

# ADDRESSING GUN VIOLENCE

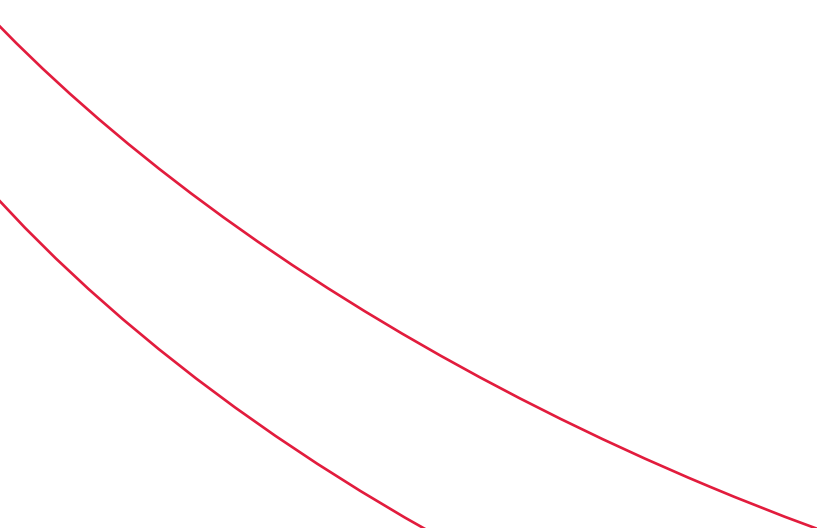
UMB's Role as an Anchor Institution





# Acknowledgements

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## 2018 - 2019 President's Fellows

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# Values Statement

Our charge was simple: use an interprofessional lens to investigate the University of Maryland, Baltimore's (UMB) role as an anchor institution in addressing gun violence. Drawing from different professional and cultural backgrounds, we challenge the UMB campus and Baltimore community audiences to consider our intersectional and interprofessional analysis and assessment of the complexities surrounding gun violence, and to take action now.

In our analysis, we came to the issue of gun violence from different perspectives: some of us have loved ones who have been victims of gun violence, one of us is an alumnus of a school involved in one of the most heinous mass shootings in U.S. history, some have lived in West Baltimore, and each has seen clients or patients whose lives have been affected by gun violence. Reasoning and deliberating across these viewpoints and experiences, we found common ground in recognizing the role gun violence has on our professions, and on our lives and the lives of those we care about. We all understand the heavy impact that gun violence has, and will continue to have, no matter where our lives take us.

On our campus and among our neighboring community organizations in West Baltimore, our personal and professional lives intertwine with the devastating consequences of gun violence. It has been felt by our campus

and community affiliated organizations, but most heavily and immediately by our West Baltimore neighbors. Understanding and exploring such a critical issue like gun violence was a tremendous task to take on. Starting with the prevalence of gun violence, we explored the intersectional nature of the issue, including how it encompasses the social determinants of health and the ways the different professional schools of UMB should help our surrounding community. Throughout this process, we paid close attention to the privilege embedded in systems that shelter some of us from the realities of gun violence in Baltimore while marginalizing and racializing our neighbors.

We see the sensational coverage of mass shootings on the news all too frequently but question how our media characterizes, simply ignores, or attempts to erase the daily realities of gun violence in urban communities like Baltimore City. This disparate public attention promotes an "us-versus-them" mentality that normalizes the issue of gun violence in Baltimore, making it seem as though only a truly "exceptional" display of gun violence can be recognized as a tragedy. There are exquisite narratives here in the city of Baltimore, rooted in a wealth of cultural history, diminished by racial marginalization and the depletion of resources. Many community activists and artists are working to change this narrative, however. In 2017, Baltimore-based

photographer Amy Berbert documented crime scenes in Baltimore City. For each murder committed in 2016, she returned to the scene on the exact day and time of the crime and took a photo to commemorate the life lost exactly one year previously. We have included several of her photos in this paper as visual reminders of the daily reality of gun violence in Baltimore City. In reading this paper, we implore you to broaden your academic and professional worldview and consider the true costs implicated by our work.

Regarding our worldview, we orient our paper around one common and recurring theme that was inescapable in every study we read, in every interview we conducted, and in every recommendation we propose: **fostering healthy, collaborative relationships between the interprofessional schools of UMB, between UMB and the community and amongst all individuals who reside in West Baltimore is key to building collective efficacy within and around our campus.** Such collective efficacy is necessary for UMB to embrace its role as an anchor institution and

valuable partner in reducing gun violence in West Baltimore.

Baltimore is our home, whether it is where we were raised or the place we adopted when we chose UMB. Baltimore is a city of deeply-rooted cultures and people who cultivate knowledge in prestigious academic institutions and celebrates creativity in the arts. Baltimore is a beautiful place, and our hope is to maximize UMB's contributions to that beauty by addressing gun violence in our community. UMB must commit to recognizing the ways our campus is complicit in the problem and then proceed with humility and sustained engagement with our neighbors. The time to act is now.



UMB students, faculty and staff, including Jay Perman, president of UMB (pictured front row), prepare to attend the March for Our Lives demonstration in Washington D.C. on March 24, 2018.

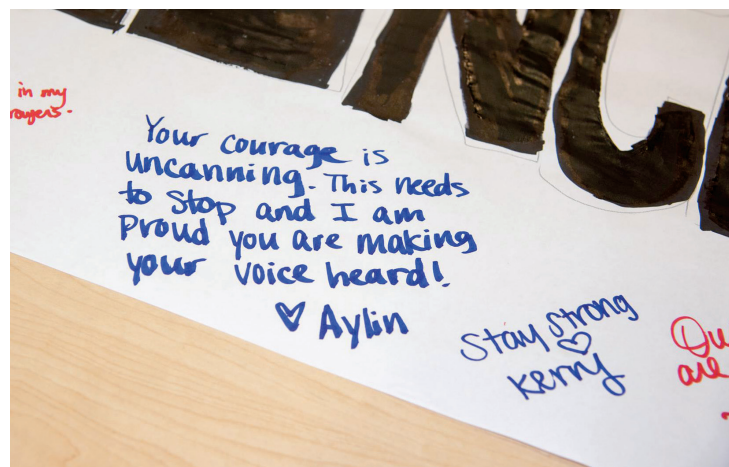
# Methodology

The topic of “gun violence” encompasses many types of violence, including homicide, suicide, mass shootings, and accidental trauma. Mass shootings are sensationalized in the news and social media, yet homicides occurring in neighborhoods all around us are sometimes memorialized only by mourning family and friends, with little attention from the media or UMB. Each of these lives matters and deserves the respect and attention of our community. With this sentiment, we chose to focus our efforts on addressing the gun violence specifically in the West Baltimore community in which UMB is embedded.

Our investigation consisted of a qualitative analysis of the varied responses to gun violence demonstrated by members of UMB and the surrounding community, supported by an examination of the peer-reviewed literature and media articles on gun violence. Between September 2018 and February 2019, we conducted semi-structured interviews with faculty at various UMB schools, each of the seven deans, community organizations, UMB staff who live in West Baltimore, the President’s Symposium guest speakers, and others. We also attended meetings of professional groups outside of UMB, including the American Academy of Pediatrics Maryland Chapter Gun Violence Task Force and the Baltimore Neighborhood Indicators Alliance. Please refer to the Appendix (pg. 31) for a complete list of individuals and organizations who spoke with us.

After gathering information from over 25 individuals and organizations as well as the literature, we analyzed our findings through an iterative process, identifying common themes and key differences among the various interviews. Using these core concepts to organize our findings and recommendations, we developed them into a concept map illustrating UMB’s role in addressing gun violence in West Baltimore (see “Themes & Concept Mapping,” pg. 10). Our recommendations are crafted to speak

to the UMB community, focusing on goals we believe are evidence-based and accessible with sufficient investment from university and school-level administration.



UM School of Pharmacy students, faculty, and staff, including Dean Natalie Eddington, PhD, FAAPS, FCP, write messages of support for victims of gun violence.

# Background

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## Access to Firearms

The presence of firearms in moments of conflict, whether internal or external, increases the risk of lethality. If conflict is external, societal fear and trauma crescendos into a community arms race. But most gun violence is fueled by internal conflict, with suicide as the leading cause of firearm-related death every year since 1999.<sup>1</sup> While firearms are the third most commonly employed mechanism in suicide attempts (following overdose and self-injury), the uniquely violent and disabling nature of self-inflicted gunshot wounds renders over 80% of suicide attempts via firearms as fatal.<sup>2</sup> In terms of external conflict, U.S. firearm homicide rates are notoriously higher than non-firearm homicide rates, and they have been increasing since 2014.<sup>2</sup>

Interestingly, while mental health statistics are remarkably similar across the industrialized world, the United States has a disproportionately high rate of suicide. The cause of this disparity is obvious: America's unique relationship to gun access and ownership. It has been interpreted and sensationalized that firearm possession is a right guaranteed by the Constitution and has presently become a central part of our culture. There are 357 million civilian firearms in the United States, a stark contrast to the 317 million people that reside here.<sup>2</sup> Compared to the global community, Americans own nearly half (48%) of the estimated 650 million civilian-owned guns worldwide.<sup>2</sup> The United States makes up less than 5% of the world's population but holds 31% of global mass shooters, and gun homicide rates are 25.2 times higher in the United States than in any other industrialized country.<sup>2</sup>

Let us leave no room for ambiguity: The United States of America has a serious gun problem. The sheer number of firearms is daunting, and the ease of access to them is a precursor to the violence we witness every day.

The state of Maryland has relatively strict laws regulating access to firearms, including background checks and safety courses required for purchase. However, differences between states' regulations regarding licensure and purchase of firearms allow for ease of transfer across state lines from neighboring states with less strict laws.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, robust federal regulations are critical to ensuring safe and responsible gun ownership nationwide.

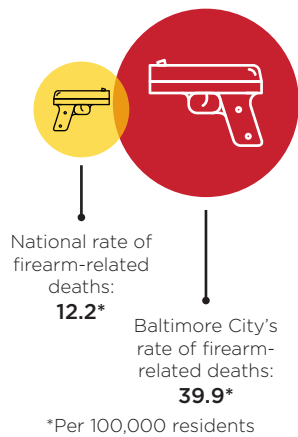
## THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA HAS A SERIOUS GUN PROBLEM

### Gun Violence Statistics in Baltimore

While gun violence is a pervasive epidemic across the United States, Baltimore City bears an exceptional burden. The most recent data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) extracted from death certificates, shows that guns claimed 39,773 lives in the United States in 2017; 267 of these were residents of Baltimore City.<sup>1</sup> The rate of firearm-related deaths in Baltimore City was **more than three times** the national rate (39.9 versus 12.2 per 100,000 residents).<sup>1</sup> These harrowing statistics include deaths due to suicides, homicides, unintentional injuries, and legal interventions. At the national level, suicides comprised the majority of gun-related deaths (60.0%), with homicides as the second most-frequent cause (36.6%).<sup>1</sup> In Baltimore City, the pattern is reversed: 91.4% of gun-related deaths were due to homicide. Almost one third (31.5%) of all people killed by a gun in the entire state of Maryland in 2017 were

African American, male residents of Baltimore City, between the ages of 20 and 35 years.<sup>1</sup>

Those who follow the *Baltimore Sun* may notice that the CDC's records show fewer homicides than reported by the newspaper. The *Baltimore Sun* reports 299 gun-related homicides in Baltimore City in 2017, and 274 in 2018,<sup>3</sup> reflecting data collected from local police records that includes the deaths of non-city residents killed within city limits. Although gun-related deaths in predominantly low-income urban communities are often



painted as an “inner-city problem,” approximately 10% of gun-related homicides involved victims who were not residents of Baltimore City. Therefore, claims that gun violence is isolated to low-income neighborhoods are misleading. Rather, gun violence affects our

entire city and the surrounding communities; finding solutions to this problem that touches us all demands the attention and efforts of all.

