I do feel enlivened during these times, because you can’t sit silent and be asleep.  LADY BRION
The buildings with their striking architectural elements. The bench where you sit to read and sip coffee between classes. Beautiful flowers in season, stunning stained glass, a quirky gargoyle. Or a little gem you may never have noticed before, like the plaque depicting an angel on the side of a familiar statue of Edgar Allan Poe.

Our campus is quiet now. The favorite spots we walk by in a more typical season of hustle and bustle are waiting for our return. While students, staff and others in our community are temporarily conducting classes and university business remotely, we’re sharing photos of some distinctive outdoor features of UB that we miss. How many of these photos can you identify? A list of their locations appears on page 33.
This has been a year like no other. When our semester began in January, who would have imagined the shifts we’re experiencing in our country’s health and economic situations, in the ways our society is functioning and in the advancement of vital issues around social justice: The events we’ve seen have been challenging, and also fascinating and inspiring.

Since our community went virtual in March, we have been sustaining our ties online. We also remain connected through the shared values our students, faculty and alumni embody as they work for a brighter future and reach out to help those who are most affected by the pandemic.

In this issue we showcase many good things that are happening at UB and highlight aspects of this extraordinary time. In one article, we discuss how our faculty and students are transitioning to all online classes. I am happy to be a part of In This Moment, which features nine members of our community sharing how they are doing and what they are thinking about during this interesting year. We also cover how our alumni contribute to organizations providing food to those who need it.

I am especially glad to shine a spotlight on the excellent work of our Student Government Association. Their newly-created Philadelphia Pride Flag street mural, shown on page 37, is only the first step in a project to be called Inclusion Alley. It’s a campus space that celebrates equality and solidarity. Raising awareness and taking an activist stance on some of the most important issues of our time is a large part of what we are about, and efforts like the SGA’s show us the way forward in uncertain times.

The changes that surround us are ongoing. But what will never change is the resilience of our university community and the creativity we bring to the issues we are facing. We will continue to support and be there for each other. And with each small step, we contribute to a larger vision that reflects who we are and what we want our world to be.

Sincerely,

Kurt L. Schmoke
President, University of Baltimore
Second Responders

BY PAULA NOVASKY

Many more people are struggling with food insecurity during the simultaneous health and economic crises associated with the pandemic. According to recently released studies by the United States Department of Agriculture and Northwestern University, the number of families experiencing hunger in the nation has almost doubled in the last year. Among families in Maryland, 1 in 5 household children report that they do not have enough to eat.

Fortunately many organizations and individuals are stepping up to help, including members of the UB community. Jim Crimmins, B.S., B.S., ’13, is the day shift receiving lead at the Maryland Food Bank. The Food Bank distributed 31.4 million pounds of food from March to August, an increase of 1.7 percent from the same time period in 2019. Crimmins’ responsibilities include taking in donated food from community partners and making sure that drivers have products ready to deliver to partner sites such as churches, soup kitchens and schools. He says an initial challenge of the COVID-19 shutdown was the disruption in the way food was distributed.

“Typically we do a lot of deliveries to school systems for things like after-school programs. Kids still need food, and we had to figure out ways to get it to them,” Crimmins says.

An ongoing challenge, he adds, is not being able to plan strategically. “We are constantly re-evaluating, managing need and providing for where there are shortages in different areas of the state,” he says. Crimmins says that it’s inspiring to see the dedication of the Food Bank’s volunteers who help with sorting and packing food, among other tasks. “We depend on them and they are very dedicated—even in the beginning most of them were here on their regular days,” he says. “They make it possible for us to get food to the people who need it.”

Saval Foodservice, a fourth-generation food distributor that serves the mid-Atlantic region, is helping people in a variety of ways.

Edith Waithira, M.A., ’19, who works as a project coordinator for the Maryland Stadium Authority, interned at Baltimore’s Mera Kitchen Collective during her UB master’s program in 2019. Mera is a food-based cooperative made up of women chefs from around the world. The organization empowers women by creating a multicultural community and helping them attain economic independence. Mera’s team has served more than 72,000 meals in the city since March. Waithira says she is inspired by the organization’s values. “From the first, you are part of the family,” she says. “It’s natural that they would want to alleviate suffering by feeding those in need.”

While interning at Mera Kitchen, Waithira’s responsibilities included preparing food for catering events, and also for the farmers market run by the collective. In addition, she helped with event planning and execution and provided transportation for team members.

“Sharing the foods that are important to us is a way to begin conversation, and a foundation to connect on deeper issues,” Waithira says. She adds that her family emigrated to Baltimore from Kenya where she was in middle school, and says of her own mother, “I imagine that she wished she had had a place like this one.”

Organizations like these will continue to adapt to support those who need them. Crimmins says the Food Bank is continually pivoting as different counties change the way businesses and schools are operating. “Work is really intense right now, and we’re not sure what’s going to happen,” he says. “All we know is that things are constantly changing.”

Edith Waithira

Paul Saval

President and CEO Paul Saval, J.D., B.S., whose grandfather founded the company more than 80 years ago, says that Saval’s customer base includes more than 1400 independent, family-owned restaurants—an industry particularly hard hit by the pandemic. In the first month of shutdowns the company provided food to restaurant and food service workers who had been laid off or furloughed.

Now the organization has transitioned to working with non-profits, providing food products for those in need and also lending Saval drivers and trucks to make deliveries for programs such as Meals on Wheels. “It’s worked well, because the nonprofits have the systems in place to feed people, and we have food products and the logistics to get the food distributed efficiently,” says Saval.

“My job has always been to plan for the future,” he continues. “But in this environment, it’s about resilience and finding ways to get through this.”

Paul Saval
Civil Discourse

BY PAULA NOVASH

In a time when public discourse can be contentious and divisive, UB’s Hoffberger Center for Professional Ethics is a shining monument to vibrant discussion that moves our society forward. Since 1987, the Center has created a wide range of programs and activities that encourage us to think responsibly about the dilemmas and choices we face as professionals and global citizens.

Fred Guy, who retired in June after more than 25 years as executive director of the Center, says honest interactions that represent diverse views are crucial to our society.

“We should be promoting free, vibrant disagreement—that’s how we learn to think, and how we grow,” says Guy, who is an associate professor in the College of Arts and Sciences’ Division of Legal, Ethical and Historical Studies. “Reasonable and thoughtful people can have different opinions about issues, and both opinions can be valid.”

The Center provides a wide range of resources and activities, including seminars, teaching modules and research sponsorships for faculty, student internships and public programs. “We span professions and disciplines, from business and the law to art, digital media and literature,” Guy explains.

UB’s 2020 Ethics Bowl team, The Ethics Bowl WINNERS, in February the UB Ethics Bowl team made it to the quarterfinals at the 2020 Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl National Competition held in Atlanta, Georgia. Team captain Daniel Galli, along with Joyce-Rae Foster, B.A. ’19, Hugh Horko and J.C. Loyd, finished in the top eight of 36 teams, and were ranked number one overall in terms of most points and most wins. With this record, UB outranked participating teams that included Stanford University, Tufts University and the U.S. Naval Academy.

The Ethics Bowl is a signature contest, businesses often seek advice and input. Vanns Spices recently expanded and moved to a larger production facility, and the company reached out to UB’s Merrick School of Business. Vanns, founded in Baltimore in 1961, is a co-packager of premium spices, seasonings and flavorings that are distributed to restaurants, specialty stores and packaged food producers.

“Learning to take a position and support it forces us to think long and hard about an issue, and allows us to practice civility and consensus-building.”

FRED GUY

A Seasoned Approach

BY PAULA NOVASH

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“We appreciate the ways Vanns invested in our students, and happily the outcome proved to be a win-win.”

