



UMB News

Shared Goals, Aspirations in West Baltimore

November 28, 2017 | *By Briana Mathis, UMMC*

Leaders of the University of Maryland Medical Center (UMMC) and the University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB), whose organizations have joined forces to form [The Partnership with West Baltimore](#), held a town hall meeting Nov. 20 at Union Baptist Church in West Baltimore.

Union Baptist pastor Alvin Hathaway, a longtime friend of both institutions, hosted and kicked off the event. The meeting, which was more of a discussion, covered the partnership's community outreach efforts and the leaders' desire to help West Baltimore residents with more than just their health care needs while providing an opportunity for community residents to ask questions, address concerns, and share their goals, aspirations, and dreams.



Dr. Mohan Suntha (far right) and Dr. Jay Perman (2nd from right) address community members gathered at Union Baptist Church.

UMMC President and CEO **Mohan Suntha, MD, MBA**, and UMB President **Jay A. Perman, MD**, said it is imperative that both institutions engage with “our community” — Suntha mentioned that 25 percent of UMMC employees live in West Baltimore, helping in ways beyond health care. This includes supporting West Baltimore businesses, providing education and job training and skills, and working with younger people to open doors to

careers in the medical field that may have been closed to them previously.

Much of the meeting was devoted to questions from the audience, which covered a wide range of topics, including:

The impact the new patient care tower at the [Midtown Campus](#) , which is expected to open in 2019 or 2020, will have for West Baltimore residents.

Job opportunities and training.

Institutional development and expansion into the West Baltimore community.

Youth engagement and education programs.

Extending services to recreation centers outside of the five partnership schools.

Consistent access to community health programs.

Partnership boundary lines and the potential for expansion.

Safety and security.

Suntha and Perman stressed that engagement with the West Baltimore community is a long-term effort. Perman, who has been involved with the community for more than 20 years, urged attendees to “continue to check us out,” referring to the work of the two institutions through the partnership, “and see if we are here to stay.”

After the Q&A session, community members and leaders exchanged information and ideas, with the hope of continuing this important work and offering more programs and services to lift up West Baltimore.

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