## A Personal Narrative

The story of one strong Baltimorean woman whom we met through our investigation represents the resilience that exists within low-income communities that face gun violence. When Sharon McMahan was growing up, her family did not have much money, and neither did her neighbors. She recalls many dinners of “mayonnaise sandwiches shared among family and friends.”<sup>4</sup> While struggling financially, they looked out for one another. When she was 15 years old, she was sitting at home one night with her family when, suddenly, the family living room was deluged with bullets from the outside. Several family members were injured in the shooting. It was later confirmed that the shooting was in response to an accusation made against Ms. Sharon’s older brother for a murder he did not commit. Looking back, Ms. Sharon realized that her family was deeply traumatized by the shooting, but nobody ever

expressed how the experience made them feel. The only sentiment uttered was that her mother had “bad nerves.”<sup>4</sup>

Ms. Sharon grew older and had a son of her own, Juan. She worked hard to support him, particularly when it came to getting him through school. She herself had dropped out at a young age, and Juan followed suit in his youth. One night when Juan was 17, Ms. Sharon dropped him off at a party at a friend’s house. Several hours later, she found herself staring at him lying in the gutter outside the party with gunshot wounds to the head. He was taken to a nearby hospital and put on life support. Ms. Sharon was told that her son was not going to survive. After eight hours had passed, she gave the hospital permission to turn off the machines that were sustaining her son’s body, all the while feeling as though she had not truly been given a choice. After Juan’s death, Ms. Sharon says she was “lost.” She did not fully understand what had happened at the hospital. She had heard stories of young men who survived after being on life support and worried that Juan could have pulled through if he had been given the chance.

Seven long years later, Ms. Sharon decided to visit Roberta’s House, the family grief support center advertised in pamphlets sent by the State’s Attorney’s office. There, she learned about and shared her grief experience with other homicide survivors, beginning her healing process.

Now, Ms. Sharon is an active member of the grassroots movement Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America, which is a part of the national Everytown for Gun Safety violence prevention organization. She has also launched her own non-profit organization offering support to families whose loved ones have been incarcerated or lost to gun violence. Although she now lives in Baltimore County, she spends every day in the City working with mothers, families, and communities to improve the conditions that drive so many young people into dangerous situations involving guns. She still lives with the immense grief for her son and five other family members who have been victims of homicide.

## Social Determinants of Gun Violence

As Ms. Sharon's story demonstrates, gun violence in Baltimore City emerges from a multitude of dynamic social and economic factors. UMB values evidence-based efforts to identify social determinants of public health-related problems and interventions. Thus far, faculty and researchers at UMB have made substantial contributions to the scientific literature elucidating the root causes of gun violence here in Baltimore City. For example, researchers at the R. Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Center identified major risk factors for African American men to become repeat victims of violent injury (i.e., violence recidivism) in Baltimore, including recent history of a fight or use of a weapon, substance abuse, previous experience of incarceration, and perceived disrespect as a precursor to violence.<sup>5</sup>



#3 James Dankins, 28 y/o | January 7, 2016 | 4:20 p.m.  
1100 West Saratoga Street © Amy Berbert

These risk factors for violence often occur in a socioeconomic context of poverty. **The high rates of crime in Baltimore City parallel the high rates of poverty, low education, food insecurity and mortality.** According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 23.8% of the 622,104 residents in Baltimore City were living below the national poverty level between the years

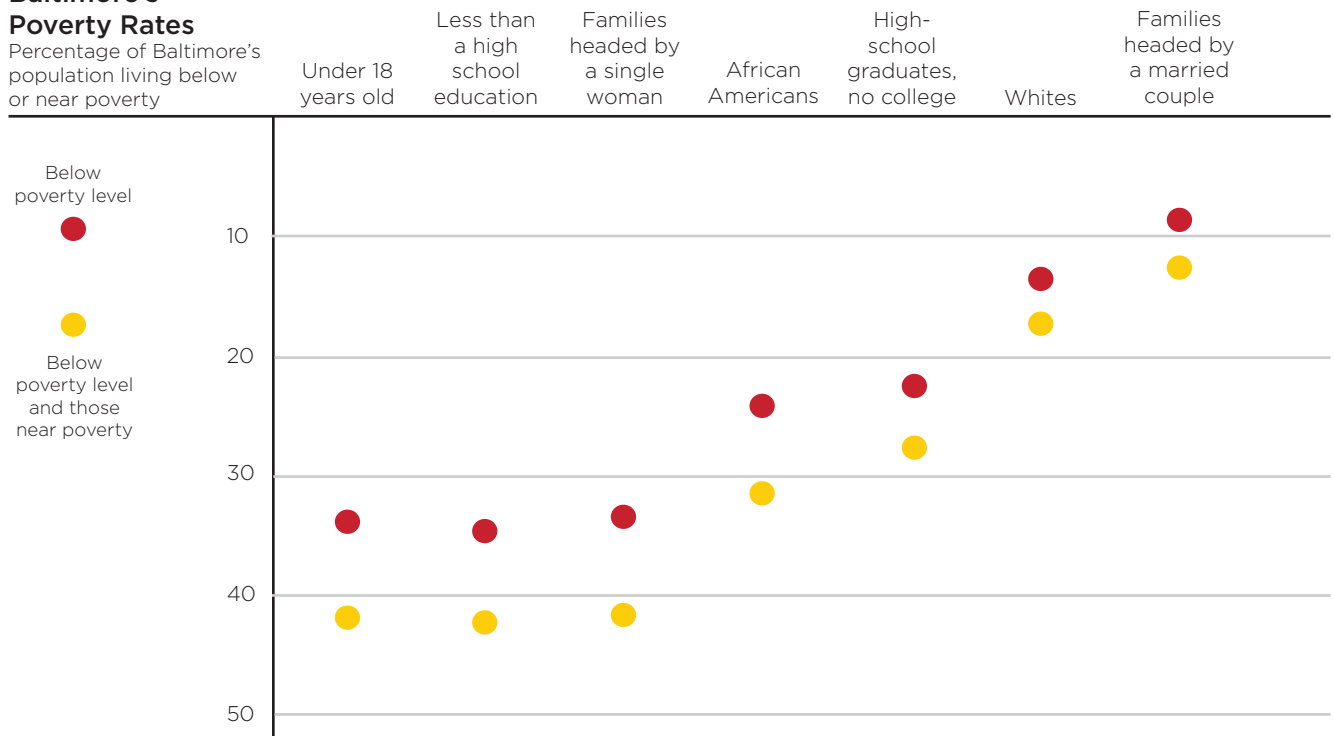
2009-2013 and one third of the households in Baltimore City had an income less than \$25,000.<sup>6</sup> Thirteen percent of Baltimore City is covered by food deserts and 47.2% of Baltimore City residents 25 years or older have a high school degree or less.<sup>6</sup> Homicide rates increased from 3.4/10,000 residents in 2013 to 5.2/10,000 in 2016 and youth mortality is at a staggering 31.3/10,000 people.<sup>6</sup> Of note, there is an astonishing 20-year difference in life expectancy between the most affluent areas of Baltimore City compared to the areas that experience the highest rates of poverty.<sup>6</sup>

Racial segregation within Baltimore also contributes to socioeconomic conditions that correlate with gun violence. Historical policies institutionalized the racial and ethnic divide in Baltimore City that still separates African American and Caucasian communities today. For example, the “West Ordinance” passed by the Baltimore City Council in 1910 barred African Americans from moving into Caucasian neighborhoods and vice versa.<sup>6</sup> This ordinance alone played an instrumental role in the current racial divide seen in Baltimore City today. Furthermore, in the 1930s the federal Home Owners’ Loan Corporation enacted mortgage market risk appraisals for neighborhoods in US cities with a population greater than 40,000.<sup>6</sup> This practice served as the basis for “redlining” and, in Baltimore, labeled predominantly African American residential areas as “high-risk,” preventing residents in these areas from buying homes and building wealth from their assets.<sup>6</sup> Today, residents living in primarily minority, low-income neighborhoods experience constant threats to their health and safety because of the social, economic and environmental inequities that were institutionalized by these racially driven policies. As displayed on the maps on pages 8-9, gun-related homicides in Baltimore during 2018<sup>3</sup> clustered around the neighborhoods that were designated “third grade” or “fourth grade” (i.e., highest risk) on a “Residential Security Map” created by the Home Owners’ Loan Corporation in 1937.<sup>7</sup>