WILLIAM CARTER

Sawchuk, a member of the winning team, says the project was a valuable part of his MBA studies. "Working with a company goes beyond a practical application of your coursework," he explains. "I would urge the capstone class to continue with this type of project." The collaboration was positive for Vanns too, says Ciotti. "Working with the MBA capstone strategy class was not only a good intradivisional exercise, but also yielded actionable results to improve and focus the company’s strategic growth plan," he says. "We have already undertaken steps to implement a number of strategic elements from the winning student groups.

“I appreciate the ways Vanns invested in our students, and happily the outcome proved to be a win-win,” says Carter.

Paula Novash is managing editor of the magazine.

SUPPORT UB STUDENTS WITH AMAZON SMILE

There’s a simple way to benefit UB students when you shop through Amazon.com. Visit smile.amazon.com and select “University of Baltimore Foundation” from the list of eligible charities. When you shop through the smile.amazon.com portal, a portion of the sale of items designated as “Eligible for Amazon Smile donation” will be sent to the University of Baltimore Foundation at no cost to you.

Your Amazon Smile donations are combined with our Annual Fund to provide direct financial support to UB students. It’s another great way to boost the power of your purchases and contribute to a variety of programs that help students to a brighter future.

Paula Novash

Managing Editor

The Ethics Bowl is a signature activity of the Center. In these contests, four or five teams are given cases covering a broad range of issues. The teams develop a position and argument, and then compete in head-to-head rounds against teams from other schools. Each team has multiple opportunities to respond to competitors’ presentations, and the sudden-death rounds are arbitrated by qualified judges. Over the years the Center has hosted and sponsored ethics bowls at the university, community college and high school levels.

Ethics bowls help participants understand and appreciate opposing points of view, says Guy. “Learning to take a position and support it forces us to think long and hard about an issue, and allows us to practice civility and consensus-building. The students develop critical thinking skills and confidence—the activity benefits them tremendously.”

Guy, who now teaches one course a semester as an emeritus professor, calls being director of the Hoffberger Center “the highlight of my career. A lot of people can be lazy thinkers, substituting empty phrases for deep, well-considered opinions,” he continues. “UB has, and will continue to have, the ideal atmosphere for the type of discussion the Center facilitates.”

We appreciate the ways Vanns invested in our students, and happily the outcome proved to be a win-win.”

WILLIAM CARTER

UB’s 2020 Ethics Bowl team

The company’s leadership realized they needed some objective analysis about their business to extend and complement their existing strategy,” says Merrick School assistant professor William Carter. Carter guided his MBA students through their integrative capstone course in strategic management, helping them to learn how to make recommendations about organizational performance through case studies such as the Vanns project.

“Our students needed to understand the company’s situation and the factors involved in growth,” he continues. “Compiling and analyzing that data and using it to make recommendations is an excellent fit for a strategic management capstone.”

Carter conceived a competition in which three teams of students would develop presentations for Vanns. Initially Nick Ciotti, the company’s president, met with the class for a question and answer session. He also shared information about Vanns’ history, product list, financials and industry.

Participant Paul (PJ) Sawchuk, MBA ’20, was impressed with how transparent Vanns was willing to be. “The information Nick shared was typical of what you would usually have in a business case study,” he says. “But this felt more organic, because we had to develop the background and challenges by working hands-on with their organization. You could appreciate that these are real people with real-world issues.”

The class toured Vanns manufacturing facility in March. Sawchuk, who works as an IT consultant, says that the physical site visit added additional value. “Having the opportunity to ask questions while on site brought a reality to the experience and made the company’s story even more compelling,” he says.

When Merrick School classes went virtual due to COVID-19, the students shifted their team collaborations online. “People adjusted well—it made us operate efficiently,” says Sawchuk. The teams participated in practice sessions with Carter before the actual competition, conducted in May via Zoom. Judges included Carter, Merrick school professors Frank van Vliet, MBA ’08, and Von Straten, as well as Ciotti and two executives from Vanns. Vanns also provided cash awards to the top two teams.

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Winning the MIA capstone strategy class was not only a good intradivisional exercise, but also yielded actionable results to improve and focus the company’s strategic growth plan,” he says. “We have already undertaken steps to implement a number of strategic elements from the winning student groups.”

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D ONOR DOLLARS AT WORK
A world with menstrual justice is one that includes education about menstruation and normalizing menstruation.

MARGARET JOHNSON

Margaret Johnson was shocked to realize that by the time she was 15, Maryland prisons did not have free access to menstrual products. She saw this as a social justice issue, one she learned about through Reproductive Justice social justice issue, one she learned about through Reproductive Justice.

A lack of access to menstrual products, Johnson says, is woefully inadequate information about menstruation. "Menstruation has been hidden for ages," Johnson says, "and the flux of bleeding due to menstruation is something that happens to a huge portion of the population every month. People are not taught to be comfortable or to express their needs." Johnson says that education about menstruation can help young people to understand their bodies better and to express their needs.

"When I heard that they didn't have access to free menstrual products, I was shocked," Johnson says. "I thought that was ridiculous. Society takes people's bodies, and they have to go through this without proper education about it." Johnson says that she decided to take action to ensure that all menstruators, regardless of their income level, have access to free menstrual products.

"A world with menstrual justice is one that includes education about menstruation and normalizing menstruation," Johnson says. In 2018, Johnson co-founded the University of Baltimore's Bronfein Family Law Clinic, which provides pro bono legal services to people in need. Johnson says that the clinic has seen an increase in the number of cases related to menstrual justice.

Johnson says that she is proud of the progress that has been made since she first began advocating for menstrual justice. "I think that we've made a lot of progress in the last few years," Johnson says. "But there's still a long way to go." Johnson says that she is committed to continuing to fight for menstrual justice until everyone has access to free menstrual products.

Next Generation of Ingenuity

Michael Vandi, B.S. '20, "describes himself as a problem solver. And while a quick look at the applied information technology major's resume confirms this, he also recalls an example from his childhood. "I grew up in Sierra Leone and we didn't always have electricity," he explains. "We used LED lamps that broke a lot." From the time he was six years old, Vandi says, "I would open them up, look at the motherboards inside, and try to fix them." His focus shifted from hardware to software during high school, and after two years at the Limkokwing University of Creative Technology in Sierra Leone, he transferred to UB where his cousin, Anebashi Vandi, M.S. '19, also studied. "There is a real value at UB," observes Vandi. "When I check my email, there's always opportunities to get involved or to join new groups.

Last year, one of those opportunities was joining a tight-knit group of students called the "Astrobees," a team of students called the "Astrobees," who, with mentor professor Giovanni Vincenti, participated in NASA's annual Spacesuit Innovation Challenge competition, led by the USM COVID Research Task Force. Colleagues Alindi, Charles Chase, Stephanie Parker, and Michael Vandi, B.S. '20, collectively known as Team Breeze, collaborated remotely to develop the COVID-19 Information and Tracker (CIAT) App, the project, created by four UB students, was awarded one of six innovation prizes by the University System of Maryland.

"When I heard about current contact tracing apps developed by large tech companies, I realized that privacy by tracking their locations, I knew that this had to be a better way," says Vandi. "I joined the team because I wanted to show that contact tracing and protecting privacy can be done simultaneously.

Vandi looks forward to publishing a report from an academic trip back to Sierra Leone, where he researched challenges to implementing e-learning there. Ideally, he says, his future path will lead him back to his home country. "Maybe I will be able to return to Sierra Leone, if everything works out," he says. "Wherever I land, I'll be addressing bigger problems than the broken lamps of his childhood, and finding ways to make the world work better."
A Case for Gratitude
GEORGE HERMINA, J.D., ’90

BY CHRISTIANNA McCAUSSLAND

As an undergraduate in the early 1980s, George Hermina, J.D. ’90, studied the nascent field of computer science. Finding programming too solitary he obtained an MBA. Eventually his brother John, already an attorney, convinced him to become a lawyer. “I’ve always liked to learn,” Hermina says. “If I’d had someone to cover my expenses I would have been in school my entire life.”

