



UMB News

UMB Recognizes Employees for Excellence, Longevity

April 4, 2022 | By [Lou Cortina](#)

It has been three years since employees of the [University of Maryland, Baltimore](#) (UMB) gathered in person for the annual Employee Recognition and Service Awards celebration, with the event being held virtually since 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic.



From left: Patrick Williams, Madison Haas, and Elyshia Menkin were honored during the UMB Employee Recognition and Service Awards Virtual Celebration on April 1.

During the 2022 virtual celebration April 1, the pandemic and UMB employees' efforts and response during the unprecedented health crisis were central to two of the three awards handed out: the Cecil S. Kelly Employee of the Year Award and the Community Service Award for 2021.

Patrick Williams, postal services supervisor, Health Sciences and Human Services Library (HSLSL), was honored as Employee of the Year for going above and beyond the call of duty while receiving deliveries at the library during the pandemic. **Madison Haas, MSW**, economic inclusion specialist, Office of Community Engagement, won the Community Service Award for her role in attracting Baltimore-area Latinos to UMB's COVID-19 vaccination clinic at the SMC Campus Center.

"It's a great honor and pleasure to recognize our dedicated staff who have served UMB faithfully," said UMB President **Bruce E. Jarrell, MD, FACS**, who presided over the ceremony along with **Mike Noll**,

MS, acting director of organization and employee development, Human Resource Services. "Our University is so fortunate to have a staff with such dedication, energy, and drive. And I'm so proud of the creativity and resilience of our staff.

"I hope you know that your work matters, and I thank you for your dedication to our vitally important work. Thank you for believing that we — and I mean all of us — can make a difference in this city, in this state, and in this world. And thank you for coming to work, whether on campus or off, prepared to do your best every day. This the UMB family, and I feel fortunate to be a part of it."

The event featured videotaped congratulations from UMB leaders, reflections from longtime employees, a game of Kahoot trivia, and recognition of Williams, Haas, and **Elyshia Menkin, MPH**, of the [University of Maryland School of Nursing](#) (UMSON), who won the James T. Hill Scholarship. The University also honored 153 employees who celebrated service milestones of 20, 25, 30, 35, or 40 years in 2021, with their combined service to UMB totaling 3,660 years.

"There is enormous value in the kind of deep institutional knowledge that this group represents," Jarrell said. "You know all the University's strengths and our challenges, our history and traditions, our culture and climate. You're the ones at UMB that I seek out — as do others — when I need the impossible done. You give wise counsel, and you demonstrate our core values."

Attendees offered congrats and shout-outs in the Zoom chat box, adding personal touches to the annual event that before COVID-19 featured lunch and a festive get-together at Westminster Hall.

(Download the [event program](#) PDF.)

Cecil S. Kelly Memorial Employee of the Year Award: Patrick Williams

When FedEx or UPS was delivering equipment such as computers to UMB, Williams, who was working on campus but under modified hours while the library was closed because of the pandemic, gave drivers his personal cellphone number so he could make sure he was at the library to receive the deliveries.

"I might have missed that first week in March 2020, but we had shipments that were already coming down the pike," Williams said. "I was basically coming in daily and coordinating deliveries, coordinating with UPS and FedEx."

Williams' supervisor, **Aphrodite M. Bodycomb, MSM, MBA**, associate director, administration and operations, HSHSL, praised Williams for his "can-do" attitude at the outset of the pandemic and as it stretched into 2021 and 2022.

"Patrick is willing to take on anything that comes his way," Bodycomb said, pointing out that he even voluntarily took responsibility for accepting packages for other units, including receiving student transcripts. "Patrick was the only person in the building most times during the beginning of the pandemic, just securing our property."

She also talked about an instance when Williams secured the building as well. One day while he was working in HSHSL, he heard a strange clanking noise and reported it to Bodycomb.

"It turned out that the sound he heard was from a piece of equipment failing that needed repair, and his report allowed the equipment to be repaired before complete failure, which would have impacted the building," Bodycomb said.

As postal services supervisor, Williams' main duty is to coordinate deliveries, shipping books to other universities in the University System of Maryland and nationwide. During the pandemic, Williams rearranged his workspace and mailroom as well as mail processes to make them safe for everyone who entered.

He also helps library staff and other departments on HSHSL's second floor such as registration, financial aid, accounting, and the Center for Information Technology Services with mailing questions or problems.

