

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Black History Month

ANGELA ALSOBROOKS, JD '96

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY (MD.) EXECUTIVE

University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB) President Jay A. Perman, MD, and the Diversity Advisory Council invite you to save the date for the University's 2019 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Black History Month celebration on Feb. 6.



KEYNOTE SPEAKER: ANGELA ALSOBROOKS, JD '96

Angela Alsobrooks, JD '96, has blazed an impressive trail in Prince George's County, Maryland's second-largest county, initially as its youngest and first female state's attorney and now as its first female county executive, taking office in December 2018.

Along this pioneering path, Alsobrooks says she has been guided by the ideals of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., so it's fitting that she will be the keynote speaker at the University of Maryland, Baltimore's (UMB) Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Black History Month celebration on Feb. 6.

Alsobrooks cites King's 1963 "Letter from Birmingham Jail" — in which the civil rights leader defends the strategy of nonviolent resistance and famously wrote, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere" — as an inspiration for her career in jurisprudence and public service.

"Dr. King dedicated his life to helping others, to doing things that are not always easy or always popular with others," Alsobrooks says. "I have spent 20-plus years working as a public servant with the hope that I'll be able to make decisions and create change now that will have an impact on our future generations, just as Dr. King did."

Alsobrooks is a lifelong resident of Prince George's County, but her time in Baltimore at the University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law holds a special place in her heart.

"It is an honor to speak on this great campus," says Alsobrooks, who earned her undergraduate degree in public policy from Duke University in 1993 and graduated from Maryland Carey Law in 1996. "UMB is one of the places where I received the education that has helped me to achieve what I have so far in my career, and I am honored to be able to give back to the University in any way I can.

"It's also always an honor to speak at an event honoring Dr. King, and this one is even more special because I am returning to a place that holds great significance and memories for me."

After earning her law degree, Alsobrooks was hired in 1997 as Prince George's County's assistant state's attorney, with a focus on prosecuting domestic violence cases. She won election in 2010 as state's attorney, the county's top prosecutor, and for eight years led the office tasked with prosecuting people accused of committing crimes in the county.

Beyond the courts, Alsobrooks led the fight to reduce domestic and family violence in the county, hosting conferences for children and families and developing training programs for clergy and others who counsel couples and families in crisis. In addition, she created a truancy reduction initiative and started a program designed to give low-level, nonviolent offenders a second chance in the community.

A single mother of a teenage daughter, she also has served as executive director of the Prince George's County Revenue Authority and as the county's education liaison, where among her initiatives were educational forums aimed at increasing parental involvement in schools.

"I always knew that I wanted to go into a career of public service," Alsobrooks says. "I wanted to help others and give a voice to those who might not otherwise have one and ensure that everyone has a seat at the table where decisions that impact their lives are being made."

In all her work, Alsobrooks maintains a strong commitment to diversity, calling it “one of our greatest strengths.”

“Being able to interact, work with, and learn from those who have different experiences than our own is what allows us to grow as a society,” she says. “When there is diversity and inclusion in anything that we do, it ensures that the needs and desires of all people are taken into account.”

— Lou Cortina