



UMB News

Face to Face with CEDIO Diane Forbes Berthoud

October 14, 2021 | By [Alex Likowski](#)

“Our campus is very engaged, very committed. And I have been impressed with the expertise and the talent on campus, specifically as it relates to equity, diversity, and inclusion,” University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB) Chief Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Officer and Vice President **Diane Forbes Berthoud, PhD, MA**, told the virtual audience of the Oct. 7 edition of *Virtual Face to Face with President Bruce Jarrell*. “What I certainly think is an opportunity, which is why I know my position and the office has been created, is around cohesion.”

Forbes Berthoud, who started her work at UMB only three months prior, added that she has already had an opportunity to meet with many members of the faculty and staff and has begun the process of assessing many of the University’s programs and practices. “There’s an opportunity to think about collective effort and how we can act more collaboratively in what we do related to equity, diversity, and inclusion,” she explained. “For all the programs and activities there are, as a strategist and analyst myself, I would invite us to ask, ‘To what end? What do these programs and activities produce? What are those goals? And have we assessed and have we met those goals?’ ”

One area that has been the subject of much discussion is the recruitment and retention of a diverse faculty. “You talk about being thoughtful about the recruitment, and yet when you have a medical center and sick patients to care for, it gets very difficult to get a broad panel if my neurosurgeon left and I now have a big blank spot in my neurosurgery program and can’t take care of these patients,” said program host and UMB President **Bruce E. Jarrell, MD, FACS**. “Do you have any experience for how you get diverse applicants for some of these very hard-to-find and yet urgent-to-recruit kinds of positions?”

“It is a challenge. And there is underrepresentation in the fields as well as the positions that you mention,” Forbes Berthoud responded. “We have to ask ourselves as an institution, ‘How important are these priorities to us?’ Because there’s a way in which — kind of like exercising or not or doing particularly healthy things for our body — we pay now, or we pay bigger. And what I mean by that is that without taking the time for a diverse panel, without taking the time to do the kinds of recruiting and pipeline-building and development, we lose the value of what we’re doing here and then we have a climate that’s not as productive, not as inclusive, and people don’t see themselves represented.”

In the second half of the hourlong program, Jarrell and Forbes Berthoud answered questions from the virtual audience on a wide array of topics, such as the impact of a less-diverse faculty on mentoring minority students, impediments to promotion and job growth, re-examining UMB’s history, and much more. Watch the entire discussion at the link at the top of this page.

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