## Baltimore's Poverty Rates

Percentage of Baltimore's population living below or near poverty



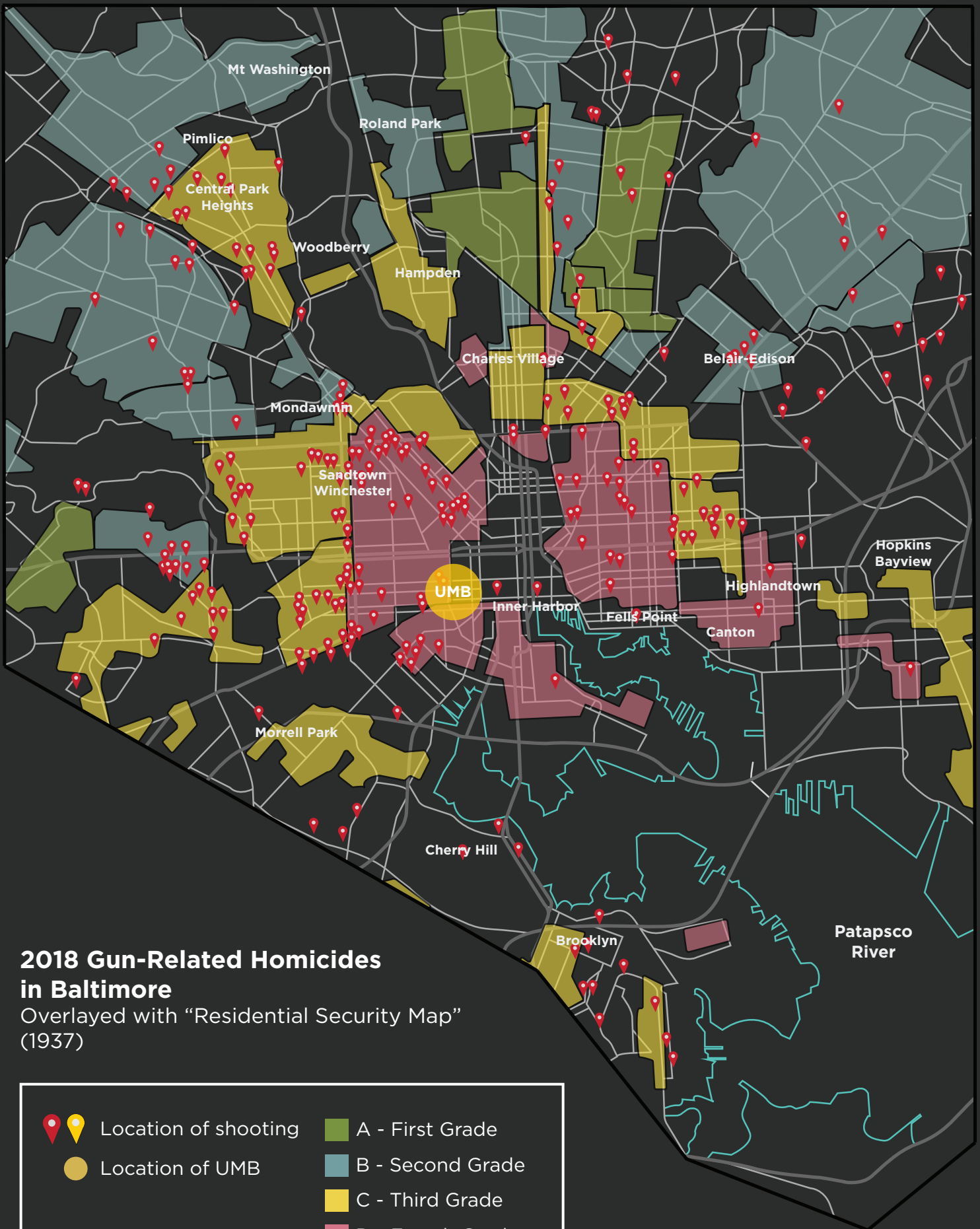
Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2013 American Community Survey

## Trauma Begets Trauma

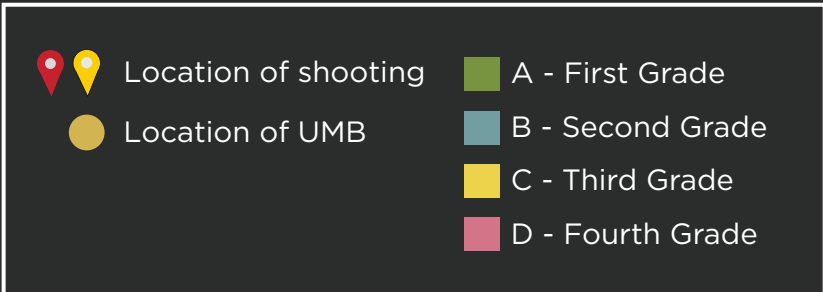
Individuals living in an intergenerational cycle of violence, poverty, housing and food instability, and systemic oppression often suffer physical, mental and emotional distress.<sup>8-12</sup> Numerous studies have demonstrated that exposure to community violence is linked to challenges with mental health. Individuals exposed to community gun violence in urban areas have exhibited symptoms of post-traumatic stress<sup>8</sup> and depression.<sup>9</sup> In particular, adolescents who witness or become victims of community violence are much more likely to have emotional and behavioral issues later in life, including aggressive behavior, post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, depression and violence perpetration.<sup>10</sup> Of note, youth raised in communities affected by violence experience elevated stress levels even when these stressors are not present.<sup>11</sup> A growing body of evidence links this exposure to physical health outcomes, including elevated blood pressure and sleep problems.<sup>12</sup>

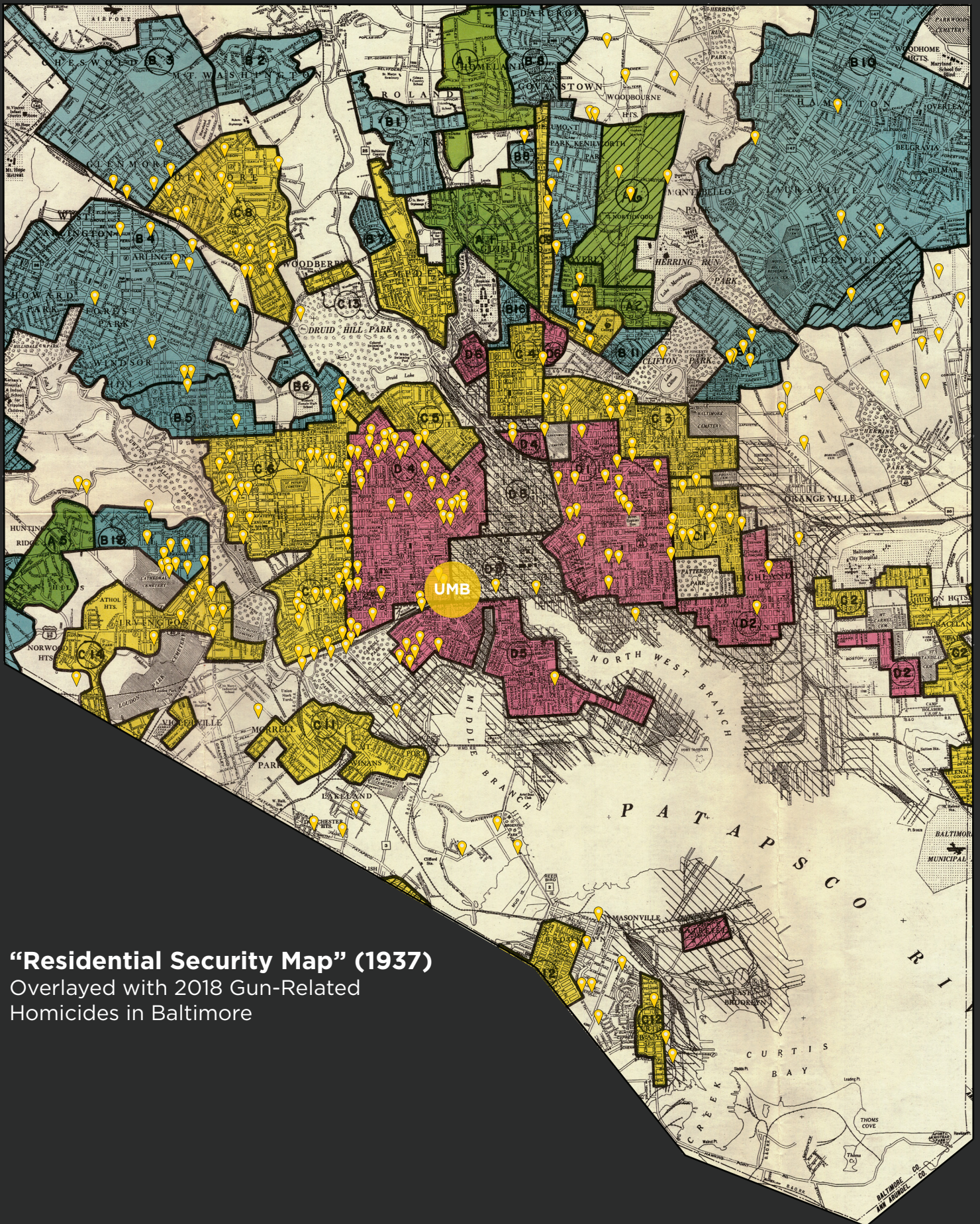
Communities with high levels of neighborhood violence often have high rates of incarceration

as well. Regardless of other individual and neighborhood-level risk factors, people who live in communities with high incarceration rates are much more likely to suffer from symptoms of depression and anxiety compared to people living in communities with lower rates.<sup>13</sup> Incarceration also affects family members who may struggle to handle household finances and raise children alone while maintaining relationships with incarcerated loved ones.<sup>14</sup> The perpetuation of violent crime can also represent an individual's assertion of power. People who feel like they lack power in other ways, particularly due to income inequality,<sup>15</sup> may feel as though they can gain power from behind a gun.



**2018 Gun-Related Homicides in Baltimore**  
 Overlaid with "Residential Security Map" (1937)





## “Residential Security Map” (1937)

Overlaid with 2018 Gun-Related Homicides in Baltimore

# Themes and Concept Mapping

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One crucial drawback to the body of academic literature about gun violence is not accuracy but representation. The issues the data raise are not located in or with a single generalized population found only in certain low-income neighborhoods in Baltimore. In fact, the root causes involve institutional and systemic complicity. Specifically in our conversations with UMB and community stakeholders, we discovered an important power imbalance characterized by inconsistent and broken relationships. These and other important themes that emerged throughout our investigation are displayed visually in our concept map along with other important themes that emerged throughout our investigation (see Figure 1). A power imbalance exists between the UMB campus and the rest of our neighborhood; this imbalance is characterized by inconsistent and broken relationships. As an anchor institution, we believe UMB has a responsibility to work on building strong, mutually beneficial relationships in three dimensions: (1) among members of our own institution; (2) among members of the West Baltimore community; (3) between our campus and our neighborhood. This paper, among other things, offers different methods of bolstering those relationships.

In addition to the theme of relationship building, we also recognize a pattern of historical and contemporary policies that divest West Baltimore communities of political, social, and economic power despite the ongoing resistance and resilience of these communities. Rather than moving forward and strengthening imbalanced relationships, our paper was written with the understanding that power between UMB and the community must be redefined and managed in a collaborative manner.