What Hermina’s resume does not tell is the story of how inextricably bonded the Hermina brothers are by more than their law firm. They grew up in Egypt, where their father was an attorney, and moved to the United States together when they were young men. “John and I have depended on each other for a long time,” Hermina recalls. “That closeness has made us work well together.”

After working at a series of jobs to fund his MBA studies, Hermina became a financial analyst at the Maryland Public Service Commission. His brother went directly into law, eventually opening his own firm. Hermina jokes that his brother was “a great attorney but a lousy business manager,” so George agreed to join the firm and handle most of its administration. It was John who pushed Hermina to apply to the University of Baltimore School of Law. “My experience at UB was fantastic,” Hermina states. “The professors were so caring, so kind, so knowledgeable. My own brother John supports UB over his own alma mater. Even after graduation, when we ran into questions, we’d call a UB professor.”

The Hermina Law Group’s work naturally bent in an international direction given the brothers’ ability to speak Arabic and understand cultural context. Their breakthrough case was helping Egyptian authorities get compensation for port cranes damaged by an American vessel.

Today the practice is split between consumer protection class action litigation and work for foreign missions and embassies. The foreign mission work deals with issues related to immunity as well as helping embassies manage myriad administrative woes, like employee disputes. Hermina also assists students from overseas who find themselves on the wrong side of the law. “Our work has been limited both by the pandemic and by the current administration,” Hermina explains. “There are fewer students coming to the United States. With COVID-19, there’s not a lot of trade going on and embassies are closed.” He adds that many civil cases have been sidelined while pandemic-embattled courts focus on other priorities.

Hermina has plenty to keep him busy. He’s a volunteer mediator, an adjunct professor at Thomas Jefferson and Stevenson universities, and serves on both Kurt Schmoke’s President’s Council and the law school’s Dean’s Development Circle. “I truly love UB and it has given me so much. I feel I should give at least some of my time and money to the school,” he says.

Despite the volatility in the United States today, Hermina says that, “Even with the problems we have, this is the kinder place on earth as far as I’m concerned.” His own story is sprinkled with tales of people helping him out when he needed it most. “I think that if you have a good heart, things will work out. It’s amazing how things worked out for me against tremendous odds.”

Christianna McCausland is a writer based in Baltimore.

RIGHT: George Hermina at his Fulton, Maryland home.
FEATURE STORY 2020

REFLECTIONS ON AN EXTRAORDINARY TIME

The pandemic has transformed our lives in myriad ways. Our personal and professional routines have changed. We’ve had to find creative ways to work together and remain connected to friends and loved ones. We are learning to nurture ourselves differently. And all of these shifts may be causing us to explore new ideas and gain new insights.

From summer into early fall, we interviewed nine members of the UB community about how they are doing and what they are thinking about. Here we share their reflections on a fascinating, uncertain and inspiring time.

IN THIS MOMENT

INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED AND EDITED BY PAULA NOVASH
PHOTOGRAPHY BY CHRIS MYERS

To me, it’s a time for creativity. The more we push the boundaries in all realms, the more we’re able to accomplish.

MATT MICHAEL
In March my husband was in California for a new job— he is a disability rights advocate—and our sons were there as well. I expected to join him after the spring semester. When it looked like we might be staying at home, he wanted me to consider getting in the car with the dog and driving West. And I said, oh, the university is only closed for two weeks and then I’ll need to be back in class. Oh well. Consistently we had a friend staying with us, and he and his daughter became my quarantine companions until I left for California this summer.

Things have changed so much, so quickly. I’ve been working on the second edition of my book Introduction to Public History: Interpreting the Past, Engaging Audiences. In the first edition, there’s a section about controversial monuments, with a commission considering what to do with them. Now all of those monuments in Baltimore have come down. And several colleagues and I designed a lecture called Decline by Dung, on the history of structural racism in Baltimore City. We delivered it more than 75 times, and to many people “structural racism” was an unfamiliar term—it was hard for people to accept and understand the history behind it. But now people are much more aware. We’re overturning so much of what we used to think about our society.

Also, seeing a new acceptance of ideas that have been out there for decades is fascinating. The College of Public Affairs recently commemorated the 50th anniversary of the student-led civil rights effort in Baltimore. One of the ideas of the campaign was that everyone would get a guaranteed income, and most people were skeptical. And then Andrew Yang proposed that during the presidential campaign, and it was recently instituted in the form of extra unemployment benefits.

I also worked on the Baltimore 68 project, a large collaborative public history archive that documents and examines a time of greatest unrest in the city. I think it’s important to note that for many years in schools like UB, scholars and students have been doing the research to step back and see the context of these problems.

So when people ask, how did we get here, what’s the history, the research is there.

It’s hopeful to me that people are thinking differently about myriad problems that have been revealed in this time, and also being protective of themselves and others, and generous. We’ve all probably bad times when we thought, I can’t do this. But we can. It’s an opportunity to realize, here’s a whole new thing we never thought we would exist.

Lady Brion, M.F.A. ’18, is an activist, an advocate and an internationally recognized spoken word poet. She is the cultural curator for Leaders of A Beautiful Struggle, a grassroots think tank that promotes the public policy interests of Black people, as well as executive director of the Pennsylvania Avenue Black Arts and Entertainment District revitalization project. Brion also works with Dewmore Baltimore, a nonprofit that uses art as a tool to increase civic engagement in marginalized communities throughout Baltimore.

I’m an introvert, but I miss social interaction. I am super excited to be able to work in a coffee shop again. I don’t know why it makes me so productive, but it does. I also miss in-person arts performances, the open mic scene. And I had planned a lot of traveling this year—I’m turning 50 and it was a present to myself. Next year, I hope.

I was always an expressive young person and injustices didn’t sit well with me. I come from a family of preachers. My Dad was politically astute and militarily spirited. We were very close and had a lot of deep conversations, and he was my biggest fan. If I showed him a bad poem he would say it was the best in the universe. Adversity is part of the experience of being a Black woman in America. I do feel endangered during these times, because you can’t sit silent and be asleep. My creativity is often connected to an event, something I learn, something I’m moved by, or that’s happening in my space. So there’s a certain activation that happens as a result of all that’s going on.

The current conversations about Black Lives Matter have long been necessary and now are happening deeply and consistently. I think there are a few things contributing to a tipping point. Before, people would often discredit the rambunctious and radical, but it does effectively disrupt so that people stop and take notice. Right now everything feels disrupted from the pandemic, so maybe people are more ready to listen.

Second, technology has us sharing information in such a rapid, in depth way, it’s piercing more house- holds and reaching more ears. Also, it’s a moment when it is harder to write off something and say it’s not connected to you. COVID affects everyone, nobody is exempt, and that has shifted people’s emotions and opened hearts and minds. Without that, this movement wouldn’t have happened.

One thing that’s okay is all of these opportunities for connecting virtually and community building. With everything digital it’s easy to move beyond the wall, but a few links. I used to travel to different places—I’ve been to Ghana, London and other locations—for poetry compe- titions, and I miss that. But now there are lots of online platforms with mostly free links. You feel like you have access to celebrities in the poetry community and beyond.

And it is good to see the outpouring and redirecting of resources to support smaller Black organizations. We’ve lost some opportunities, but they are replaced by things we couldn’t have anticipated.

I’m motivated by the resilience of people who are still getting up and working, like in the revitalization of the Black Arts District project (blackartsdistrict.org). If they are making things happen, I know I can do the same.

David J. Smith, J.D. ’84, has more than 30 years’ experience in fields that include career education, law, peacebuilding, humanitarian education, conflict resolution, community organizing and civil and global education. He is the founder of the nonprofit Forage Center for Peacebuilding and Humanitarian Education and has appeared in a variety of media outlets such as NBC’s Today Show.

We live in a multicultural community in Rockville—our neighbors are from El Salvador, Bangladesh, Camer- oon—and in this time, I am valuing that more than ever. Things have changed so much, so quickly. I’ve been getting up and working, like in the revitalization of the Baltimore County Public Library system. We’ve lost some opportunities, but they are replaced by things we couldn’t have anticipated.

