



President's Office

Letters to the UMB Community

Statement On This Week's Events at the U.S. Capitol

January 08, 2021

Dear UMB Community,

If you are like me, you have been pinned to the news for the last 48 hours. The events in Washington, D.C., have made it very difficult to focus on things related to my job as president of the University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB), in spite of the pandemic, but they also have allowed me to reflect quite a lot and gain perspective. I needed time to think about what I wanted to share with this community.

What I have seen is unthinkable to me as an American. I have seen an insurrection, which in my opinion was fueled by the leader of our government, the president. I saw offensive banners and language, bias and hate against my fellow Americans including my African American colleagues, my Jewish colleagues, and my LGBTQ colleagues. I am sure many others were demeaned by the demonstrators. I was demeaned as well, and I took it personally. I felt and still feel wounded by the events. This is not my idea of democracy. I will not forget these feelings and the reality that goes with them.

I feel ashamed that this is a sick underbelly of America. Just as with the killing of George Floyd and so many other sisters and brothers, the injustice and cruelty that many Americans experience every day has again been exposed to plain daylight. I cannot let feeling ashamed, however, be the end of it. UMB, and I along with it, must redouble our efforts at the University to address as many of these injustices and inequities as we can.

It will take time for us to process all that has happened this week. I care about every one of you. Coupled with the pandemic, these events have added significant stress to our already stressful lives. Please take care of yourselves and each other during this difficult time.

I hope that we do not see a return to the status quo. If we are to be united, let us be united more than we have ever been in a commitment to creating a more just and equal America.

Stay healthy and safe.

Sincerely,

Bruce E. Jarrell, MD, FACS

President

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