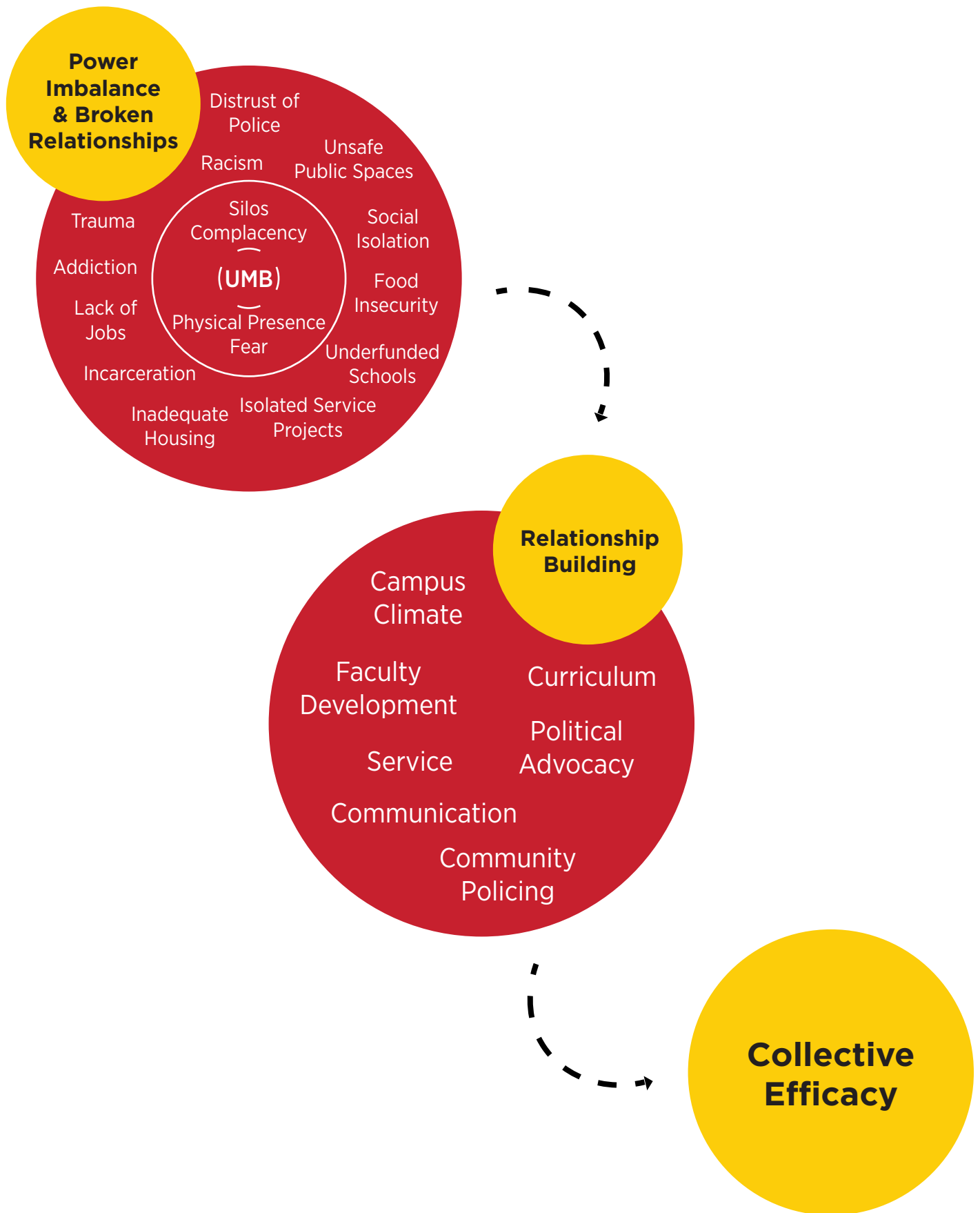
This process of relationship-building should consciously restore power to those who have been marginalized, cultivating the collective efficacy needed to identify and reverse the

root causes of gun violence in our community. Given the historical landscape of relationships between the community and UMB, it is imperative that UMB actively work to earn our neighbors' trust. In doing so, UMB encourages collective efficacy. Collective efficacy includes social cohesion and social control, meaning neighbors trust one another and are willing to work together towards maintaining the common good.<sup>16</sup> Increasing collective efficacy is important so that members of UMB and the greater community share a common purpose and work towards change together.

Our themes emphasize that UMB is not separate from, but rather *embedded in* the West Baltimore community. In the concept map, "UMB" is surrounded by a dashed circle, representing the semi-permeable barrier that makes our campus accessible to some but not all. Certain characteristics of our campus contribute to an unbalanced power dynamic between our campus and our neighbors: individual schools that operate in silos, fear of the danger "out there", complacency and numbness toward the issue of community violence, and the physical presence of our buildings, cars, and people that constantly remind our neighbors who has the power in our neighborhood.

Our concept map displays some of the difficulties present in our community. These challenges are fueled by a history of systemic segregation, racism and contemporary oppression, resulting in broken relationships among our neighbors and also between our campus and our neighborhood. It is within this framework that we challenge UMB to consider our findings and our recommendations.

Figure 1. Concept map of UMB's role in addressing community gun violence.



# Recommendations

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Throughout our investigation, we learned about many amazing things UMB is doing to give back to the community in which it is embedded. We also have pieced together shortcomings in UMB's approach to addressing gun violence, as well as gaps in its institutional approach and barriers it must surpass. Keeping this in mind, the following recommendations are suggestions, not golden tickets. It is easy for us to promulgate the perfect programs and scenarios, but organizational structuring and institutional implementation require total and complete participation. Without a unified and collective effort, our recommendations will rightfully be interpreted as insincere and incomplete. Therefore, we hope that those implementing our recommendations will make modifications in favor of practical considerations and remain dedicated to our overarching goals of repairing a fractured relationship between UMB and the community and promoting collective efficacy in Baltimore.

## Campus Climate

Our campus is a community unto itself. The seven schools share not only a physical space, but academic forums as well. How we treat our physical space is an outward manifestation of the respect we have not only for ourselves, but also for the people whose communities and lives are interrupted by our physical presence. Our campus does not exist in a vacuum, and an attitude of indifference diminishes the sincerity of the efforts by our campus community members who invest resources in bettering Baltimore as a whole. To that point, our seven schools are having fragmented conversations on how to listen to the people of Baltimore. Consequently, inconsistencies arise in UMB's approach to community engagement, and grievances that our neighbors bring forth to our campus are addressed in a compartmentalized fashion. We need increased effort by the independent schools of UMB to foster a spirit of unity and camaraderie. Orienting these concerns around

gun violence, our first step should be to truly understand the repercussions gun violence has on our UMB family.

Our interviews have left us with the impression that the number of people on campus who have direct personal or professional experience with gun violence is likely to be quite large, so a closer look at how gun violence has impacted these individuals and what unmet needs they have is warranted. We suggest UMB **commission a campus wide scan of the exposure and impact of gun violence on students, faculty, and staff**, and seek feedback on how to best support individuals on our campus who have been affected. Based on our interview with a UMB affiliate who lost a family member to gun violence, we anticipate one potential mechanism may be an affinity group for students and employees who are returning to work or school following a traumatic event. We did hear a positive account of UMB's Employee Assistance Program (EAP), which facilitates access to experienced counselors that offer support and structure to help individuals and groups discuss issues. However, our interviewee noted that as a family survivor, she is sometimes expected to offer additional support to other people facing similar situations. Per her suggestion, having an affinity group already in place could make reaching out for help easier for anyone who finds returning to their day-to-day life difficult. Completing the assessment of the impacts of gun violence described above would clarify if UMB needs such a resource at this time.

## Physical Space

UMB must **be aware of how the physical presence of our campus impacts the power dynamic in our community**. For example, the large construction site in the 800 block of West Baltimore Street has been lying open, surrounded by chain link fencing for the last five years as business plans are being negotiated. On the southern side of the street,

there is no sidewalk accessible to pedestrians along the length of the construction site, and campus commuters park along the concrete barriers every day. It is inconvenient to cross to the sidewalk on the northern side of the street, so pedestrians often walk in the one open eastbound lane, endangered by the passing cars and buses. Every time an individual walks next to this traffic, they affirm UMB's dominant use of land in the neighborhood. This example illustrates a dismissive attitude towards the physical space of our surrounding community, perpetuating a perception of powerlessness among members of our community.

UMB must move forward with either constructing the building intended for this site, or fill in the large pit and remove the fencing so that we can all enjoy a more visually appealing neighborhood. We have been made aware that UMB administration has begun actively pursuing a solution since we discussed this issue with them. However, we hope that in the future UMB will think more proactively about these issues. Other ways that everyone affiliated with UMB can help make our neighborhood more friendly to pedestrians are to be mindful of how much space we take up

when walking in large groups on the sidewalks, and remembering to stop their vehicles outside of the crosswalks at red lights. These small practices of mindfulness will help all of us feel more connected.

## Silos

Gun violence is a complicated problem that requires interdisciplinary, intersectional solutions. When used together in a coordinated, complementary manner, UMB's rich diversity of academic expertise and professional skills have great potential to contribute to positive change in our community. However, throughout our interviews with UMB faculty and administrators, we repeatedly heard concerns that the individual schools on our campus operate like silos, often making interdisciplinary collaboration too complicated to be feasible. We must build more bridges among our diverse academic programs so that students and faculty from across campus can join forces and responsibly collaborate with our neighbors on solutions to our community's problem with gun violence.



Large construction site in the 800 block of West Baltimore Street.

First, we encourage UMB administration to **consider a campus-wide cluster hire of faculty to fill critical research gaps related to the topic of gun violence.** According to *Inside Higher Ed*, cluster hires, or the hiring of multiple faculty members who share research interests but may work for different schools or departments, often support interdisciplinary work, increase faculty diversity, and promote a positive institutional climate.<sup>17</sup> Following the model of North Carolina State University, we suggest an interdisciplinary approach to mentoring as well as tenure/promotion for members of the cluster hire. They could also be provided with a dedicated space on campus for working together and a yearly symposium to present their work to the broader campus community.<sup>17</sup> The newly hired faculty, in conjunction with interested faculty already employed by UMB, could form a standing working group and apply together for external funding for research and service related to gun violence. This group could determine whether creating a formal center for gun violence intervention research at UMB should be a goal. Finally, the work group could present a united front when advocating for policy changes to the city, state, and federal governments.

Regarding student education, we have

identified new student orientation as a practical opportunity to foster both campus-wide unity and sensitivity to the social determinants and traumatic effects of gun violence in our community. Currently, each school conducts an independent orientation to help incoming students acclimate to UMB and the Baltimore environment. Most orientations include a “safety talk” given by a UMB Police officer, which is intended to give students practical safety tips for being on campus and living in Baltimore City (e.g., to avoid wearing headphones while walking, to travel in groups after dark). However, few, if any of the orientations, include substantial information about the history of Baltimore and the structural racism (such as “redlining” and sentencing disparities) that has led to the segregation and concentrated poverty that contribute to the high prevalence of violence in our city. For some students, especially those who are new to Baltimore, hearing about crime on and around campus without knowing the appropriate historical context contributes to a sense of fear and separateness from our neighbors. Alice Cary, MS, chief of the UMB Police Force intends to redesign these safety talks to include presentations from community members and more robust information about our neighborhood. We recommend that **Chief Cary and the UMB Police Force work with faculty who specialize in community engagement and the social determinants of health as they restructure the orientation safety talks.**

In parallel, we propose that UMB **organize a campus-wide orientation for incoming students as an “Introduction to Baltimore,” including an overview of racism in Baltimore’s history and basic information about historical trauma and trauma-informed care.** The orientation could be planned to last for 2-4 hours and be offered several times throughout the month of August to accommodate the differing start dates of our various academic programs. After attending the live event, students could follow up with online learning modules scheduled throughout the academic year in a format similar to the programs about sexual harassment and prescription drug abuse that all students are required to complete.