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I’m motivated by the resilience of people who are still getting up and working, like in the revitalization of the Black Arts District project (blackartsdistrict.org). If they are making things happen, I know I can do the same.
There are many opportunities to have influence now, where someone needs help and I am able to provide it.

DALYA ATTAR

In my work I often see that the best way to move forward is to find things that you both can relate to. The starting point can be very basic—nearing that someone is cooking smells good, or talking about each others’ kids. We are often afraid to have conversations about big issues or divisions. I often tell people to put others’ kids. We are often afraid to have conversations about big issues or divisions. I often tell people to put

F. MICHAEL HIGGINBOTHAM has been a professor of law at UB for more than 30 years. He is the author of books that include Racial America, and is a frequent contributor to various media outlets such as CNN.

I think sometimes we expect the grand thing to happen, but it’s the little incremental things we have to do. And I’m hopeful we can do it—but it’s going to be a marathon. It’s shifting to be the learner rather than the teacher, stepping back and saying, I don’t know, but I’m ready to listen and learn.

I recently finished the fifth edition of my textbook on race law. So much has occurred in the last four years in race relations, and COVID-19 has highlighted the costs of not doing anything about injustices. Clearly this is our time to do something, to be working on problems and seeing some solutions. Seeing people of all colors at the protest says to me that we are ready for change.

It’s an interesting time to be a constitutional law professor—so many issues around the constitution and federalism have come up in the last few years. Going forward we need a commitment to legislation, and then I want to see the courts interpret these laws in ways that allow for adequate remedies to be provided. Many laws that provide vital protections, like the Voting Rights Act, have been undermined by recent decisions, and that is troubling.

My uncle, A. Leon Higginbotham, who passed away in 1998, was a civil rights activist and judge on the United States Court of Appeals. He was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom. In 1997 he published an open letter to Justice Clarence Thomas in the University of Pennsylvania Law Review, expressing his disappointment that Justice Thomas would turn his back on a century of racial struggle. I worked closely with my uncle on race and equality issues. My father, who is 95, recently said to me, Isn’t it time for a letter from heaven? So I’m working on a public letter in my uncle’s voice to President Trump, addressing race relations and race equality.

I tell my students they are so fortunate. Having a license to practice law is a great opportunity because you’re not only on the playing field, you can help to make the rules. I see that passion to make a difference in our communities. I see that passion to make a difference in our communities. I see that passion to make a difference in our communities.

I remind myself that I’m not the only one trying to be a wife, mother and teacher along with my jobs as a legislator and attorney. I remember when I was in college and law school I was working full-time and my children were younger, and I can’t say I’m busier now. If I could do that, I can do this. But it is a demanding time.

Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg is a role model for me. She worked all her life to ensure women can have just as much in life as men. As she so eloquently put it, “Women belong in all places where decisions are being made. It shouldn’t be that women are the exception.” May her memory be a blessing.

The legislature, constituent issues and the need for assistance are a lot. I love how I can make a difference for people. When I was very young, I used to watch the news and be so upset at injustices I would cry. I used to think, something has got to change. There are many opportunities to have influence now, where someone needs help and I am able to provide it. My district, the 41st, is very culturally diverse. I’m seeing that we’re all in this together. The ways neighbors are helping neighbors is inspiring. There is a Jewish concept of social justice, TikkuM Olam, which means “repair the world.” To me, it says that we have a responsibility to the rest of humanity—the reasons we are here are not just about us. Respect for others was

DALYA ATTAR, B.S.’11, represents Baltimore’s 41st District in the Maryland House of Delegates. Attar, who is also an associate state’s attorney for Baltimore City, is the first Orthodox Jewish woman to serve in that legislative body.

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KURT SCHMOKE

ENRICHMENT/ DISTRACTIONS

SCHMOKE: This time has allowed me to read eclectically. I’ve gone from Yale professor Frank Snowden’s Epidemics and Society: From The Black Death to the Present to a Christopher Buckley satire on Russian Great Again. Now I’m reading Wade Morris’s Five Days: The Fiery Reckoning of an American City, about the uprising in Baltimore after the death of Freddie Gray.

I watched the movie Harriet and loved it. I would play the theme song, Stand Up, on repeat all day if my wife would let me! And we’ve both enjoyed the wife would let me! And we’ve both enjoyed the

Moore’s Buckle satire to a Christopher Buckley satire on Russian Great Again.

One good thing is I’m spending more time with my family. Meeting my wife Katherine and my son Gregory about their concerns personally and professionally. I do miss the interaction with people on campus but recognize the value now not as before, of a campus experience. I know our staff and faculty are providing an excellent academic experience for our students, but I do not underestimate the intangibles that come from interacting with people on campus, in a campus setting.

Like everyone in this time I experience lows and highs, such as the loss of Floyd’s death, and John Lewis’s inspirational message to us on his passing. His Op-Ed is one of the great pieces of literature. I believe it is our duty to reveal around the慈善s to the country that an elected official has ever inspired. One thing that is even clearer to me is how important language is, because I see in national debates how language can be distorted to lead people as distractive ways. And language can also be used to inspire people to act. Lewis’s message is a ray of light in darkness.

I believe that the government leaders and the health situation improves soon so that we can get back to some form of classes on campus, or even some sort of hybrid model. And I hope that debate will evolve around substantive issues to help health advice determining how we can proceed safely, and so that we can get back to some form of classes on campus.

I travel extensively for conferences and collaborative research opportunities. In January I took 13 UB students to Ghana to work with start-ups. In February, I did a week-long visiting professorship in Brazil, and in March I went to Morocco and France to give a couple of invited talks. I landed in the United States on March 13, and since then I have been at home with my wife and children, who are 7 and 11. Today, though, I’ve had meetings with colleagues on Brazil, Egypt and Italy.

This new cyberphysical reality is enabling us to reimagine how we do things. For example, we just created a new version of our Global Field Study. For years I have led UB students to work with companies on real-world businesses challenges. This year the program will be virtual. Starting in January our students will connect to multinational teams and work as consultants to companies in Africa, Europe and South America.

Our focus will be on businesses with an ecosystem provides.

They are aware of the challenges of the pandemic.

The team meets online twice a week to review COVID-19 updates, and we are in a rhythm. We instituted an Incident Command Structure to support the COVID-19 response and it has provided better understanding of each other’s work styles and how we all work together. It’s a challenging time but we are finding ways to help support residents and each other.

There have been many changes to operations. We run senior centers and that was one of the first patient-facing services that we had to re-think, to protect those older adults. Many of the centers served as sites where they came together to eat, and we had to transition to all meal delivery. And because we know that isolation can also be devastating, we expanded our Maryland Access Point call center to older adults and their caregivers can call and be connected to people and other resources.

What has been hard is that for weeks, all of my dreams were about working with UB students to work to the actual impact of technology to society. We must decide what risks we are willing to take in order to benefit from the possibilities that this incredible digital ecosystem provides.

LETITIA DZIRASA: We just watched Mindy Kaling’s Never Have I Ever. It’s a young woman’s coming of age story, funny but also deep. And I’m a big Horace and ragazza fan, so I am reading Susanne Collins’ prequel, The Boltons, Snegdurs and Snakes. I ordered an air fryer to experiment with different ways of cooking. I also learned to cut my own hair during quarantine!
TO SAY THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC has upended higher education is an understatement. Last spring, colleges and universities across the United States scrambled to move classes online as campuses were shut down to prevent the spread of the virus. Then, with fall rapidly approaching and the pandemic nowhere near under control, schools were faced with difficult decisions.

A NEW VIRTUAL REALITY

ONLINE LEARNING IN A TIME OF CHANGE

BY ABIGAIL GREEN, M.A.’01 • ILLUSTRATION BY RICHARD MIA
According to data compiled by the Chronicle of Higher Education and Davidson College’s College Crisis Initiative on the reopening plans for nearly 3,000 institutions, 10 percent planned to resume classes primarily or fully online. Just under 24 percent planned to go back primarily or fully in person, and 26 percent were still making a decision as of mid-August. Umb is among those institutions holding classes entirely online for the Fall 2020 semester. UB’s classes are a mix of synchronous instruction—i.e., real-time, live teaching—and asynchronous instruction, pre-recorded classes that students can access at any time.

