



UMB News

Face to Face: The Academy of Lifelong Learning

October 16, 2020 | By [Alex Likowski](#)

“The correct analogy for the mind is not a vessel that needs filling, but wood that needs igniting — no more — and then it motivates one towards originality and instills the desire for truth.” With those words, first- and second-century philosopher and teacher Plutarch urged his students not merely to listen and be filled up with knowledge one time. Instead, he said their curiosity should be ignited and burn brightly and turn learning into a lifelong endeavor.

Nineteen centuries later, we’re still just as concerned with learning and growing throughout our lives and enhancing our understanding of the world and our place in it. Only now, the stakes are higher. Changes in technology, changes in how we work, even where we work, and extremely rapid changes in the world around us make it imperative that we learn and grow to remain relevant and effective.



Roger Ward and Nick Kouwenhoven discuss the UMB Academy of Lifelong Learning.

The internet, of course, has made it possible to access amazing amounts of information incredibly quickly. For example, a recent Google search of the term “higher education” yielded more than 11 billion results in less than a second.

That is certainly very little time to find so many results, but can you imagine how much time it would take to examine each of them for relevant information and then verify the sources?

In May, the University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB) launched the [Academy of Lifelong Learning \(ALL\)](#), designed in part to solve that problem. No more separating tiny grains of wheat from mountains of chaff on the internet. ALL is built to engage our alumni, our community, and everyone else in an online forum where a

large cast of subject matter experts answer questions submitted by anyone. The answers come directly from the experts.

The hottest topic right now, of course, is the COVID-19 pandemic. Here are just a few of the experts who might answer a question in that topic area:

Robert C. Gallo, MD, director of the Institute of Human Virology and co-discoverer of HIV as the virus that causes AIDS

Wilbur Chen, MD, MS, FACP, FIDSA, an infectious disease expert and a member of Gov. Larry Hogan's Coronavirus Response Team

Matthew Frieman, PhD, a professor of microbiology and immunology who's been on the front lines of studying many different coronaviruses for years

Diane Hoffmann, JD, MS, director of the Francis King Carey School of Law's law and health care program

Michael Greenberger, JD, founder and director of UMB's Center for Health and Homeland Security.

And there are many, many more ([complete list](#)).

Those experts have been answering questions submitted by anyone and everyone, such as: How can we keep everyone in the household safe when college students return home on holiday breaks? What does the positivity rate of COVID-19 really tell us? Is the risk of contracting COVID greater if my child is taking immunosuppressive medication?

And all those answers and other supporting information and media are curated by topic and available to anyone who visits the site.

On the Oct. 15, 2020, edition of *Virtual Face to Face with Dr. Bruce Jarrell*, guest host **Roger J. Ward, EdD, JD, MSL, MPA**, interim UMB provost, executive vice president, and dean of the Graduate School, spoke with **Nick Kouwenhoven**, executive director of the UMB Academy of Lifelong Learning.

To watch the discussion, access the link at the top of the page.

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