

# Letters to the UMB Community

## In Solidarity with UMB Vice President and CDO Forbes Berthoud and DEI Officers Against Hate and Violence

*January 26, 2023*

The University of Maryland, Baltimore is united in solidarity against hate and violence with Asian American communities in Monterey Park and Half Moon Bay, California, both suffering after mass shootings around the recent Lunar New Year weekend. At a time dedicated to celebration of family and community for Asian Americans, these shootings recall the significant increase in anti-Asian violence since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has negatively impacted Asian Americans' feelings of safety and well-being. UMB, as a health and human services university, plays a significant role in creating safe and inclusive environments in the moments when people are at their most vulnerable. We embrace our human imperative to care for all of our community, particularly in times of pain and crisis. Please utilize the Student Counseling Center and the Employee Assistance Program for support.

These recent events, and the mid-January stabbing of an Indiana University student who was targeted because of her Asian heritage, are inextricable from the more than 11,000 hate incidents reported against Asian Americans and Pacific Islander Americans between March 2020-March 2022 (Stop AAPI Hate). These incidents reinforce our commitment to increasing Belonging, Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion at UMB, throughout Baltimore, the state of Maryland, and the world.

The data shows that anti-Asian bias can be reduced through systemic measures including education about the histories of anti-Asian stereotypes, better incident reporting systems (with multilingual options & culturally informed staff), and other initiatives to address the deliberate construction of Asian Americans as the "yellow peril" over hundreds of years of imperialism, colonialism, and capitalism. As an educational institution, we at UMB continue to provide and develop resources to address these social constructions that lead to so many significant impacts. As members of the UMB community, we pledge to be present for each other, to see each other's pain, to understand its roots, and to do what we can and must to heal the wounds that cause it. With all of our neighbors in Baltimore, we encourage and create pathways for communication and connection while working for justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion.

In Solidarity,

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