The university was an early adopter of online learning—UB’s Merrick School of Business launched the First Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business International (AACSB-accredited, open-enrollment online MBA in 1999. AACSB accreditation signifies that a business school has passed rigorous quality standards for education; fewer than 5 percent of business schools worldwide achieve the designation.) In 2020, for the ninth consecutive year, U.S. News and World Report ranked UB’s online MBA as a top program of its kind nationally. University-wide, UB offers five fully online degree programs in addition to several online courses across its 70+ undergraduate, graduate, law and doctoral programs and certificates.

The SCHOOL OF LAW GOES ONLINE FOR THE FIRST TIME Even with its history of being ahead of the curve when it comes to online learning, UB faced some challenges this fall. In particular, the School of Law was entering uncharted territory. “It’s really hard to know where the curve is,” says law professor William Hubbard. Hubbard, who is also director of UB’s Center for the Law of Intellectual Property and Technology, had not taught any online classes prior to the pandemic. He says that law schools in general have been slow to embrace online learning.

Much of that is because the practice of law has not had a big presence online. For example, “doing a Zoom deposition would have been shocking a year ago. And now it’s commonplace,” Hubbard says. Given the reduction in travel expenditures and the ease of depositing witness notes located anywhere, he thinks that going forward more of the practice of law will be done remotely.

The field of law has been reluctant to embrace some aspects of technology for a long time, he adds. Both lawyers in the courtroom and professors in the classroom, says Hubbard, “generally believe that we’re more persuasive in person.” And for Hubbard, asynchronous teaching presents some challenges. “Because I was a litigator, I like the give and take,” he says. “I like being able to read my audience as I am going. I don’t deliver the same approach.”

“I don’t deliver the same approach. And so I prefer the synchronous approach.”

STUDENT ORIENTATION GOES VIRTUAL For Jasmine Brown, a senior information technology major at UB, this is her second year as an orientation leader—but her first year doing it virtually.

Normally, she would be in charge of two groups of freshmen, transfer and graduate students, guiding them through campus tours, financial aid information sessions and opportunities to get involved at UB. This year looks a lot different: She and her fellow virtual orientation leaders will discuss Zoom etiquette, how students can contact offices virtually and how to use the UB Portal.

“As treasurer for the student events board, my role is to make sure the first event of Fall 2020, karaoke night on September 1, which took place on Zoom. “We want students to still feel like they’re getting that warm welcome to campus.”

Brown advises incoming UB students to keep an open mind. “We can still do the same things we’d normally do on campus,” she says. “We’re just in a different setting.”

As treasurer for the student events board, Brown helped plan the first event of Fall 2020, karaoke night on September 1, which took place on Zoom. “We want students to still feel like they’re getting that warm welcome to campus.”

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SUPPORTING STUDENT SUCCESS Several UB organizations provided our students with critical assistance that allowed them to continue to thrive academically during the pandemic.

The Student Emergency Assistance Fund was initiated by the Office of Student Services, and is managed by the University of Baltimore Foundation. More than $239,000 has been contributed by the UB community to provide for needs such as housing and utilities, food and medications, and Internet services. The fund also helped students bridge financial gaps caused by loss of employment.

The University of Baltimore Foundation created a $100,000 fund for technology assistance as UB moved to online learning in March. The fund provided essential tools such as laptops and webcams, and also helped to design virtual learning programs for students in the simulation and design program.

And the Philip E. & Carol K. Ratcliffe Foundation authorized $25,000 in emergency funding to help UB’s Ratcliffe Fellows continue their education in the Entrepreneurship program.

“I like being able to read my audience as I am going. I don’t deliver the same approach. And so I prefer the synchronous approach.”

WILLIAM HUBBARD

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In January, Buthaina Shukri, M.S. ’00 retired from a 20-plus year career in higher education. “I had planned a family trip to the Galapagos Islands,” she says. “But, pandemic.” Cancelling the trip was disappointing but Shukri is looking forward to her “third act” as assistant to the president at the Community Action Council of Howard County. “It’s the best of all possible worlds, meaningful part time work at a nonprofit in my community,” she says.

Shukri has successfully navigated a variety of transitions, from coming to the United States at age 5 to living internationally. Her Iraqi father and British mother met when her father attended university in London. Shukri was born in Germany while her father was in medical school, and the family moved to Austria where he continued his studies. “My socially activist father was nearing graduation and did not want to return to the increasingly oppressive atmosphere in Iraq,” she says. “My parents had become good friends with a couple from Newton, Massachusetts, who offered to sponsor our family to emigrate. We became U.S. citizens in 1972.”

Shukri attended college in New York and lived in California before moving to Berlin, then part of West Germany, where her first husband was stationed with the U.S. Army. “We saw the Wall come down,” she recalls. The couple moved to Seoul, South Korea where Shukri began her career as a job assistance counselor. “I worked with U.S. military personnel when the armed services were being downsized,” she explains. “From the beginning I enjoyed the relationship building.”

Upon returning to the States, Shukri took a position as UB’s assistant director of Career Development and Cooperative Education. The area evolved into The Career Center, and she eventually became its director and also completed her UB master’s degree. “I was always in awe of the drive and resilience of UB students,” she recalls. “I remember a mentor who would bring her 3-year-old to our meetings after she’d worked all day and before her finance class. One employer said to me, ‘I know your students aren’t going to grow up on my time and money—they know who they are and are going to be successful.’”

After what she calls “nine wonderful, fulfilling, stimulating, and growth-filled years,” Shukri opened a private practice in career counseling, which allowed her to be more available to her daughter Jessica, then in high school. She returned to UB as publications manager for the School of Law and several years later moved on to work in alumni relations and development at The George Washington University.

“I met so many donors who came from unusual or humble beginnings, who were determined to prevail no matter what. Often they would credit an institution or professor who started them on a path. It’s great when you can share those stories.”

Recently Shukri and her husband Jeffrey Boutwell trained as contact tracers, helping health departments find and inform people who have been exposed to someone with a positive COVID-19 status. Shukri also looks forward to making a difference in her newest role at the Community Action Council, which provides food and housing assistance, including help with energy and weatherization needs, as well as early childhood education resources, to lower-income residents of Howard County.

Shukri became a grandmother in September 2019. “I come from a tiny nuclear family and now I want to gather memories for my grandson Jack,” she explains. Besides recording family history, a longtime interest, she’s writing letters and postcards to Jack: “It’s a way to capture the experience of his family living in this extraordinary time.”

Paula Novash is managing editor of the magazine.

Celebrating Every Chapter
BUTHAINA SHUKRI, M.S. ’00

BY PAULA NOVASH

BIO
BUTHAINA SHUKRI
• M.S., University of Baltimore
• Career counselor and alumni relations and development professional
• Assistant to the President, Community Action Council of Howard County
• Former director of UB’s Career Center and manager of publications for the School of Law

CONNECTED
BUTHAINA SHUKRI

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First and Goals
VERLANDO BROWN, M.S. ’15
BY ABIGAIL GREEN, M.A. ’01

Sometimes all it takes is one person to encourage you to go for your goals. Verlando Brown, M.S. ’15, had several people supporting him during key moments in his life, including a high school guidance counselor, a UB admissions devotee and former First Lady Michelle Obama. And now, he’s become that encouraging person for other first-generation college students.

Growing up in West Baltimore in a single-parent household, Brown credits his mom for keeping him in school. “My mother was a big proponent for education,” he says. “I was not out in the street, selling drugs or going to jail.”

Brown attended Frederick Douglass High School. “It was rough,” he says, but it was also where his guidance counselor sparked his interest in higher education. “She said, ‘I believe in you, you are smart enough. I know for sure you can make it through college,’” he recalls. “Those were some really powerful words.”