"A lot of times when it comes to mailing things, people might need help with how to address it or how much postage is needed, so I help people with that," he said. "I know that can be a headache, so that's why I just enjoy helping people with a problem that they might not be too familiar with."

"Customer service is very important to me," he added. "My goal is to make everyone that I help happy. It's very important that the people that I deal with see that me helping them helps me. I just love to help people."

The Employee of the Year award, which comes with a \$1,500 bonus, is presented to an employee who exemplifies the qualities of service, humanity, and commitment that Kelly exhibited during his career on UMB's facilities staff from 1966 to 1989.

Community Service Award: Madison Haas

Haas worked with two nonprofits that support immigrants, the Esperanza Center and CASA de Maryland, to encourage Latinos to receive COVID-19 shots at the SMC Campus Center vaccination site. She also reached out to the University of Maryland School of Medicine (UMSOM) to recruit Spanish-speaking students, faculty, and staff to serve as interpreters.

"Madison went above and beyond to help the Latino community of Baltimore get COVID-19 vaccinations," said **Sandra Quezada, MD, MS**, associate professor in the Department of Medicine, associate dean for admissions, and associate dean for faculty diversity and inclusion at UMSOM. "She arranged for weekly Saturday clinics throughout the spring of 2021 that were specifically tailored to provide vaccine access to individuals referred from Esperanza and CASA."

"Madison's empathy and thoughtful attention to detail were inspiring. She advocated for creating and further enhancing Spanish language signage throughout the clinic to help Spanish-speaking patients navigate the large space, and she recognized the need for linguistically appropriate services to make it a welcoming and effective experience."

UMB's Community Service Award recognizes employees who are active in local community service organizations or who have a long history of service on the local, national, and international levels. Haas' supervisor, **Ashley Valis, MSW**, executive director of community engagement and strategic initiatives, says Haas is a deserving recipient.

"Madison was steadfast in making sure anyone who needed help communicating in their native language was supported at the clinic," Valis said. "She was committed to ensuring that all who came to UMB during such a perilous time in our history were welcomed and supported and had the best vaccination experience possible."

"She is a role model among her colleagues at UMB for lifting up community voices and making sure their needs are met," Valis added. "We are extremely grateful to have her on our team at the Office of Community Engagement."

James T. Hill Scholarship: Elyshia Menkin

This \$2,000 scholarship was established to support UMB's commitment to staff development in recognition of James T. Hill's long and outstanding service to the University as well as his personal commitment to the professional development of UMB employees.

Menkin has consistently shown the type of passion for self-improvement and professional development that Hill was known for, says her former supervisor, **Michele Ondra, MBA, MS**, school administrator, [University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law](#).

“Elyshia participated in many of the law school’s training sessions and strived to improve her already robust skill set or learn new tips or tricks,” Ondra said of Menkin, who now works as an administrative manager in the Office of the Academic Deans at UMSON. “She especially enjoyed attending ‘Tech Tip Tuesdays’ hosted by the law school’s instructional technology department.

“Elyshia’s drive and desire for professional development make her an incredible employee — and an astute learner. She’s a worthy recipient of the James T. Hill Scholarship.”

Menkin has participated in three UMB programs dedicated to professional development: the UMBrella Coaching Program, Management Essentials, and the Emerging Leaders Program.

“These programs and particularly the mentorship and practical guidance that they provided exceeded my expectations,” Menkin said. “These programs helped me as I transitioned from an individual contributor to a manager, and I am confident the knowledge I’ve gained from them will continue to help me in my career.”

Menkin earned a Master of Public Administration degree from the University of Baltimore in 2020 and is a student in Maryland Carey Law’s Part-Time Evening Program.

“To pursue a law degree is a dream come true for me and something that felt out of reach years ago but is now possible with UMB’s tuition remission benefit,” Menkin said. “I’ve enjoyed taking advantage of the many other opportunities for professional development that are available around the University.”

40-Year Milestones

UMB annually recognizes employees who have hit service milestones in five-year increments between 20 and 50 years. There were no 45- or 50-year employees in 2021, but nine who celebrated 40-year milestones:

Molly Lutz, Karen Sack, and Elizabeth Waters, UMSOM

Helen Edmond, Antoinette Fields, and Francine Nickens, [University of Maryland School of Dentistry](#)

Susan Gillette, Office of the President

Vickie Campbell and James Reynolds, Office of Academic Affairs

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