

## 2020 MLK Diversity Award Winners

Each year, UMB presents Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Diversity Recognition Awards for individual and/or group achievements in the areas of diversity and inclusiveness.

The Diversity Advisory Council named the 2020 winners, who will be honored at UMB's Black History Month celebration on Feb. 5 featuring keynote speaker Roni Ellington, PhD, MA, a Morgan State professor, scholar, and champion of STEM education for minority students.

The MLK Award recipients serve as models of the ideals epitomized by the life and work of Dr. King.

# Outstanding UMB Faculty Award

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### Positive Schools Center



The Positive Schools Center (PSC) is succeeding in its mission to improve school climate — the tone, feel, and character of a school’s atmosphere — for Baltimore City students. One measure of its progress: In five years, the number of schools receiving PSC’s training and services has grown from six to 24.

But PSC director Shantay McKinily, MEd, doesn’t need numbers to confirm the impact of the K-12 program, which is based within the Social Work Community Outreach Service (SWCOS) at the University of Maryland School of Social Work. She sees the results almost every day.

“We are proud when a student demonstrates improved social awareness and relationship skills by lifting up a peer’s accomplishment and acknowledging their hard work,” says McKinily, a clinical instructor at the School of Social Work who has been

PSC's director since November 2017. "We are proud when a student who has struggled with self-confidence and self-esteem takes the initiative to enroll in honors classes and seek out extra support. And we are proud when a student's parent finds a new job opportunity as a result of a connection made by one of our coordinators.

"Our team of faculty and staff work every day to create positive environments where young people can thrive. Our students are our future leaders, and these seemingly small steps are the foundation of their success and ultimately of a more equitable and just society."

During the 2018-19 school year, PSC provided nearly 450 hours of coaching and training to almost 600 Baltimore City Public School (BCPS) teachers, administrators, and staff. Through these efforts, school climate has improved for nearly 6,000 students. The program's impact is being recognized by the University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB), which named PSC the winner of a 2020 Diversity Recognition Award as Outstanding UMB Faculty/Unit. The center and its leaders will be honored at the University's Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Black History Month ceremony on Feb. 5.

"This award is evidence that UMB is committed to creating more restorative spaces that are racially equitable, trauma responsive, and inclusive of the communities they serve," says McKinily, a former BCPS teacher and principal. "PSC is a collaborative effort that requires tremendous time and energy not only of our staff members, but also from our graduate interns, Baltimore City principals, school staff, and students. We are immensely grateful that their hard work is being recognized."

PSC describes its mission as promoting positive, supportive, and mindful learning communities where students, school staff, and other stakeholders can connect with one another in a safe and positive environment, positively develop as students and staff, and grow as scholars and educational leaders. The program aims to strengthen conversations around racial justice and equity, and it advocates for less punitive approaches to discipline, particularly when those issues result in high rates of suspension and expulsion.

PSC defines school climate as a combination of important dynamics within a school, including social-emotional ties among students, staff, and administration; governance and decision-making processes; and the physical environment — all of which collectively impact the experience of those who interact with the school. The program differs from similar school climate efforts in two key ways: PSC provides a comprehensive and integrative approach to improving school climate, compared to other initiatives that focus on one or two components, and it focuses on training adults rather than providing direct services to students.

"Through introspection and self-reflection, school staff members are better equipped to integrate racial equity, healing, and cross-racial community building in all spaces of their everyday work," says Wendy Shaia, EdD, MSW, founder of PSC and executive director of SWCOS. "PSC's director meets quarterly with each school leader to assess its

progress and review data, acting as a thought partner and helping principals identify needs and training/coaching that will support their goals.

“PSC has been a natural evolution of the work SWCOS has engaged in for over 25 years, and it’s our largest effort to foster inclusiveness and racial equity in Baltimore City.”

McKinily notes that each PSC success story could be seen as one step toward the type of equality and justice championed by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., saying it was fitting that the center won an award in his name.