Brown was accepted to Towson University in 2006. It was his first time living on his own, and like many students in his situation, he struggled at first. Statistics show that one-third of first-generation college students drop out within three years. Common issues include “impostor syndrome,” or feeling like you don’t belong, and balancing work and school, since many of these students must work one or more jobs outside of class.

Brown advises first-generation college students to join at least one organization or club to get involved, even if they’re shy. “Trust me, I know how it feels. But just try to introduce yourself. People will help you and be there for you,” he says.

In fact, he adds, he came close to dropping out his first year at Towson. “What stopped me was the support system that I was able to find and create. Those people said, ‘We’re not going to let you give up on yourself’.” Brown would like to see better mental health support for first-generation college students, to help them avoid struggling as much as he did.

Seeking better job opportunities after attending Towson, Brown found himself on UB’s website. “When I read about the Human Services Administration program, I loved it. And UB as an institution, something grabbed me about how the school would help you apply what you learned in the classroom to the real world,” he says. A meeting with the graduate admissions director, who encouraged him and even waived the application fee, sealed the deal. “At UB, I felt like I mattered,” says Brown.

In an effort to support his peers, Brown created an event called First-Gen Baltimore. At First-Gen, Brown made another fateful connection: he enticed Eric Waldo, executive director of Michelle Obama’s Reach Higher initiative, to be the evening’s keynote speaker. “Eric said he was really impressed and he invited me to the White House to meet the First Lady,” says Brown. Waldo also connected him with Forbes, and Brown has since written several articles for their website.

In Washington, D.C., Brown shared his story with students from around the country. When he was introduced to Mrs. Obama, “she gave me a big hug,” says Brown. “It was absolutely amazing.” And when he graduated from UB with his master’s degree, he received a personalized letter of congratulations from then-President Barack Obama.

Brown has worked at several nonprofits including Thread, Inc., an organization that links Baltimore youth with volunteers to build supportive relationships. Now he is an operations assistant at the Baltimore City Mayor’s Office of Children and Family Success. In this pandemic year, he fields more requests for assistance than ever. “We’re doing the best we can to help people,” says Brown. Of UB, he says, “The university really wants you to learn, and really wants you to make a difference in people’s lives, in the city, the state and this country.” And Brown, by all measures, is doing just that.

Abigail Green, M.A. ’01, is a writer based in Baltimore.

“VERLANDO BROWN
• M.S., University of Baltimore
• Operations Assistant at Baltimore Mayor’s Office of Children and Family Success
• Founder of First-Gen Baltimore
• Thought Partner, Michelle Obama’s Reach Higher Initiative

The university really wants you to learn, and really wants you to make a difference in people’s lives, in the city, the state and this country.”
Williams Ferguson, B.S. ’69, joined the Easterseals Delaware & Engineers in Cleveland and also as a member of the United Soccer Association of America (the Delaware Institute of Certified Public Accountants). His experience officer for Under Armour, named to the new position of chief development and chief of staff for the National Mediation Board as of March. He has worked as a lecturer at the Howard University School of Law in Washington, D.C., since 2019. Patricia M. Muhammad, J.D. ’00, received the Executive Director’s Award from Maryland Legal Aid at the 2019 Equal Justice Awards Breakfast in July. She has been named as a lecturer at the Howard University School of Law in Washington, D.C., since 2019.

The Office of Alumni Relations invites you to connect with fellow UB alumni, faculty and staff in a virtual community of book lovers. Participants contribute to book discussions and network through a private online forum. Joining is completely free; you just have to have a copy of the book to enjoy.

We’d love to see your new books and will pass along your suggestions. Our first selection is Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption, by Bryan Stevenson. Created in partnership with Professional Book Clubs, a book club management service, this initiative was launched thanks to a grant from Alumni Association-International. For more information, visit www.pbc.org/ubalt.

Richard B. Benenson, MBA ’95, began his term in March as managing partner with Rosenberg Hayn Furber Shluck.

Michael J. Marzulla, J.D. ’98, and Nicole Hewitt, J.D. ’99, became the heads of the Howard County (Maryland) Office of Human Rights in June.

Robert D. Matthews, B.S. ’98, was named vice president for workforce development and chief of staff for Euton Unidos in March.

Jessica duPloof, J.D. ’99, received the Easterner’s Distinguished Award from Maryland Legal Aid at the 2019 Equal Justice Awards Breakfast in July. She has been named as an equal opportunity manager at the National Automotive Manufacturers and Space Administration in April.

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Astrid Schmidt-King, J.D. ’02, executive in residence and director of the international business program at Loyola University Maryland, founded School of Business, was named a 2020 Jelove Fellow by the World Trade Center Institute for the cohort in October 2019. She participated in the Emerging and Developing Global Executives Program to learn more about key global business issues, relationships and more.

Kendra J. Vann, J.D. ’05, was appointed community representative for the Howard County (Maryland) Public School System in July 2019.

Mary E. Lamanah, M.A. ’03, joined UHealth and the University of Florida (Florida) Miller School of Medicine as chief marketing and communications officer in June 2019.

Olmi A. Portillo, B.S. ’05, and Jimena Portillo, B.S. ’05, opened the second location of their restaurant, Taco Love Grill, in the Cross Street Market in Baltimore’s Federal Hill neighborhood in August 2019.

Wenna B. Snowdy, J.D. ’03, was selected in March by Maryland Governor Larry Hogan to serve as an associate judge for the District Court of Maryland, District 5, Prince George’s County.

Horten, M.A. ’04, was appointed deputy attorney general for the Office of the Attorney General for the Commonwealth of Virginia, as senior counsel in July 2019.

Kelly A. Powers, J.D. ’06, was awarded the 2019 Federal Bench Exceptional Service Award in November 2019 for her work with children and parents. Particularly noted was her dedication, expertise and service to the Court in handling cases under the 1980 Hague Abduction Convention.

Daniel A. Blank, B.A. ’07, ’09, named a partnership in Kirk in September 2019 to serve as the partner’s Compensation Advisory.

Monique Y. Cox, M.A. ’08, was appointed in November 2019 as executive director for the Baltimore region of the Urban Alliance. She leads its strategy, development and operations.

Jennifer L. McNulty, J.D. ’05, was confirmed as associate justice of the Massachusetts Superior Court in January 2020.

Jason R. Porter, J.D. ’05, became the assistant attorney general in the Office of the Attorney General for Maryland in January.


Rebekah L. Knouse Perillo, MBA ’06, was inducted into the Howard County Woman’s Athletics Hall of Fame in February. She and her sister were honored for their achievements on the tennis court as students at Centennial High School in Ellicott City, Maryland.

Duncan S. Keit, J.D. ’04, joined Albers & Associates in March.

Shalay S. Massey, B.S. ’06, J.D. ’15, joined the family law practice at Turnbull Nicholas & Sanders as an associate in February.

Georgette D. Kiber, MBA ’04, operating executive with the Carlyle Group was named to the NCR Corporation Board of Directors. NCR Corporation is a software- and services-led enterprise provider for the financial, retail and hospitality industries.

Andrew S. Rapaport, J.D. ’04, was named by Maryland Governor Larry Hogan in October 2019 to serve as judicial appointee for the Calverton Circuit Court.

Aaron W. Anderson, M.A. ’05, was appointed by Illinois Governor J.B. Pritzker in September 2019 to serve as the state’s Workers’ Compensation Administrator.

Scarlett M. Corso, B.A. ’07, J.D. ’10, rejoined the liability team in the Baltimore office of Franklin & Porcelli in March. She previously held positions with The Transfers Indemnity Company and Gilman & Bedigian, LLC.

Kimberly H. Heald, J.D. ’07, general counsel for The Children’s Guild Alliance was elected in January as secretary of the board of directors for the National Association of Children’s Guilds Joint Council in August 2019.