#105 Antonio Addison, 22 y/o | May 25, 2016 | 5:48 p.m.  
1200 N. Carey Street © Amy Berbert



The content for this program could be guided by the orientation curriculum currently used by the School of Social Work's Social Work Community Outreach Service (SWCOS), which includes a walking tour of Baltimore plus education on the history of Baltimore, race and inequity, social justice, transformative versus transactional work, and implicit bias training. Learning about Baltimore's historical context at the very beginning of our academic journey here, and then continuing these lessons throughout the year, will give UMB students a better understanding of the Baltimore environment and the neighbors that we serve and learn from as students. Ultimately, we hope that this joint orientation and continuing education opportunity will bring a sense of solidarity to the relationships among UMB students and with our neighbors, strengthening the foundations for collective efficacy in our shared community.

## Capacity Building

### Curriculum

As an institution known for its academic rigor and unique interprofessional environment, UMB attracts students from across the state and country. Because of this wide draw, many UMB students have limited knowledge of Baltimore City before arriving on campus. Some may have had little experience in any urban environment. As our institution asks students to engage with community members in their various professional fields, we must pay close attention to this potential knowledge and cultural gap.

Baltimore City is home to many bright, driven and resilient individuals who have also survived poverty, racism, and violent crimes; experiences that can cause high levels of traumatic stress. This trauma has impacted generations of Baltimore residents and, as mentioned above, can greatly affect the determinants of a person's physical, mental, emotional and financial health. All professions taught through UMB schools require students to engage with individuals while they are in some type of vulnerable situation, whether they are wearing a paper gown on an exam

table or seeking legal advice. For this reason, it is imperative that UMB students understand the scope of the trauma many Baltimore City residents have experienced and how it can contribute to a sense of vulnerability. Students need to approach their work through a culturally competent, trauma-informed lens.

We recommend that UMB **include trauma-informed care in every school's curriculum.** The Agency for Healthcare and Research Quality (AHRQ) defines trauma-informed care as an "approach to engaging people with histories of trauma that recognizes the presence of trauma symptoms and acknowledges the role that trauma has played in their lives."<sup>18</sup> We believe it is important to introduce these concepts as soon as students arrive on campus during new student orientation. In this setting a discussion of trauma-informed care could complement the overview of redlining and historical racism that we previously recommend be included within orientation. Because these topics are complex, they must be reinforced and expanded upon throughout the academic experience at UMB. Potential starting points include an interdisciplinary one-credit course on trauma-informed care with a particular focus on practice in Baltimore and/or a mandatory online training to be completed throughout the year. Most importantly, students' field instructors and clinical or research supervisors must proactively speak with students about how to incorporate this information in their daily work; ongoing faculty development will be required to achieve this goal. The R. Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Center's Violence Prevention Program, which is described in more detail later, has extensive experience training staff in trauma-informed care; they may serve as important consultants in enhancing UMB's trauma-informed education.

For some individuals, traumatic stress stems from interactions with law enforcement. To address this issue, Dr. Bahiyah Muhammad, PhD launched the first successful "Policing Inside-Out" Class at Howard University in collaboration with the International Association of Chiefs of Police in 2016.<sup>19</sup> The course brings together students, community

members, and both University and city police officers to discuss social justice issues and strengthen relationships between these groups. The class creates a space for people to express their opinions, hear viewpoints that may differ from their own, and collaborate to reduce violence and improve relationships between community members and law enforcement.<sup>19</sup> This past fall, Morgan State University and Coppin State University collaborated to bring the course to Baltimore City, which they plan to offer again during the 2019-2020 academic year.

We recommend the **thoughtful implementation of a Policing Inside-Out class at UMB**. A successful implementation would require consultation with Dr. Muhammad, who created the course and expressed support for offering the class at UMB, as well Dr. Natasha Pratt-Harris of Morgan State University and Dr. Jacqueline Rhoden-Trader of Coppin State University, who successfully implemented the course at their respective institutions. These individuals are aware of the challenges that accompany the course's implementation as well as strategies that are particularly helpful in navigating them. Dr. Pratt-Harris has graciously provided us with the syllabus from the first Policing Inside-Out class at Morgan and Coppin Universities, which we would be happy to share with any faculty interested in adapting and teaching the course at UMB.

Finally, we recognize that guns will remain a part of the lives of the patients and clients we are preparing to work with in our careers. To this end, all UMB students should become proficient in speaking with patients, clients and colleagues about firearms and firearm safety in a professional capacity. Research shows that health professionals are typically underprepared to discuss firearm risk and safety with patients and clients,<sup>20</sup> so an opportunity exists for UMB to become a leader in cultivating this professional capacity among its students. We recommend that UMB **support all academic programs to incorporate into their curricula evidence-based tools for clinicians to effectively communicate about firearms and firearm safety with patients and clients**.

## Faculty Development

UMB must support faculty as we ask them to teach trauma-informed care that is sensitive to the historical and cultural factors that contribute to gun violence in Baltimore. We recommend that UMB **support and encourage faculty to utilize tools to recognize and process their own implicit biases**. We are aware of several UMB faculty who are already conducting such trainings. Another available resource is a workshop created by the People's Institute entitled "Undoing Racism", which has been used by several faculty at the School of Social Work (see: <https://www.pisab.org/>).

We must also reflect on the role UMB's research plays in Baltimore. Are we responsible collaborators? Are relationships between faculty and community members mutually beneficial, with an emphasis placed on improving the lives of those living directly in the West Baltimore community? Our investigation has highlighted some areas for improvement.

Hours of interviews have left us with the impression that UMB views efforts to address social inequities and gun violence as valiant and necessary, yet not an immediate priority. Some faculty feel their community and/or violence prevention work is performed in addition to, and sometimes in competition with, the grant-writing, teaching and quantitative research more highly valued by the institution. We recommend that UMB **examine how a faculty member's service-based and violence prevention work contribute to their potential for promotion and/or tenure** and how the institution supports these efforts.

We also know that UMB is capable of developing stronger collaborative research relationships with our surrounding community. A common concern raised in our conversations with various stakeholders is that some UMB investigators identify problems and research questions within the confines of the UMB campus; only after developing potential solutions do they venture west across Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard and engage with our community members. This pattern must

be corrected for a number of reasons, the first being missed opportunities. How can we be sure we are identifying the most pressing issues and viable solutions if our work is not embedded within the community we seek to help? Quality research requires significant effort and funding, so we should ensure we are selecting the most meaningful topics. Without sufficient groundwork, investigators may leave some of the most pressing questions or impactful interventions untapped.

This research pattern also weakens relationships with community members. When investigators recruit our neighbors as participants for a study that was primarily identified and developed on campus, the relationship tends to feel more utilitarian than collaborative. As one Baltimore resident stated, people do not want to feel as if they are “another notch on someone’s belt.” This dynamic degrades trust and the sense of teamwork desperately needed to address the city’s gun violence epidemic. We recommend that UMB **create a structure that compensates faculty for the time required to complete appropriate “groundwork” in the community as part of the research process.** A collaboration with the office of community engagement may be helpful to facilitate the development and monitor the status of exchanges stemming from such groundwork. Incorporating this information in the IRB approval process could help with the tracking and assessment of this information.

During the course of our interviews, we learned of a Faculty Fellows Program that UMB used several years ago to train a cohort of junior faculty members on effective community engagement techniques. The faculty were then encouraged and supported to integrate what they learned into their courses. We suggest UMB **consider re-instituting the Faculty Fellows Program.** This initiative would have the dual benefit of educating junior faculty and their students about community engagement while also helping foster relationships between junior faculty across schools. With strong relationships as a foundation, faculty will be better prepared to work with our neighbors in West Baltimore to develop solutions for the



#212 Jawaun Pritchett, 25 y/o | September 5, 2016 | 2 a.m. | 700 Mura Street © Amy Berber

problem of gun violence in our community.

## Community Engagement

The key to identifying and reducing the risk factors that contribute to gun violence in our West Baltimore community is collaborative engagement with our neighbors. Our recommendations thus far have focused on building self-awareness and cultural competence within our campus—qualities that act as the foundation for effective community engagement. In this section, we make recommendations that will help UMB improve our relationships with our neighbors through three community mechanisms: communication, service, and partnerships.

Through our interviews, we learned that UMB is considering applying for the Carnegie Community Engagement Classification, which recognizes academic institutions that have made a “commitment to deepen the practice of service and to further strengthen bonds between campus and community.”<sup>21</sup> Implementing our recommendations about community engagement would support UMB’s application for this important Carnegie classification.

## Community Communication

A key university stakeholder who works tirelessly to communicate with our neighbors is the Community Engagement Center (CEC), which grew out of a past President's Fellows white paper. The CEC currently offers numerous resources for community members, including exercise classes, fresh produce markets, workforce development programming, and after-school activities for youth. As it strives to prioritize the needs of the community in all its programming, the CEC has worked with an ad hoc community advisory board over the last few years, assembled on several occasions to discuss specific issues. However, based on our conversations with CEC Program Coordinator, Kelly Quinn, PhD, as well as with other community members, there is a need for regular, ongoing communication between UMB and our neighbors to better define and address our community's needs. We recommend that UMB **institutionalize a formal community advisory board (CAB)** that engages community members, researchers, clinicians, university administration and law enforcement in regular dialogue about any and all issues related to how our campus interacts with our neighbors.



#253 Major Anderson, 27 y/o | October 18, 2016 | 2:25 p.m. | 2000 Cecil Avenue © Amy Berbert

The creation of the CAB should be led by the CEC, and adequate funds should be provided to compensate CEC staff for their time. The expertise of the School of Pharmacy's PATIENTS Program in working with community-based advisory boards for research purposes may also be helpful in the formation of a university-wide CAB. A potential model for UMB's CAB is the University of Washington's City/University Community Advisory Committee, whose purposes include: assisting the university and city in "preserving the many positive aspects of the University's presence in the community" and "the protection of the adjacent community and business areas from the adverse effects of University and City actions" among others.<sup>22</sup> This type of comprehensive consultation with our neighbors will help UMB address the issues of physical development as well as define relevant programming and resources to meet our neighbors' most pressing needs.

We suggest that the new CAB work with UMB administration to develop a strategic plan for addressing gun violence in our community as a matter of high priority. Based on our conversations, we anticipate an early initiative of this plan will be the engagement of young African American men in our neighborhood. Almost everyone we interviewed voiced the immediate need for safe, prosperous employment for young men in our community so that they have viable economic options to support themselves and their families. Under the advisement of the CAB, UMB should focus on developing innovative ways to engage with the young men in our neighborhood.

Beyond a formal advisory board, UMB can do more to better listen to our neighbors and respond to our community's most pressing needs. We propose **an annual open forum conducted by a professional mediator**, which will serve as a controlled environment to discuss neighbors' concerns regarding UMB, such as the issues of physical space and community-based research explored in earlier sections of this paper. This forum should also be a safe space to discuss implicit biases, social injustices, power, and racism. This type of regularly recurring public communication

will help UMB hear directly from our neighbors about how our campus can be a better partner in addressing the root causes of gun violence in our community.