“Dr. King understood that progress is achieved through a series of small steps, that while one person alone may not be able to change the world, each person has the power to create change and together we can move mountains. PSC shares this mindset,” McKinily says. “We build the capacity of our teachers to create positive environments for students, of our principals to support and retain high-quality teachers, and of our students to lead with empathy and compassion. We recognize the power in each and every person, and we believe, as Dr. King did, that these small steps are the foundation for revolutionary societal change.”

## Outstanding UMB Student Award

Elodie N. Tendoh



Elodie Tendoh enjoys acquiring knowledge and is deeply committed to sharing it.

A former biology teacher in her native Cameroon, Tendoh is a fourth-year student at the University of Maryland School of Pharmacy (UMSOP), working on her PharmD degree as well as a Master of Science in Palliative Care. She's also made her mark as a mentor at UMSOP and the University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB), providing guidance to middle school students and up.

"I believe knowledge is power," Tendoh says. "Mentorship is important to me because it's a form of service through which I can share my knowledge with someone else, guiding them to make thoughtful and well-informed decisions. Taking time to enrich others with the knowledge I have acquired gives me satisfaction, especially when it leads to the achievement of their goals."

Tendoh has mentored fellow and prospective pharmacy students through the Student National Pharmaceutical Association (SNPhA) and the American Pharmacists Association-Academy of Student Pharmacists (APhA-ASP). She is a former mentor in the UMB CURE Scholars Program, which prepares sixth- to 12th-grade students in

Southwest Baltimore for competitive and rewarding research, STEM, and health care careers. And through health fairs and her Baltimore Collegetown LeaderShape fellowship, she has advocated for healthier diets and improved access to fresh fruits and vegetables in the city.

Tendoh's mentorship and efforts to promote diversity and inclusion in pharmacy and health care-related fields have not gone unnoticed at UMB, where she is the winner of a 2020 Diversity Recognition Award as Outstanding UMB Student and will be honored at the University's Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Black History Month celebration on Feb. 5.

"I believe Elodie embodies the values of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. because she gives back in so many ways," says JuliAna Brammer, MBA, director of admissions, records, and registration at UMSOP. "She has not only mentored middle and high school students but also her fellow classmates during their undergraduate career. In the mentorship program through SNPhA, she helped prospective students navigate the admissions process and current students obtain leadership roles.

"She has been involved with eight student organizations at the School of Pharmacy and around UMB. Elodie has a long record of giving back to her classmates and the community. She is truly a leader our students and everyone at UMB can look up to."

In Cameroon, Tendoh spent three years in a teacher's training college and became an elementary school biology teacher before immigrating to the United States with her husband eight years ago. She decided to pursue a career in patient care and did pharmacy prerequisite work at Anne Arundel (Md.) Community College before being admitted to UMSOP.

"The School of Pharmacy is ranked among the top 10 pharmacy schools in the nation," Tendoh says. "This drove me toward the school, because I wanted the best education I could get. And during my research I found out that the faculty is stellar and the culture allows students to excel both in academics and personal growth and development."

Brammer lauds Tendoh for the impact she's made at the school, noting that as a regional coordinator for APhA-ASP, she brought together students from 21 pharmacy schools for a midyear conference.

"Over 300 student participants learned about leadership development, leading with passion, and embracing the call to explore and serve the Baltimore community," Brammer says. "During her tenure as coordinator, there was a 25 percent increase in participants and the highest number of exhibitors who exposed students to a variety of pharmacy career paths."

Tendoh, who is the mother of two girls, Kayla and Kerone, is on track to graduate in May and aims to continue her training at a teaching hospital and become a clinical pharmacist, specializing in palliative care and geriatrics. In her career, she hopes to

continue “to make an impact on the lives of others and advocate for those who cannot advocate for themselves.”

As for the UMB Diversity Recognition Award, she describes it as “the greatest honor of my life.”

“I feel humbled that my name can be mentioned in the same sentence with one of the greatest advocates of all time in Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.,” Tendoh says. “To me, this means that my journey has just begun, that my work has just begun. This award gives me a platform to exemplify Dr. King’s life and mission of diversity and inclusiveness, creating equal opportunities for all.

“One of his quotes that resonates with me a lot is: ‘The time is always right to do what is right.’ As I get ready to leave the UMB community, I hope to take this with me and impact everyone who crosses my path.”