Erich M. Bean, J.D. ’08, was named by Maryland Governor Larry Hogan in November as general counsel for the Allegheny County District Court.

Lauren D. Benjamin, J.D. ’08, an attorney in the Department of Justice at the American Antiquarian Society in Worcester, Massachusetts, was named in May 2019.

John P. Maloney, J.D. ’11, joined Sykes Group in Los Angeles, California, as general counsel in September 2019. He is experienced in litigating cannabis startups with strategic planning and navigating complex and dynamic environments.

Jessica L. Phillips, J.D. ’11, joined Malo Premo, LLP, in Santa Barbara, California, in September 2019. She specializes in personal injury, including automobile accidents, product liability, wrongful death, toxic tort, and sudden and catastrophic injuries.

Dyotrina L. Reed, M.A. ’11, ’13, was named assistant director of government relations for the Maryland Insurance Administration in January.

Takia R. Ross, B.A. ’15, was named one of The Baltimore Sun’s 20 Women for 2019.

Kevin D. Habbel, MBA ’09, was promoted to a director at the SC&H Group, leading organizations in the execution of business strategies and deployment of innovative solutions.

Thomas E. Miller, J.D. ’09, was named Nixon Law Group, PLLC, a leading law firm in Baltimore, Virginia, as counsel in July 2019.

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Georgette D. Kiber, MBA ’04, operating executive with the Carlyle Group was named to the NCR Corporation Board of Directors. NCR Corporation is a software- and services-led enterprise provider for the financial, retail and hospitality industries.

Andrew S. Rapaport, J.D. ’04, was named by Maryland Governor Larry Hogan in October 2019 to serve as judicial appointee for the Calverton Circuit Court.

Aaron W. Anderson, M.A. ’05, was appointed by Illinois Governor J.B. Pritzker in September 2019 to serve as the state’s Workers’ Compensation Administrator.

Scarlett M. Corso, B.A. ’07, J.D. ’10, rejoined the liability team in the Baltimore office of Franklin & Porcelli in March. She previously held positions with The Transfers Indemnity Company and Gilman & Bedigian, LLC.

Kimberly H. Heald, J.D. ’07, general counsel for The Children’s Guild Alliance was elected in January as secretary of the board of directors for the National Association of Children’s Guilds Joint Council in August 2019.

Erich M. Bean, J.D. ’08, was named by Maryland Governor Larry Hogan in November as general counsel for the Allegheny County District Court.

Lauren D. Benjamin, J.D. ’08, an attorney in the Department of Justice at the American Antiquarian Society in Worcester, Massachusetts, was named in May 2019.

John P. Maloney, J.D. ’11, joined Sykes Group in Los Angeles, California, as general counsel in September 2019. He is experienced in litigating cannabis startups with strategic planning and navigating complex and dynamic environments.

Jessica L. Phillips, J.D. ’11, joined Malo Premo, LLP, in Santa Barbara, California, in September 2019. She specializes in personal injury, including automobile accidents, product liability, wrongful death, toxic tort, and sudden and catastrophic injuries.

Dyotrina L. Reed, M.A. ’11, ’13, was named assistant director of government relations for the Maryland Insurance Administration in January.

Takia R. Ross, B.A. ’15, was named one of The Baltimore Sun’s 20 Women for 2019.

Matthew J. Rudy, J.D. ’11, joined the Baltimore office of Cordell & Cordell in August 2019 as a senior litigation attorney.

Lauren B. Zagler, J.D. ’11, was appointed by Maryland Governor Larry Hogan in December 2019 to serve on the Baltimore Park Advisory Council.

Matthew P. Burkett, MBA ’12, is the chief financial officer at FUN. com in North Mankato, Minnesota, which is the largest online retailer of Halloween costumes and novelty collectible goods. He joined the company in June 2019.

Robin Holmes, B.A. ’12, founder of Donde’s Deli, received the Entrepreneur of the Year Award from SCORE Greater Baltimore in September 2019. SCORE is a nonprofit that supports the growth of entrepreneurs and small businesses.

James R. Jefferson, J.D. ’12, joined the Baltimore office of Whitten, Balch & Parnell as an associate in August 2019.

Aditya S. Raval, MBA ’12, joined ClearOne Advantage in November as marketing director. He is responsible for brand management, marketing initiatives, digital engagement and new customer growth.

Michael Sappertsne, M.S. ’12, was appointed to assure manager in February for Bowen, Supprensen & Friedland, LLP, a business consulting and accounting firm.

Brian C. Thompson, J.D. ’12, was promoted in April to associate general counsel at Merkle in Columbia, Maryland.

Lafontaine E. Oliver, MBA ’13, became president and general manager of WYPR-FM 88.1, the National Public Radio station serving Baltimore and the state of Maryland, in July 2019.
David Chiodaroli, B.A. ’18, writes for Screen Rant, an online entertainment news site that features news and commentary on television, films, and video games and film theories.

Brianna Billups, B.S. ’18, joined the workers’ compensation group at Goldberg Segalla in September 2019.

Lindsey Eldridge, M.P.A. ’19, joined the workers’ compensation group at Goldberg Segalla in February as the workers’ compensation group at Goldberg Segalla.

Matthew T. West, J.D. ’18, welcomes a daughter, Cross, on June 2019.

John F. Simanski III, J.D. ’18, welcomes twin boys, Malachi and Max, on June 2019.

Christopher M. Craig, B.A. ’04, M.A. ’11, and Courtney L. Craig, B.S. ’12, welcomed their twins, Mathew Jacob and Brian Andrew, on February 18.

Christopher Pineda, B.A. ’12, MBA ’20, became the head of the Bel Air Dominoes Affiliation in July 2019.

Felicity K. Ratcliff, an associate at Goldberg Segalla, co-authored an article on worksite violence in the November issue of the Northern Virginia Business Journal.

Benjamin H. Seider, J.D. ’17, serves as the department’s acting community outreach coordinator.

Lindsey Eldridge, M.P.A. ’19, joined the workers’ compensation group at Goldberg Segalla.

Christopher Pineda in February as the workers’ compensation group at Goldberg Segalla.

He and his wife, Brittany Thompson Pineda, B.A. ’18, also welcomed their daughter, Abigail Grace, on February 18.

Stephanie A. Miller, M.S. ’08, is the University of Baltimore’s Ratcliffe Entrepreneurship Fellows Program and for her business, Fully Grown, an organic line of fruit snacks whose profits support the University of Baltimore’s Ratcliffe Entrepreneurship Fellows Program and for her business, Fully Grown, an organic line of fruit snacks whose profits support the University of Baltimore’s Ratcliffe Entrepreneurship Fellows Program.

Carol W. Allen, B.S. ’73, welcomed a daughter, Cross, on June 2019.

John F. McClellan, LL.B. ’68, welcomed a daughter, Cross, on June 2019.

James L. Carls, B.S. ’76, welcomed a daughter, Cross, on June 2019.

Lindsey Eldridge, M.P.A. ’19, joined the workers’ compensation group at Goldberg Segalla.

Patrick J. Barrett, B.S. ’99, welcomed twin boys, Matthew Jacob and Brian Andrew, on February 18.

Robert H. Bates, LL.B. ’88, welcomed twin boys, Matthew Jacob and Brian Andrew, on February 18.

Kevin G. Wolters, B.S. ’85, welcomed a son, Matthew Jacob, on February 18.

Franklin & Prokopik in February as the workers’ compensation group at Goldberg Segalla.

Richard P. Morgan, B.S. ’90, welcomed twin boys, Matthew Jacob and Brian Andrew, on February 18.

James O. Myer Jr., B.S. ’88, welcomed a son, Matthew Jacob, on February 18.

Stephen J. Morgan, B.S. ’90, welcomed twin boys, Matthew Jacob and Brian Andrew, on February 18.

David G. Lang, B.S. ’90, welcomed twin boys, Matthew Jacob and Brian Andrew, on February 18.

Ruth L. Morgan, B.S. ’90, welcomed twin boys, Matthew Jacob and Brian Andrew, on February 18.