## Community Service

Encouraging students, faculty and staff to engage in direct service to our neighbors is one way UMB can foster a spirit of connectedness and interdependence with our neighbors, which is an important element in building the collective efficacy. Although several UMB programs highlight and promote community service, we have identified additional opportunities to advance this aspect of UMB's community engagement strategy.

Many academic programs within UMB include a community service and/or service learning requirement for students to graduate. A notable exception is the School of Dentistry (SOD), where the vast majority of students voluntarily participate in community service. Dental professionals play a key role in our shared work to prevent violence. The head and neck are among the most common areas of the body to sustain violence-related injuries. Dental professionals are uniquely positioned to identify these types of injuries and make referrals to community support programs and resources that help prevent further escalation, including gun violence. Dean Mark Reynolds, DDS, PhD and Associate Dean of Student Affairs Karen Faraone, DDS, MA spoke glowingly of the dental students' enthusiasm for community service, which includes aiding those affected by domestic violence and abuse. They noted that service is an integral part of the SOD's culture. One way this commitment to service has been institutionalized at the SOD is through community service awards granted to students at graduation: students who average 15 hours of community service per semester are eligible for the Dean's Award for Community Service, and students with 25 hours per semester receive the Dean's Award for Outstanding Community Service. We propose that the President's Office **support an award system for the entire campus to recognize students who have dedicated their educational careers**

**to community service.** Award selection could be based on a student portfolio demonstrating critical reflection on their role as a volunteer and the changes they have encountered in themselves over the course of their education at UMB.

Currently, UMB employees are entitled to 4 paid hours to participate in community service each year. Several of the deans we interviewed mentioned their faculty and staff often want to take advantage of this opportunity but are deterred by the complicated paperwork required. UMB can engage a broader range of UMB staff in community service by **increasing the number of paid community service hours to 8 (a full day)** and increase awareness of this opportunity among staff and administration.

In recognition of outstanding community service, UMB honors an annual Public Servant of the Year among faculty. In addition, the MLK Diversity Award recognizes student, faculty or staff for excellence in diversity, inclusion and equity. In addition to the community service honors UMB currently awards, we suggest UMB **add a funded award for members of the UMB community who are actively doing work in violence reduction and/or prevention.**

Throughout our interviews we learned that faculty, staff, and students are often unaware of the community-based activities taking place in other schools, and community members tire of being offered services from multiple UMB affiliates who are not coordinated with each other. UMB will be more successful in building collective efficacy with our neighbors when the members of our campus are working together to engage our community. Several years ago, SWCOS began an initiative to map all areas in the community where representatives of UMB were working but experienced difficulty accessing this information from the individual UMB schools. We recommend that **each school designate a staff member as the school's Community Affairs Liaison to the Office of Community Engagement** and that this position be supported financially by UMB. Building on the valuable work that SWCOS has started, the Community Affairs Liaison would be tasked

with maintaining a list of their school's active community projects (including volunteer service and research) and inputting this information into a campus-wide database. With this resource, all UMB students, faculty and staff will be able to find community service and/or research opportunities that match their interests. Most importantly, this database would help UMB affiliates coordinate with each other and make plans to form sustainable relationships with our neighbors when initiating any kind of community-based service or research project.

Finally, we recommend that UMB **host an annual campus-wide community service event that involves all of UMB's seven schools.** Such an event would promote a culture of unity among our diverse UMB programs and provide an opportunity for members of our campus to build relationships with our neighbors.

## Community Partnerships

There are already a number of community organizations working to reduce gun violence and the socioeconomic factors that contribute to violence in Baltimore City. These professionals, volunteers, and activists are dedicated to their work and passionate about the difference they are already making in our community. UMB has the opportunity to enhance support for several existing community partnerships and also to enter into new relationships.

## Social Work Community Outreach Service (SWCOS)

SWCOS is an independently funded non-profit organization housed on UMB's campus that is dedicated to creating transformative relationships through university-community partnerships. Their mission is to raise a generation of socially and culturally aware social workers who resolve community issues through an anti-racist, anti-oppressive lens. SWCOS prides itself on fostering inclusivity among its partner community programs, thereby empowering members of the community to achieve a better future for themselves.

SWCOS's work with Baltimore City Public Schools is a great example of a successful university-community partnership that addresses some of the root causes of gun violence in Baltimore. For example, the Positive Schools Center (PSC) is a SWCOS initiative in collaboration with the Center for Dispute Resolution at the Carey School of Law, Morgan State University School of Education and Urban Studies, and Towson University School of Education. The PSC is working to change the school-to-prison pipeline that is rooted in disproportionate suspension rates of children of color. Currently located in 17 different schools, the PSC coaches schools to develop an anti-oppressive lens and a positive, restorative school climate that recognizes and responds to the diverse needs of children who come to school from household environments that include trauma, violence, and food and housing insecurity. Another SWCOS program funds full-time social workers in four community schools, where they address case management issues and structural barriers to children achieving their education.

An important feature of SWCOS's community work is their unwavering dedication to their community partners, even in the face of community violence. For example, when a violent incident occurred at one of the elementary schools where SWCOS was working several years ago, SWCOS remained committed to their work there, even when other UMB schools pulled their student volunteers out of this community service site. Finally, SWCOS emphasizes the importance of working with community partners to strengthen all aspects of their programs; this approach is in contrast with other UMB programs that "cherry-pick" the most promising individuals for participation in programming, leaving other community members behind. Given SWCOS's transformative community work that addresses the root causes of gun violence, we suggest UMB **invest additional resources in SWCOS.**

## Violence Prevention Program

The Violence Prevention Program (VPP) is a highly effective, evidenced-based program

that grew out of the partnership between the University of Maryland Medical System and faculty at our School of Medicine. The VPP currently operates within the Center for Injury Prevention and Policy (CIPP) at the R. Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Center, staffed by caseworkers and social workers with expertise in motivational interviewing and trauma-informed care. The VPP's history exemplifies a successful university-health system partnership, and the present activities of the VPP present an opportunity for increased UMB involvement.

In the early 2000s, faculty and trauma surgeon Carnell Cooper, MD noticed that victims of violent crimes seemed to be at high risk for committing future acts of violence and/or becoming repeat victims of violence (i.e., violence recidivism). To address this issue, Cooper designed a randomized control trial comparing an intensive "Violence Intervention Program" (VIP) to usual care for victims of violence who were treated at Shock Trauma. The VIP group received intensive case management, which included home visits, weekly group sessions, substance abuse rehabilitation, employment training and services, educational services, conflict resolution training and family development support. The results of the trial showed that individuals who participated in the VIP were less likely to be arrested and/or convicted of a violent crime compared to the control group, saving the state of Maryland an estimated \$1.5 million in incarceration costs.<sup>23</sup> This high-profile research was instrumental in establishing the intervention and prevention programs currently offered by the VPP. Today, the VPP is a nationally-recognized program that trains hospitals across the country to implement similar interventions.<sup>24</sup> The VPP has also expanded to offer primary prevention efforts in the community, including Preventing Health Alternatives for Teens (PHAT) in middle schools, My Future My Career in high schools, and the Complicated Grief Group for children who have lost loved ones to violence.

UMB currently supports the VPP by providing stipends for participants in employment training programs. While this support is

indispensable, UMB can do more to help strengthen this renowned program that has been proven to reduce violence in our own city. We recommend that UMB **work closely with VPP and the Center for Injury Prevention and Policy to evaluate their partnership and identify the most effective strategies to support their current endeavors.** We have identified potential areas for tighter collaboration, but defer to the dedicated VPP staff to voice their greatest needs.



Members of the Violence Prevention Program.

We believe UMB can further support the VPP by utilizing its human capital to better collaborate with the program. For example, the VPP receives no compensation for the trainings they conduct at other hospitals across the country, incurring the costs of these trainings in their own budget. Because there is a demand from other hospitals to learn about the VPP's evidence-based interventions, VPP would like to operationalize a training curriculum. UMB could offer administrative and financial support to these knowledge-sharing efforts.

From a research perspective, little has been published in recent years about the VPP.

Partnerships among the VPP and various academic departments within UMB could help measure outcomes and disseminate information about VPP in the academic literature. Further demonstration of positive outcomes can help secure future funding for the continued operation and, hopefully, expansion of the VPP. In the past, the VPP has worked with faculty in the School of Medicine's Department of Epidemiology and Public Health but has not been able to continue this collaboration due to budget limitations. Could these scholarly services be provided for academic credit or some other partnership that does not utilize VPP's limited funding? UMB could also identify and support opportunities for faculty to volunteer their clinical services for routine activities or special events organized by VPP, such as the Complicated Grief Group. Such interventions could have a significant impact in helping participants overcome adverse childhood experiences and reduce the risk of downstream violence.

In addition, UMB can better support VPP's primary prevention efforts through volunteering. These programs include "My Future My Career," a program that engages and exposes high school students to jobs in healthcare and requires ambassadors from individual schools within UMB. The CIPP also organizes community events where UMB volunteers are needed. For example, during Youth Violence Month in April, the CIPP invites children to create and display artwork about violence; UMB can support this initiative by creating a space for the art to be displayed and advertising the display to increase student and faculty attendance, demonstrating UMB's support for children in our community. The VPP has also held a Stoop Storytelling Workshop, which combines therapy and storytelling for men in their programs. The workshop culminates with participants sharing their stories in front of an audience. UMB could support the continuation of this program with funding and encourage students and faculty to attend the final presentations so they can learn more about the personal experience of violence and signal to the participants that we care about the trauma they have experienced.

Additional opportunities for UMB to support the VPP include helping them advocate for insurance reimbursement for VPP support specialists. The VPP would also like to develop a Trauma Response Team that would be deployed to the scene of homicides within Baltimore City. Similar teams exist in San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Oakland, and Johns Hopkins University has recently obtained funding for an East Baltimore Trauma Response Team. UMB could strengthen our existing community partner relationships by collaborating with the VPP and Johns Hopkins School of Public Health to bring these services to West Baltimore.

