



## UMB News

### University Kicks Off Diversity Plan Process

August 5, 2022 | By [Mary Therese Phelan](#)

About 30 members of the [University of Maryland, Baltimore's \(UMB\)](#) administrative and academic units recently gathered to participate in an interactive kickoff of the first-ever UMB Strategic Diversity Planning Process.



*Tyrone Roper, holding microphone, provides input during a strategic diversity planning session while tablemates, Hershaw Davis Jr. and Nicole K Palmore, and Reetta Gach (standing) listen.*

"As you and I know, based on your experience, your insights, your expertise, equity, diversity, inclusion, and anything related to organizational change requires a systemic, sustainable, and strategic approach," **Diane Forbes Berthoud, PhD, MA**, UMB's first chief equity, diversity, and inclusion officer and vice president (CEDIO/VP), told the in-person participants assembled in the Elm Ballroom in the Southern Management Corp. Campus Center, as well as those watching virtually.

The event was aimed at providing:

- An update on equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) leadership, collaborations, and partnerships
- An overview of the diversity strategic planning process and an opportunity to discuss and offer feedback about that process
- A preview of the upcoming institutional EDI dashboard and a chance to provide feedback on the dashboard's development.

The institutional dashboard will map hires, recruitment, promotion, retention, and other major institutional indicators.

Participants were asked to answer the following questions:

- What are the most critical issues to address related to diversity, equity, and inclusion at UMB? Why?
- What would a diverse, equitable, and inclusive UMB look, sound, and feel like?
- Which EDI indicators/performance measures are most important to track and report in an institutional dashboard? Why?

Table discussions were held while attendees wrote their answers on large pieces of posterboard and then shared their ideas with the group as a whole.

“The input from participants affirmed the needs related to recruitment, retention, promotion, advancement, and accountability,” said Forbes Berthoud, who was appointed by UMB **President Bruce E. Jarrell, MD, FACS**, last year. “The involvement of all these different people is important because we want everything we’re doing around creating a more equitable, diverse, and inclusive university to be a collective effort. It needs to be collective; it needs to be integrative and holistic. So we need people from administration and finance and from the law school and from police, from communications, from the president’s office, so we can hear all the perspectives from the academic units and the administrative units, on how we can make this University even greater and more inclusive than it is.”

**Hershaw Davis Jr.**, MSN, BSN '09, RN, clinical instructor, Organizational Systems and Adult Health, the [University of Maryland School of Nursing](#), was glad he came.

“I wanted to participate not only as an alum and a faculty member, but also as a Marylander. I have a vested interest in how we serve the people of Maryland,” he said. “And in order to do that, diversity, equity, and inclusion are a part of the service that we provide to our citizens in the state.”

Added **Tyrone Roper, MSW**, director of UMB’s [Community Engagement Center](#), “I just think that any work around diversity, equity, and inclusion is important because it really helps to ensure that the goals and values of the University are upheld. And it also creates a level of support and encouragement for the folks who have otherwise not been treated fairly across campus.”

In the fall, UMB’s [EDI Office](#) will host more sessions in person and virtually to provide updates on the strategic planning process. In addition to the quantitative data from the dashboard and EDI-administered surveys, the office will coordinate with academic and administrative units to conduct focus groups and other meetings to listen and learn about UMB’s needs and priorities related to EDI.

Roper said he plans to participate in future strategic planning sessions, focus groups, or in any other way he possibly can.

“I’m committed to the process. I’m committed to the end,” he said.

“This is a process that we see as iterative and ongoing,” added Forbes Berthoud. “We’re open to growing and growing.”

Afterward, Forbes Berthoud called the event “a great success.”

“Part of what makes equity, diversity, and inclusion leadership work is partnership and collaboration with the entire UMB community. And this was the beginning of that conversation, formally, with many of our key constituents,” she said.

“Also, I was very moved by the excitement and the hope, especially when they saw the data about the University on a big graph that says, ‘Here’s how we’re doing, and here’s where we need to improve.’ And I think people are all in for that change.”

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