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‘UMB’s Got Talent’ Show Features Song and Dance

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Performers take the stage at third annual event, which transitioned from virtual to hybrid this year.



The third annual “UMB’s Got Talent” show was held Dec. 1 at MSTF Leadership Hall, a hybrid event featuring performances from members of the University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB) community. For the first time, the routines were held in person and in front of a live audience, with 50 in attendance and more watching online.

The talent show debuted in December 2020 and was held virtually for two years due to COVID-19 pandemic restrictions. Four performers took to the stage this year — three singers and one dancer — and the event was emceed by Dana Rampolla, director of integrated marketing, Office of Communications and Public Affairs.

“It was a relaxing evening and a lovely way to kick off the holiday season,” said Rampolla, who thanked Tom Hockensmith, executive director, Center for Information Technology Services, for leading the committee that organized the event.

“The performances were well done and entertaining,” Rampolla added. “While we hope to showcase more performers and welcome more viewers next year, it was a great transitional year, moving from a virtual platform to the hybrid format. Our hardworking committee navigated some minor kinks this year, and we have some ideas for next year’s event to make it even better.”

The performers, all from the University of Maryland School of Medicine (UMSOM), were:

Kristie Nichols, MS, human resources program manager, Center for Shock Trauma and Anesthesiology Research (STAR). Nichols sang “Dreams” by Fleetwood Mac, with Rampolla noting the song an appropriate choice because one of the popular rock band’s members, Christine McVie, had died the previous day.

Sandra Quezada, MD, MS, associate professor, Department of Medicine; associate dean for admissions; and associate dean for faculty diversity and inclusion. Quezada sat down with a guitar and sang “Los Momentos (The Moments)” by Chilean songwriter Eduardo Gatti and “Blackbird” by the Beatles. The first song, she said, was composed in 1970 but was lost after a military coup in Chile three years later. “Fortunately, Gatti recorded it again so that I could learn it in Chile 20 years later,” Quezada said.

Tess Gillis, MBA, MJ, senior academic development specialist, Office of Medical Education. “We recently went to a conference in Nashville, and it really brought out my inner country singer,” said Gillis, who sat down with a guitar and sang “I Will Always Love You” by Dolly Parton and “Whenever You Come Around” by Vince Gill.

Komal Bhagat, MPH, lead research analyst, STAR. Bhagat performed a four-minute Bollywood belly and Indian folk-style dance routine designed “to showcase the color and diversity of her Indian culture and bring happiness to everyone in the audience,” Rampolla said.



A panel of four judges deemed Gillis' routine as the first-place winner in the event, which was organized by the University Student Government Association, UMB Staff Senate, UMB Faculty Senate, and UMB Council for the Arts & Culture.

Watch the talent show [at this link](#). Passcode: 1^.#iMW

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