

'Jmore' Profiles Perman, Peers in Issue on Leaders

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Long before **Jay A. Perman, MD**, began a career as a physician or became the president of the [University of Maryland, Baltimore \(UMB\)](#), he pondered another path.

"I grew up in Chicago in an Orthodox-Conservative Jewish family," he told writer Simone Ellin, who was preparing a story for the Baltimore publication *Jmore* about five Jewish university and college presidents. A group of rabbis had approached Perman's widowed mother, Rose, about the possibility of her son becoming a rabbi. They offered to pay tuition to Hebrew high school.

"I had always wanted to be a doctor, but we talked and thought about it a lot, whether to become a doctor or a rabbi," Perman says in the July 2018 issue of the magazine. He chose medicine.



UMB President Jay A. Perman, MD, is shown in his office in this and a cover photograph by Justin Tsucalas to illustrate the article "A Class of Their Own" in the July 2018 issue of "Jmore" magazine.

A pediatric gastroenterologist, Perman continues to practice weekly at his President's Clinic, where he treats young patients and teaches UMB students the concepts of team care. In that way and in his role as president, Perman said he "gets to be like a rabbi by performing acts of *tikkun olam* (repairing the world)."

The article goes on to discuss aspects of Perman's leadership since he became president in 2010 that help UMB and its graduates serve the public good. It notes that many of these graduates, from six highly ranked professional schools and an interdisciplinary graduate school, are in human services.

The article describes outreach to West Baltimore through the [Office of Community Engagement](#) and pending expansion of the Community Engagement Center. And it devotes ample attention to "another pet project" of the president's, the [UMB CURE Scholars Program](#). The program offers ongoing enrichment and mentorship to students in three West Baltimore middle schools and is poised to shepherd the first group of entrants into ninth grade at several selective high schools.

The program was conceived as a response to the shortage of African-Americans in science, technology, math, and engineering (STEM) careers and the health disparities tied to that gap. The UMB CURE Scholars are the youngest to participate in the National Cancer Institute's [Continuing Umbrella of Research Experiences \(CURE\)](#) program, the magazine notes.

As a teenager, Perman decided he wanted to be a doctor. Perhaps many of the CURE Scholars will aim to be like him or like the other UMB researchers and health care providers who have become their role models. "I hope I'm still around to see the first of these kids walk across the medical school stage," he told *Jmore*.

The article, "[A Class of Their Own](#)," by Aliza Friedlander and Ellin, with photography by Justin Tsucalas, also profiled Jose Antonio Bowen, PhD, MA, president of Goucher College; Elliot Hirshman, PhD, president of Stevenson University; Ronald J. Daniels, JD, LL.M, president of Johns Hopkins University, and Fred Bronstein, DMA, MM, dean of Peabody Institute.