Madeline H. Kepple, B.A. ’81, welcomed a daughter, Cross, on June 2019.

Mark D. Martin, B.S. ’81, welcomed a daughter, Cross, on June 2019.

William A. Saunders, B.S. ’81, welcomed a daughter, Cross, on June 2019.

Christopher Pineda in February as the workers’ compensation group at Goldberg Segalla.

James L. Carls, B.S. ’76, welcomed a daughter, Cross, on June 2019.

James O. Myer Jr., B.S. ’88, welcomed twin boys, Matthew Jacob and Brian Andrew, on February 18.

Michael A. Carrington Jr., B.S. ’15, and Tori L. Carrington, B.S. ’16, M.A. ’18, welcomed their daughter, Chloe Pineda, B.A. ’18, on February 18.

Let us know when your little one arrives, and we’ll send you a Baby Bee bib. Share the buzz at 410.637.6131 or alumnub@ubalt.edu.

Ashley Thomas, B.S. ’14, welcomes a son, Matthew Jacob, on February 18.

Oklawski, Fawnish, B.S. ’18, and Nicholas Banaszek, B.A. ’14, married in January.

They welcomed their first child, Hunter Banack, in April.


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Let us know when your little one arrives, and we’ll send you a Baby Bee bib. Share the buzz at 410.637.6131 or alumnub@ubalt.edu.
Author Marjorie Boafo Appiah, MBA ’07, publishes her novels under the name Marjy Marj. It’s an upbeat moniker that accurately reflects her enthusiasm for her many ventures. In addition to writing a series of novels based on the immigrant experience, Boafo Appiah is the founder of the nonprofit Girls for STEAM. She’s also a management consultant who works with local businesses and host of a video streaming channel, Marjy TV.

Boafo Appiah was born in Ghana and moved to the United States in her early twenties. “I am as Ghanaian as jollof rice and as American as apple pie,” she says. “Home is wherever you become part of your community.”

Boafo Appiah initially lived with an uncle in New York and then moved to Baltimore to attend UB. “I have fond memories of my MBA studies,” she says. “When my son Adom attended a camp at The John Hopkins University, we visited the UB campus. I took my Dad as well, when he visited from Ghana.”

Boafo Appiah and her physician husband lived in Arkansas before relocating to their current city of Spartanburg, South Carolina. There she founded Girls for STEAM (STEAM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math) with friends from high school. The organization promotes educational activities for youth ages 6 to 18 in the United States and Ghana.

“We provide mentors and resources,” she explains. “It’s wonderful to see children get so excited about whatever they are doing—coding, dance, spelling, math, debate—and help the future generation to dream and aspire to achieve great heights.”

One initiative of Girls for STEAM, Giving Book Day, regularly distributes books by authors of color. The project began when Boafo Appiah noticed that her local Barnes and Noble had boxes of unsold books to donate. The initiative also partners with Project Lit Ghana, which provides books by authors of African descent to children and young adults in that country. “Every day is Giving Book Day!” she says. “I am passionate about representation, that kids see themselves in stories. And for children who often do not own books, there is a special feeling when they can say ‘this book is mine.’”

Boafo Appiah created Marjy TV, which streams via YouTube and Facebook, as a vehicle to provide inspirational content and discuss “everyday issues impacting the human race,” she says. Recent interviewees have addressed topics such as how to have difficult conversations and how to support frontline workers through music. She also hosted a series focusing on youth called “Everyday Heroes.”

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First of the many books

First of the many books
A Legacy of Giving

For David Hugel, J.D. ’73, M.S. ’77, a Vietnam War veteran and nationally recognized legal authority on public and highway safety, service to country and community has always been important. Like many UB students, Hugel worked while he attended school, first as a news reporter for WBAL and WJZ Baltimore where he covered the unrest in 1968 for the station. Then, while pursuing his law degree, he worked in public relations for the Baltimore office of the American Red Cross. He went on to teach as an adjunct professor in UB’s criminal justice program from 1974-77 before joining Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois. There he taught constitutional law, evidence and police civil liability to law enforcement officials from across the country.

His passion for service and helping others is reflected in the legacy he is leaving for UB students and the community. In 2018, Hugel established the David H. Hugel Papers held in the Special Collections Department of UB’s Robert L. Bogomolny Library. The collection, open for research to UB students, faculty, staff and the community, contains publications, articles, photographs and other ephemera related to his professional career, documemtation and community activism.

Most recently Hugel worked with the College of Public Affairs and the Office of Institutional Advancement to create the David H. Hugel Future Leaders Endowed Scholarship. The scholarship supports future UB undergraduate students who are passionate about making their communities a better place for all. To fund the scholarship, Hugel has generously included a bequest for UB in his will.

Including UB in estate plans is a way alumni and friends can pass down opportunities to the next generation. When those gifts create an endowment, as Hugel’s will, they grow and prosper indefinitely, benefiting UB students, faculty and programs. And it gives donors like Hugel the satisfaction of knowing those gifts will impact lives for generations to come.

UB’s Office of Institutional Advancement provides gift planning information and assistance to alumni and friends who are considering how they may want to help UB students. Most of the more than $1 million in bequests UB has received in the last two years will eventually provide direct support to our students.

Through his bequest, Hugel is ensuring that his legacy of service lives on. For more information about gift planning with the University of Baltimore, please contact:

Leslie Joyce
Senior Director of Development
University of Baltimore
420 W. 33rd Street
ly@ubalt.edu

For additional information visit: http://ub.myplannedgift.org/

Donor Dollars at Work

RAINBOW CONNECTION

In many cultures, rainbows are a symbol of hope. And a newly-painted rainbow crosswalk on UB’s campus conjures thoughts of positive change as well, as it celebrates the university’s support of the LGBTQ+ community. Conceived and executed by the university’s Student Government Association (SGA), the Philadelphia Rainbow Flag street mural is located in the alley between the Thomas Business Center and the Liberal Arts and Policy Building.

“This project is a way to raise awareness, promote diversity and safe spaces, and highlight the struggles of underrepresented communities to achieve social equality,” says Daniel Khoshkepazi, President of the SGA.

The SGA passed a resolution in support of the project in June, Pride Month, and presented a proposal to UB’s administration. “Everyone was 100 percent supportive, and that felt very empowering,” Khoshkepazi adds.

University System of Maryland guidelines for the COVID-19 pandemic restricted the number of people doing the actual painting. Those involved include Khoshkepazi, SGA Senator Emily Kamp and Joseph Yb, Anthony Butler, M.A. ’02, SGA Advisor and director of UB’s Rosenberg Center for Student Involvement, and Sara Goldin, a Baltimore community artist. The team spent more than 20 hours over several days creating the mural.

“With projects like this one, the SGA is engaging in cultural change that benefits UB and the community for years to come.”

The rainbow crosswalk is the first of its kind on a Maryland university campus.

“We’re proud to have a new campus and city landmark that people can visit and enjoy,” says Khoshkepazi.” “With projects like this one, the SGA is engaging in cultural change that benefits UB and the community for years to come.”
The Bob Parsons Scholarship Fund makes it possible for 1000-plus community college and military veteran students to complete their undergraduate education for free. The fund was established with a generous donation from The Bob & Renee Parsons Foundation. Bob Parsons is a Baltimore native, UB alumnus and Marine Corps Vietnam War veteran. "A college degree is a game changer. It opens the door to more career opportunities, higher paying jobs and a happier life," said Parsons. "I’m establishing this scholarship fund to help low-income students acquire a first-class college education and build a brighter future for themselves, their families and the city of Baltimore."

The nonprofit’s $5 million gift over five years will bridge the gap between what a Pell Grant covers and the university’s remaining tuition and fees.

For more information and to apply, visit ubalt.edu/parsons or contact admission@ubalt.edu, 410.837.4777.

LET UB INVEST IN YOU

Providing transfer students and military/veteran students with financial support towards tuition and fees