

UMB CURE SCHOLARS PROGRAM

Transforming the Lives of Young People in West Baltimore



“The scholars are so engrossed in science and they’re so excited about it. You don’t really get that opportunity and excitement in science in the type of communities that we live in. You don’t get people pushing for your kids to create an awesome career path. The UMB CURE Scholars Program really cares about our children.”

— UMB CURE SCHOLAR PARENT

UMB CURE SCHOLARS PROGRAM

Launched in fall 2015, the University of Maryland, Baltimore’s (UMB) CURE Scholars Program is a **groundbreaking year-round pipeline program** that prepares sixth- to 12th-grade students in West Baltimore for competitive and rewarding careers in health care, cancer research, and STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics).

As the first middle school program funded by the **National Cancer Institute’s Continuing Umbrella of Research Experiences (CURE)**, the UMB CURE Scholars Program identifies sixth-graders with an interest in science from three middle schools in the underserved neighborhoods of West Baltimore, and supports these scholars throughout middle school, high school, and college to create a truly comprehensive pipeline experience. This transformative program is designed to support under-represented minority students by exposing them to STEM careers, exciting experiments, and inspiring mentors. With 200 total mentors from across UMB’s six professional schools and

interdisciplinary Graduate School, scholars participate in after-school hands-on experiments that foster curiosity and enhance science skills while building strong relationships with UMB faculty, staff, and students. Scholars meet three times a week in the new Community Engagement Center, where they have two lab-based after-school sessions and full-day Saturday tutoring and life skill development workshops. The curriculum also includes a comprehensive summer academic enrichment component.

The COVID-19 pandemic halted regular CURE programming in March of 2020. Knowing that the pandemic would affect our scholars and their families and communities disproportionately, the UMB CURE Scholars team sprang into action. Weekly check-ins were developed and supplies including 47 Chromebooks and \$7,000 worth of groceries were delivered to those in need. Summer and fall programming pivoted to an entirely virtual platform to still deliver top-notch STEM educational experiences.



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The UMB CURE Scholars are selected based on their commitment to a long-term program and not on academic performance measures. Through rich scientific opportunities, students gain presentation experience, academic growth, self-confidence, and the motivation necessary to succeed. In fall 2020, the UMB CURE Scholars pipeline included **over 130 scholars in grades six through 11** and boasted an average annual student retention rate of **over 90 percent**.

ENSURING THE FUTURE

Ensuring that our future health care, STEM, and cancer research workforces more accurately mirror our community is no easy task. As UMB President Bruce E. Jarrell, MD, FACS, observes, *“We started the CURE Scholars Program because we know that talent is universal, but opportunity is not. The UMB CURE Scholars Program is a place for the scholars to use their incredible talents in new and exciting ways.”*

The UMB CURE Scholars Program provides that opportunity to local students by creating a long-term, early-intervention pipeline to motivate and shape these future scientists, cancer researchers, engineers, and health care workers. The program’s success results from significant public and private philanthropic support, along with outstanding business and community partnerships. These meaningful collaborations significantly enhance UMB’s capacity to provide programs and services to the young people who urgently seek them. The end result will improve many lives in West Baltimore and replace the cycle of poverty with one of success and achievement for many of its families.



“Before CURE, many of my classmates wanted to become NFL players, NBA players, or hairstylists, but now some of us want to become doctors, engineers, anesthesiologists, or plastic surgeons. CURE has helped us improve our math scores, our study habits, and has shown us what it means to

be a health care professional. CURE has helped me to get closer to my goal of becoming a cardiologist.”

— **SHEREEN FARQUHARSON, COHORT 2**

UMB CURE Scholar from Green Street Academy

WE CAN DO IT TOGETHER

We hope you will join the growing number of UMB benefactors deeply committed to transforming the lives of children and families in one of Baltimore’s most challenged yet resilient communities, while building the next generation of cancer researchers and scientists.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

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