### **Safe Streets**

Safe Streets is a city-supported, privately-funded community organization that uses the Chicago-based Cure Violence model to reduce shootings in high-violence neighborhoods. In Baltimore, there are currently four Safe Streets locations, each with its own staff of outreach workers who act as "violence interrupters" in the neighborhood. When we visited the Safe Streets office in Sandtown, site director Imhotep Faitu explained that their model of violence interruption treats violence like an infectious disease: the Safe Streets outreach workers identify high-risk individuals—perpetrators and/or victims of violence—and then work to change the behavioral norms of these individuals in order to interrupt the spread of violence through the community. Faitu emphasized that credibility and strong relationships with people in the community are key components of the Safe Streets model. Since the first office was established in Baltimore in 2007, Safe Streets has conducted thousands of mediations resulting in zero retaliation. Daniel Webster, ScD of the Bloomberg School of Public Health has worked extensively with Safe Streets over the years to collect and analyze data, demonstrating reductions in homicides and non-fatal shootings<sup>25</sup> and positive changes in attitudes toward guns and shootings among youth living in and near neighborhoods where Safe Streets operates.<sup>26</sup>

UMB already has a mutually beneficial relationship with Safe Streets Sandtown



through the School of Social Work's Promise Heights initiative. In the past, Promise Heights staff have helped arrange for mental health education for Safe Streets staff, particularly about recognizing and coping with trauma in themselves. Conversely, Safe Streets has helped respond to safety concerns raised by Promise Heights staff on a few occasions, even outside of Safe Streets' official catchment area. Currently, there is funding designated by the state and city to establish several new Safe Streets locations. The School of Social Work was approached with the idea to become the sponsor for a site in the Poppleton neighborhood, but the decision was made that the School was not equipped to handle this kind of work. The Fellows **recommend that UMB revisit the idea of sponsoring a Safe Streets location in our community, in close conversation with local community members.** One important role that UMB could fill is assisting with professional development for the Safe Streets staff by offering continuing education and credentialing.

## Thread

Thread is a large network of volunteers from across Baltimore City that works hand-in-hand with Baltimore City Public Schools to support young people who are facing significant challenges such as poverty, lack of social support, and housing or food insecurity. Youth are invited to participate in Thread if they have a grade point average below 1.0 when they are halfway through the 9th grade; after enrollment, young people are followed by a group of up to five mentors (called a "Thread Family") for the subsequent ten years. The Thread Family structure allows volunteers to support each other as they support their young person in realizing their potential. Each volunteer commits to a minimum of one year, emphasizing the longitudinal relationships built between the young person and the adult volunteers. The volunteer Family Members maintain frequent contact with the young person, helping them manage their responsibilities (e.g., driving them to school) and strengthen their personal relationships (e.g., offering advice about how to talk with their parents). When needed, volunteers receive support from Thread staff, who are



Thread participants with Baltimore City Public School students.

located in four high schools throughout the city (Dunbar, Digital Harbor, ACE-Hampden, and Frederick Douglass).

Now in its fifteenth year, Thread has seen great success with its unique mentoring model: 87% of students who participated in Thread for six years graduated from high school, and 84% have been accepted to college.<sup>27</sup> UMB can learn from Thread's commitment to supporting youth where they are and focusing on building healthy relationships with family and community. Thread currently has a partnership with the School of Medicine's service learning program, having welcomed 10 student volunteers over the last two years. UMB **could increase its support for Thread by providing spaces where Thread Families can gather for events and increasing the number of volunteers from UMB.** Thread has a goal to involve at least 5% of the adult population of Baltimore City in mentoring youth.

## Advocacy and Community Policing

### Policy, Advocacy, and Existing Legal Tools

There are many legal issues surrounding gun violence, including ease of access to firearms, purchasing requirements, licensing provisions, and much more. UMB could serve as a

powerful resource for analyzing law and policy and advocating for safety to the Maryland General Assembly and the Governor.

Right now, UMB as an institution has a single government outreach pipeline: the Office of Government Affairs (OGA). OGA serves as the liaison between the University with local, state, and federal government officials and their staff, as well as community leadership. OGA has a distinguished history of guiding testimony on legislation, providing information to public officials, and taking unified comprehensive positions on various issues relating to the public sector.

Another OGA responsibility of note is the President's Panel on Politics and Policy (P4). P4 is a speakers series that examines the aforementioned public sector issues important to UMB and "that are likely to be affected by the Trump Administration and Congress."<sup>28</sup> The program allows the university community to sit together and, under the guidance of experts, discuss our approach in improving the human condition. More particularly, the Francis King Carey School of Law's Clinical Program has the tools to facilitate these conversations. Clinical programming already exists for subject matter on low-income taxpayers, civil rights, public health, gender violence, criminal justice, human rights, and immigration.

The parts and pieces for UMB to be a strong political advocate exist, but some assembly is required. As we heard from Cassandra Crifasi, PhD and Jonathan Metzl, MD, PhD in their President's Symposium presentations, there is a near-universal consensus among public-health researchers on a set of laws, regulations, and practices that if adopted, would drastically reduce incidents of gun violence across Baltimore and the nation.<sup>2,29</sup> These include, but are not limited to prohibiting felons, juveniles, among others, from having firearms, universal background checks, strict record keeping by retailers, registration, permitting, and carrier testing.<sup>2</sup> The many schools and organizations of UMB should **investigate the viability of these legal tools and agree on a policy position that would, in our professional opinions, result in the mitigation of gun**

**violence.** Once this campus-wide position has been established, the Law Clinic, OGA, and P4, should work in conjunction to promote this policy among the City of Baltimore, Maryland General Assembly, the Governor, and the Congressional leadership that represents Maryland in Congress.

On a more immediate level, one recurring theme we heard from our interviews is that there is a deep lack of trust between many Baltimorean communities and the Baltimore City Police Department (BPD). For example, our Social Work colleagues who conduct the Promise Heights program shared that many of their clients do not call the police when they need help because they believe the police will not respond in a helpful way. On April 7, 2017, the City of Baltimore and the Department of Justice (DOJ) entered into a Consent Decree, which is a court enforceable agreement to resolve the DOJ's findings that BPD had engaged in a pattern and practice of conduct that violates the First, Fourth, and Fourteenth Amendments of the United States Constitution, as well as multiple provisions of federal statutory law. The decree's requirements focus on building community trust, creating a culture of community-oriented problem policing, prohibiting unlawful detentions, preventing discriminatory policing and excessive force, ensuring public safety, and enhancing officer accountability. The Consent Decree provides an opportunity for the public and Baltimore stakeholders (like UMB) to serve as agents of the Court in overseeing the implementation of the Consent Decree. The Baltimore Police Monitoring Team is that team of agents. Their website is available here: <https://www.bpdmonitor.com/>. By harnessing the Law Clinics' resources and OGA's political clout, UMB should **become an active and regular participant in the Baltimore Police Monitoring Team**, working closely with BPD and community leaders to ensure that BPD enforces the law and protects Baltimoreans in a responsible, accountable, and effective manner.

## UMB Police Department

Despite the many challenges associated with the BPD, the UMB Police Department works hard to maintain positive community relationships through both formal and informal initiatives. UMB police officers regularly participate in academic and recreational activities with elementary and middle school children through the Police Athletic/Activities League (PAL) program. The department holds meetings with the Southwest Partnership (a nonprofit comprising seven local neighborhood associations and six anchor institutions) and has implemented the Campus Outreach and Support Team (COAST) program, which includes homeless liaison and neighborhood liaison officers. In addition to these individual programs, the UMB police department emphasizes a community policing approach in all of its duties and routine responsibilities.

An important supporter of this community-based focus is Chief Alice Cary, a thoughtful and motivated addition to the UMB police department as of June 2018. In addition to supporting the initiatives mentioned above, she has exciting ideas for the future. She plans to implement the use of taser and body cameras to reduce the risk of inappropriate use of firearms, develop a “talking tour” of the campus where victims of violence can share their stories, and incorporate therapy dogs within the department. She is also working to develop a mental health policy for her officers, drawing from President Barack Obama’s 21st Century Policing Model. She acknowledges that the demands placed on officers have expanded in recent years. This workforce requires adequate support as they are frequently exposed to violence and trauma.

UMB police department’s jurisdiction includes the main campus boundaries as well as a small area west of Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard that surrounds the BioPark buildings. Several of the West Baltimore residents we interviewed expressed their impression that the UMB Police Department maintains better relationships with and creates a greater feeling of safety among community members than the BPD. Chief Cary speculates that the UMB

police department’s focus on community policing provides officers with more opportunities to engage with individuals living and working in their jurisdiction. These officers are offered opportunities to proactively respond to or prevent potential problems before they escalate.



Alice Cary, MS, chief of the UMB Police Force

In our interviews, we heard it suggested that broadening the UMB police department’s jurisdiction has the potential to benefit the individuals living and working in the expanded space due to the reasons described above. The expansion may have the added benefit of off-loading the struggling BPD. This expansion would only prove beneficial if carried out responsibly and in close collaboration with community members living in the potential expansion area (e.g., with the proposed Community Advisory Board), as they would be greatly affected by such change. The UMB police department would need adequate support to successfully complete such an endeavor in order to **maintain a focus on community policing** and all of the accompanying benefits.

# Conclusion

Orienting our interviews around the intersectional issue that is gun violence, we were confronted with two universal themes in every conversation: poor relationships and power imbalances. These relationships are multi-faceted, including not only UMB's relationship with its own membership, but also between UMB and our immediate neighborhood. Consequently, our recommendations seek to mend broken relationships and promote collective efficacy. To these ends we seek to develop a physical environment demonstrating respect to our neighbors so as to foster clear and respectful conversation with them. We also encourage UMB to adopt a universal curriculum and train faculty with a rigorous sensitivity to implicit biases and trauma-informed care. UMB should also encourage students, faculty and staff to engage in neighboring areas and

create a more regular and less academic role in the neighborhood, listening to the needs of the community without the imposition of academic influences. Lastly, UMB ought to utilize its political tools to the fullest, and with the community's support, advocate for gun reform policy and police-community relations in the public arena on the City, State, and national level.

We conclude by reiterating the importance of healthy, collaborative relationships between the interprofessional schools of UMB, between UMB and the community and amongst all individuals who reside in West Baltimore. We urge UMB to fully invest in relationships with an equitable balance of power, building the collective efficacy within and around our campus that is needed to combat gun violence in West Baltimore.



UM School of Pharmacy students, faculty, and staff show solidarity with student Allison Cowett of Parkland, Fla., who wears a green MSD High School shirt beneath a white coat, at a rally against gun violence held in the school's atrium.

