

# HBCU Marketplace

Oct. 31, 2019

Baltimore Convention Center

Good afternoon, everyone. It's great to be here with you for such an exciting event. I know you're at the end of an exhausting few days, but I'm sure it's been worth every second.

I want to offer a couple of thanks before I launch into some brief remarks. All of us are here because of HBCU Marketplace founder Tariq Shane. Something of this magnitude takes vision and hard work. But it also takes confidence—confidence that if we're given the opportunity to connect with one another, we will. UMB is proud to connect with you. We're proud to be a sponsor of this event, and I thank Mr. Shane for asking us to sign on.

I'd also like to thank LaRion Finney, who put UMB together with this event and told us how important it was that we be here. He was right, as usual. Thank you, LaRion.

Finally, I want to acknowledge all the students here from Maryland's own terrific HBCUs: Morgan, Coppin, UMES, Bowie. It's great to see you.

Now I can't very well have all of you in this captive audience and NOT try to sell you on UMB. You are, after all, the dream demographic: high-achieving students, engaged students, competitive students—excited and invested in everything that comes next.

And so I'll pitch you really quickly on UMB and then we can move on. UMB is Maryland's only public health, law, and human services university, and we award most of the professional doctorates in the state. We have seven schools—in medicine, law, dentistry, pharmacy, nursing, social work, and an interdisciplinary graduate school focused mainly on the biomedical sciences. From here, it's an easy walk to our campus. So if anyone wants to go back with me, let me know. I could probably arrange a tour.

I hope a number of you already met our schools' admissions deans during the Career Fair. We had six tables out there, and I told my colleagues to be aggressive in recruiting you. So you can tell me later how they did.

UMB is a proudly diverse institution: 44 percent students of color, 25 percent under-represented minorities, 18 percent Black. We have seven very different schools at UMB, but we have only one mission, and that's to Improve the human condition and serve the public good. All of us are committed to educating the next generation of professionals who will advance human health and well-being, who will secure justice, and equity, and opportunity for all. It's in our DNA—it's part of who we are—and I know we'd be even stronger if you joined us.

So if you want a professional education beyond a bachelor's degree, you really can't do much better than UMB. And I hope you'll give us a look.

Even if you don't choose UMB, let me deliver a pitch for what we do at UMB—what we call the caring professions: health, law, social work. I'm a pediatrician by training, and I spend a lot of my time on programs designed to develop and educate a diverse health care workforce. And I do it not just because health care is a fulfilling career for graduates and pays well, though I think both are true. I do it for patients. I do it because our health outcomes are better when we have more providers of color. I do it because the really tragic health disparities we have in this country—where diseases are more prevalent and more deadly in the Black population than in the White population—those disparities shrink when we have more providers of color.

You are the best weapon we have to protect the health of vulnerable populations. You're the best weapon we have to protect their rights.

We just lost one of UMB's most distinguished alums, the Hon. Elijah Cummings—a graduate of our Carey Law School and a very close friend to me—and to our University. Congressman Cummings spent his lifetime fighting for access and equity, fighting for the rule of law, fighting to hold power to account, fighting for justice. That's what the caring professions do.

And if you don't choose UMB and you don't choose the caring professions, think about choosing Baltimore. We need young people like you. We need your energy and talent. We need people who can partner with us in the exciting work of building this city into something even greater than it is today.

You know, UMB is proudly a part of Baltimore. We're proud to invest in our communities, to work with our neighbors every day on the issues that are most important to them: getting better schools, better jobs, better housing better policing, better health care. We need YOU in this work. THEY need you in this work.

And if it's not Baltimore—if it's Chicago, or St. Louis, or Oakland, or Atlanta—please just get involved. Equal access is a battle worth fighting. I imagine many of you have already had to fight it. And so who better to win opportunity for others than those who've already won it for themselves.

And if you don't choose UMB, or the caring professions, or Baltimore ... that's fine. I mean it. It's okay. But please do choose—no matter what—an organization that really values what you bring to it. Choose an organization where diversity isn't merely head-counting, but instead a real and deep commitment to inclusion, where you're not just sitting at the table; you're advancing the conversation.

You are an incredible asset to any company, any organization, that makes you an offer. So treat yourself like one. Thank you and I wish you all the best of luck.