# Outstanding UMB Staff Award

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**Bill Joyner, LMSW**



Bill Joyner is passionate about fighting economic inequality in Southwest Baltimore and sees his mission as a two-pronged effort: supporting local businesses while addressing the systemic issues that create the imbalance.

“I know that opportunities are limited when entire neighborhoods are impacted by racist policies and practices in education, employment, housing, health, and law enforcement,” says Joyner, senior economic inclusion specialist in the Office of Community Engagement (OCE) at the University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB). “The sacrifices of others have lifted me to a level of relative privilege and safety from the worst impact of these forces. It’s not only my duty to lift as many others as I can, but also to dismantle the forces that threaten us in the first place.”

Joyner's work with OCE has been transformational in boosting economic opportunity in Southwest Baltimore, as he has recruited nearly 30 local businesses from marginalized populations to be part of UMB's supply chain, with the vast majority of the business owners being people of color. He also manages an after-school paid internship program with the volunteer-led community Pop! Farm, which provides Baltimore youths with valuable work experience, and serves on the steering committee of UMB's Live Near Your Work Program, which provides funding and resources to help UMB employees buy homes near the University.

For these efforts, Joyner will be honored with a Diversity Recognition Award for outstanding staff member on Feb. 5 during UMB's Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Black History Month Celebration. The honor is well-deserved, says Ebony Nicholson, MSW, the diversity, inclusion, and leadership program specialist in UMB's Office of Interprofessional Service and Learning Initiatives.

"Bill's work directly aligns with one of the many goals of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.: Developing sustainable pathways out of poverty for historically marginalized groups," Nicholson says. "The services and projects Bill manages create generational impacts. These programs over time can improve the relationship between UMB and our Southwest Baltimore community by providing mutually beneficial relationships in the form of business partnerships."

Chief among Joyner's projects is the Community Merchant Access Program, which connects small businesses owned by people of color, women, and immigrants to procurement opportunities with UMB, the University of Maryland Medical Center (UMMC), and other universities and corporations.

"Bill is consistently introducing the UMB community to local businesses we can support with our institutional resources," Nicholson says. "Many of these businesses are owned by historically marginalized populations that might not always be on the radar of a large institution such as UMB. His work is literally 'putting your money where your mouth is.'"

Joyner says he's particularly proud of the Community Merchant Access Program, an initiative that includes the Local Food Connection, where participating small businesses receive access to training, technical assistance, marketing support, and other resources to help them sell food or provide catering services.

"We took UMB's spending on local food sources from 0.01 percent to 7 percent in a single year, and we did that in 2015 while also starting up and staffing OCE's Community Engagement Center, which had no dedicated staff at the time," says Joyner, who also is studying for his law degree at the Francis King Carey School of Law and hopes to graduate in July.

Joyner has made an impact on other major issues as well. For instance, when UMMC and the School of Medicine were rocked by allegations of sexual misconduct in late 2018, Joyner stepped forward to organize leaders from UMB's six professional schools and interdisciplinary Graduate School to form an Institutional Equity Workgroup.

“The workgroup formed in the summer of 2019 and works to find the institutional barriers within the University that might prevent minorities and women from thriving,” Nicholson says. “The committee continues to collect data and will present recommendations to campus leadership for targeted action across the University.”

Joyner says he’s pleased to do such work because it pays back those who’ve supported him along his journey.

“There are many people who have invested huge amounts of time and energy in helping me find a way to make a difference at UMB,” he says. “And in a place like UMB where time and energy are sometimes in short supply, I don’t take that for granted, and I want to make good on their investment.”

Winning the Diversity Recognition Award also demonstrates that UMB is acknowledging and encouraging grassroots efforts to promote equity and inclusion on campus and in the surrounding community, Joyner says.

“I think there’s a common belief that a person has to do something ‘big’ in order for it to be significant. For example, you have to conduct groundbreaking research on disparities or launch a campuswide initiative that impacts thousands of people every year,” he says. “But this award rejects that notion, which seems appropriate since Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. also rejected it. He said, ‘All labor that uplifts humanity has dignity and importance and should be undertaken with painstaking excellence.’ That’s what I strive to do.”