# Summary of Recommendations

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- Commission a campus wide scan of the exposure and impact of gun violence on students, faculty, and staff (see “Campus Climate” page 12)
- Be aware of how the physical presence of our campus impacts the power dynamic in our community (see “Physical Space” page 12)
- Consider a campus-wide cluster hire of faculty to fill critical research gaps related to gun violence (see “Silos” page 14)
- Collaboration between UMB police and faculty experts to restructure orientation safety talk (see “Silos” page 14)
- Organize a campus-wide orientation for incoming students as an “Introduction to Baltimore,” history and trauma-informed care (see “Silos” page 14)
- Include trauma-informed care in every school’s curriculum (see “Curriculum” page 15)
- Thoughtful implementation of a Policing Inside-Out class (see “Curriculum” page 16)
- Support and encourage faculty to utilize tools to recognize and process their own implicit biases (see “Faculty Development” page 16)
- Examine how service-based and violence prevention work contribute to faculty’s potential for promotion and/or tenure (see “Faculty Development” page 16)
- Create a structure that compensates faculty for the time required to complete appropriate “groundwork” for community research (see “Faculty Development” page 17)
- Consider re-instituting the Faculty Fellows Program (see “Faculty Development” page 17)
- Institutionalize a formal community advisory board (see “Community Communication” page 18)
- Annual open forum conducted by a professional mediator (see “Community Communication” page 18)
- Support a campus-wide award system recognizing students who have dedicated their educational careers to community service (see “Community Service” page 19)
- Increase the number of paid community service hours to 8 (a full day) for employees (see “Community Service” page 19)
- Establish a funded award for members of the UMB community actively doing work in violence reduction and/or prevention (see “Community Service” page 19)
- Designate a “Community Affairs Liaison” at each school (see “Community Service” page 19)
- Host an annual campus-wide community service event (see “Community Service” page 20)
- Invest additional resources in SWCOS (see “SWCOS” page 20)
- Evaluate partnership with VPP and identify effective supportive strategies (see “Violence Prevention Program” page 21)
- Revisit the idea of sponsoring a Safe Streets location in our community, in close conversation with local community members (see “Safe Streets” pages 23)
- Increase support for Thread by providing physical space for events and increasing the number of volunteers from UMB (see “Thread” page 23)
- Create and promote a unified institutional position on public policies to mitigate gun violence (see “Policy, Advocacy and Existing Legal Tools” page 24)
- Become an active and regular participant in the Baltimore Police Monitoring Team (see “Policy, Advocacy and Existing Legal Tools” page 24)
- Continue to prioritize community policing through the UMB police department (see “UMB Police Department” page 25)

# Meet the Fellows

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Photo by Adrienne R. Kambouris, MD/PhD Student

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*(Top row, left to right)*

**Zachary Lee**  
School of Law

**Lauren Highsmith**  
School of Social Work

**Nicole Campion Dialo**  
School of Medicine

*(Bottom row, left to right)*

**Jenny Afkinich**  
Graduate School

**Vibha Rao**  
Graduate School

**Jessica Egan**  
School of Nursing

## **JENNY AFKINICH**

Graduate School

Jenny Afkinich is a PhD candidate in the University of Maryland School of Social Work. She has an undergraduate degree from Wofford College in Sociology, History, and German with a concentration on African American Studies and a Master's in Social Work from the University of South Carolina. Before moving to Maryland, she was a social worker in South Carolina working with justice-involved youth as well as children and families exposed to violence.

Jenny is currently working on her dissertation focusing on the role of social workers in reducing disproportionate minority contact in the juvenile justice system. During her PhD program, she spent two years as a research assistant at the National Institute of Justice studying the impact of violence exposure on children. After completing her PhD, she hopes to continue teaching new social workers while conducting research on the perpetration of violence as well as racial disproportionality in the justice system.

## **NICOLE CAMPION DIALO**

School of Medicine

Nicole Campion Dialo is pursuing the dual-degree MD/MPH program at the University of Maryland School of Medicine. She has completed the first three years of the MD program and is working on her MPH, with a concentration in Global Health. She aspires to be a clinician-advocate who works toward a more equitable distribution of health resources in the United States and abroad. She is considering clinical residency programs in Family Medicine and Psychiatry.

Nicole is interested in this year's topic of gun violence after having lived in West Baltimore for four years, first as an AmeriCorps volunteer at Bon Secours Hospital and now as a student at UMB. Hearing Lord John Alderdice speak at the Rising Baltimore Symposium in the fall of 2017 inspired Nicole to question how health care systems can better support individuals

who have experienced or perpetrated violence and work with communities to help break the cycle of violence. She is particularly interested in the role mental health treatment may play in violence prevention.

## **JESSICA EGAN**

School of Nursing

Jessica Egan is pursuing her doctorate of nursing practice in the Adult-Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioner program. She has been a bedside nurse for seven years, primarily working in the Cardiac Intensive Care Unit. Although she has learned an enormous amount in the world of critical care, she is looking forward to helping her future patients through primary care and preventative medicine. Jessica believes it is important to address obstacles and health threats patients face in their immediate and surrounding environments. Unfortunately, gun violence has become a growing threat and she believes that as health care providers we are responsible for finding and advocating for solutions.

## **LAUREN HIGHSMITH**

School of Social Work

Lauren Highsmith received her Bachelor of Science degree in Sport Management from Bowie State University in 2015. After the 2015 uprising in her hometown of Baltimore, Lauren joined the Choice Program, an AmeriCorps-affiliated community outreach organization. Through the Choice Program, she was a contracted case manager, working under the Baltimore City Department of Social Services Foster Care Diversion Program. While working with the Department of Social Services, she gained a passion for working with youth who are at-risk for foster care placement, physical abuse, neglect, substance use, gang initiation, teenage pregnancy, and sex trafficking. After completing her AmeriCorps year of service, Lauren was inspired to pursue her Master of Social Work degree. Lauren's interest in gun violence is fueled by her upbringing in Baltimore as well as her work with the at-risk youth population. She understands that gun violence is not only a matter of when someone

decides to acquire and utilize a handgun, but also more so the circumstances that lead to such a decision.

Lauren strongly believes that the social determinants of health need to be a focal point when addressing certain disparities found within disenfranchised communities. During the 2018-2019 academic year, Lauren will be completing her Master of Social Work degree while serving as the vice president for the University of Maryland School of Social Work Student Government Association. She also is an active member of United Students of African Descent (USAD) and previously served as a USGA Senator for the School of Social Work. Lauren hopes to combine her love of sports, social justice, and youth advocacy to improve the quality of life for not only the youth found in her neighborhood, but in the surrounding communities as well.

## **ZACHARY LEE**

School of Law

Zachary Lee is a second-year student at the University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law. He completed his undergraduate degree in Philosophy at the University of Florida, graduating in 2016. While there, Zachary served as the opinions editor and a member of the editorial board to the school's student newspaper, using his column as a medium to convey his advocacy for various forward-thinking philosophical and political theories. It was here where Zachary's passion for public service and civil discourse was fully realized. He currently serves as the president of the Maryland Law Democrats and as a staff editor for the *University of Maryland Law Journal of Race, Religion, Gender & Class*.

As a Parkland, Fla., native and a new resident of Baltimore, Zachary has had a glimpse of the disparate types of gun violence that exist, and the various conditions that such violence stems from. He hopes to quell such violence nationwide through an interdisciplinary discussion involving legal practice and Constitutional interpretation. Zachary has contributed to this conversation specifically at Cleveland's March for Our Lives Rally to an

audience of over 10,000.

After graduating, Zachary hopes to establish a legal practice advocating on behalf of disenfranchised communities that may potentially fall prey to the effects of climate change. He recognizes the multidimensional relationship that exists between climate change and concepts like resource allocation, education, and public health and safety, and is excited to be part of the conversation in his new home.

## **VIBHA RAO**

Graduate School

During the 2018-2019 academic year, Vibha Rao will be pursuing a one-year Master of Science in Clinical Research through the Graduate Program in Life Sciences at UMB. She received her MD degree from the University of Maryland School of Medicine in May 2018 and her BS degree in Biological Sciences, with a minor in Political Science, from the University of Maryland, Baltimore County in 2014.

In addition to the devastating media coverage of countless mass shootings and the debate over gun control, it was Vibha's clinical experiences, taking care of patients and their families who were victims of gun violence, that showed her the impact it has on the community she has grown so close to during her time in Baltimore. The particular instance that stands out for her was in the Shock Trauma Center when a patient came in with multiple gunshot wounds to the chest and her team had to open his chest at the bedside to restart his heart. Her impactful clinical experiences, developing skill set in public health research, and her love for Baltimore City has piqued Vibha's passion for understanding the root causes of gun violence in the community and proposing how UMB can play a role in addressing this issue from an interdisciplinary scope.



# Appendix

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**Anita Warren**, Clinical and Translational Research Informatics Center

**Ashley Valis**, MSW, Executive Director, Office of Community Engagement

**Bronwyn Mayden**, MSW, Executive Director, Promise Heights

**Bruce Jarrell**, MD, Executive Vice President, Provost, Dean of the Graduate School

**Cassandra Crifasi**, PhD, MPH, Assistant Professor, Center for Gun Policy and Research, Department of Health Policy and Management, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

**Carol Vidal**, MD, MPH, Assistant Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine

**Chief Alice Cary**, MS, Chief of University of Maryland Baltimore Police Force

**Cyndi Rice**, Director of Student Development and Leadership

**David L. Stewart**, MD, Chair, SOM Department of Family & Community Medicine

**Donald B. Tobin**, JD, Dean of the Francis King Carey School of Law

**E. Albert Reece**, MD, PhD, MBA, Dean of the School of Medicine

**Erin Walton**, LCSW-C, Program Manager, Violence Prevention Program, R. Adams Cowley Shock Trauma

**Gun Violence as Public Health Epidemic Task Force**, American Academy of Pediatrics, Maryland Chapter

**Imhotep Faitu**, Site Director, Safe Streets Sandtown

**Jane M. Kirschling**, PhD, RN, Dean of the School of Nursing

**Jay Perman**, MD, President, UMB

**Jaquella Croslin**, Security Supervisor, UMB Police Force

**Jonathan M. Metzl**, MD, PhD, Frederick B. Rentschler II Professor of Sociology and Medicine, Health and Society; Director, Center for Medicine, Health, and Society; and

Professor of Psychiatry at Vanderbilt University

**Kelly Quinn**, PhD, Program Coordinator, UMB Community Engagement Center

**Laundette Jones**, PhD, MPH, Assistant Professor, SOM Department of Epidemiology and Public Health

**Lori Edwards**, DrPH, RN, Senior Director, Center for Global Education Initiatives

**Maria Goodson**, MA, University and Partner Engagement Manager, Thread

**Mark A. Reynolds**, DDS, PhD, MA, Dean of the School of Dentistry

**Natalie D. Eddington**, PhD, Dean of the School of Pharmacy

**Natasha Pratt-Harris**, PhD, Associate Professor and Coordinator of the Criminal Justice program in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Morgan State University

**Rachel Donegan**, JD, Assistant Director, Promise Heights

**Richard P. Barth**, PhD, MSW, Dean of the School of Social Work

**Sharon McMahan**, Community Organizer, Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America

**Tanya Sharpe**, PhD, MSW, Factor-Inwentash Endowed Chair in Social Work in the Global Community, University of Toronto

**Tara Carlson**, MS, RN, Director, Community Outreach and External Affairs, Center for Injury Prevention and Policy, R. Adams Cowley Shock Trauma

**T.J. Smith**, former Chief Spokesman for the Baltimore Police Department

**Toby Treem Guerin**, JD, Managing Director, Center for Dispute Resolution, University of Maryland School of Law

**Vernell Lewis**, Clinical and Translational Research Informatics Center

**Wendy Shaia**, EdD, MSW, Executive Director, Social Work Community Outreach Service

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