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Upcoming Wisdom Institute Events Fall 2022

October

Celtic Music with Tim Topoleski
October 1 – 1 - 4:30 p.m.

Retriever Essentials and
Winter Wear Collection
October 19 – Noon - 1:30 p.m.

December

Happy Hour
December 6 - 5:30 p.m.



Alumni take a selfie with Dr. Hrabowski. Photo courtesy of Marlayna Demond.

To paraphrase Snoopy,

“It was a dark and rainy day...”

nevertheless, there was a significant gathering of retirees at our 5th Annual Signature Event. Dr. Jay Perman, Chancellor of the USM, spoke about the future of higher education using his story as the son of parents who fled the Holocaust as a point of departure. He noted that “...education was sweet medicine.” Dr. Hrabowski joined the chancellor in a thoughtful conversation about the values that sustain centers of learning. A joyful and unplanned request from Dr. Hrabowski brought everyone out of their seats (that were carefully distanced) and into focus so Marlayna Demond could snap a photo of everyone together! It was a wonderful and joyous detour from the agenda. Drs. Perman and Hrabowski were presented with frames and the promise of photos from the event. A special book capturing memories, photos, and messages from retirees was presented to Dr. Hrabowski who immediately began turning pages with sheer delight. Contributions to Retriever Essentials were collected and the UMBC teddy bears that graced the tables were also donated to Retriever Essentials. The festivities ended with a note of sincere appreciation to all who had gathered together, to our speakers, and to Provost Philip Rous whose ongoing support has literally established and sustained the Wisdom Institute.

It was, however, a bittersweet occasion. On the one hand, remarks about the future of higher education gave us reasons to be optimistic, while simultaneously providing a roadmap for its continued relevance, purpose, and success. On the other hand, it was the last time Dr. Hrabowski would be with us as president of UMBC. That being said, we know a strong and lasting foundation exists and that UMBC will continue to flourish as a Research 1 University. Our confidence was reinforced when our new president was named. Dr. Valerie Sheares Ashby has been named UMBC's next president, and, much to our delight, in many ways she is already a Retriever. For example,

Dr. Sheares Ashby was instrumental in UNC's collaboration with UMBC to launch the Chancellor's Science Scholars Program, among the earliest Meyerhoff Scholars replication pilots at an R1 institution.

Dr. Sheares Ashby holds and demonstrates actions and values that are closely aligned with ours. In his letter announcing her appointment, Dr. Perman wrote, “Without question, Dr. Ashby has the experience and attributes needed to grow UMBC's academic and research prominence, and she is steeped in the culture of inclusive excellence that has made UMBC a national exemplar of equity and achievement.” Furthermore, in describing her tenure as dean of Duke University's Trinity College of Arts & Sciences, Dr. Perman noted that Dr. Sheares Ashby exhibited values UMBC holds dear including, but not limited to, student success, inclusive excellence, community, collaboration, research and innovation, and faith in human potential. Her reaction to being appointed as UMBC's new president was reflected in her words, “I am deeply honored to lead UMBC—an institution with a bold vision that matches my own values, particularly inclusive excellence. I look forward to sharing more about myself and listening to your aspirations for UMBC's future, and I am excited by the possibility of all we can accomplish together.”



President Valerie Sheares Ashby and a UMBC tour guide rub True Grit's nose on her first official day on campus. Photo courtesy of UMBC Magazine.

(Continued from page 1)

Message from the Director

Please join me in welcoming Dr. Sheares Ashby to the UMBC family. This will be the beginning of an exciting new chapter in UMBC's remarkable story. Remember, too, to welcome Dr. Hrabowski to The Wisdom Institute. It is a new chapter in his life as well.

Smiles,
Diane

Scenes from the Signature Event

Photos courtesy of Marlayna Demond.



More Scenes from the Signature Event

Photos courtesy of Marlayna Demond.



Word cloud included in the memory book for Dr. Hrabowski based on contributions from WI members





Joe Arnold and Ed Orser stand in the middle of Frederick Road to promote their Catonsville book.
Photo courtesy of Ed Orser

Scholar's Corner

"Mining Our Own Backyard"

Whether with my students or on my own, there was much to be discovered as we mined our own backyard.

--Ed Orser, American Studies 1969-2010

The following are favorite projects from my years at UMBC.

Arriving at UMBC in 1969 in the midst of the unrest prompted by the Vietnam War, and happy to discover the outdoor benefits of Patapsco Valley State Park, I was quite interested to learn that many of its facilities had been the work of CCC participants in the 1930s and of Conscientious Objectors sent to continue the CCC work in what was the first assignment for COs as World War II approached and the draft was implemented. Searching for a topic for one of my early American Studies senior research seminars, I decided to involve my students in learning more about this significant nearby historical episode. Not surprisingly, many of my male students were worried about their own situation should they eventually be drafted for military service in Vietnam, as some were. The projects provided an opportunity for interviews with several who served at

the Patapsco or other camps and a rare chance to meet with General Hershey, director of Selective Service (1941-1970). Continuing research on my own after the seminar resulted in an article in the Maryland Historical Magazine, "Involuntary Community: A Case History of a Civilian Public Service Camp during World War II."

A subsequent senior seminar project on West Baltimore's Gwynns Falls/Leakin Park, the nearby large woodland reserve that stopped I-70 in its tracks and was literally in my own backyard, prompted my curiosity to learn more and to involve my students in research on what we discovered were three significant stories about this remarkable open space within the city's limits. The first was its transition from private estate to urban park land. The property had been the country estate of Thomas Winans, son of B&O railroad builder Ross Winans, who had sent his two sons to Russia at the request of the tsar to build its first railroad, connecting St. Petersburg and Moscow. When Thomas returned with considerable wealth, he drew upon it to establish a country estate, whose historic structures from the era are still landmarks of the site. Second, with its extensive woodlands, the estate was strongly recommended to be secured as a natural "stream valley park" by Frederick Law Olmsted

Jr. in reports of 1904, 1926, and 1939. When the Winans Estate property became available, in the 1940s the City used funds from the Leakin family bequest to purchase it for an addition to Gwynns Falls Park, the combined land dubbed Gwynns Falls/Leakin Park. Third, only two decades later, it was targeted by transportation planners for the projected route of an interstate expressway. Opponents of the park incursion joined activists from neighborhoods across the city--White and African American, middle and working class--in Baltimore's "expressway wars" of the 1960s-1970s. While their legal action stopped plans for I-70 at the park boundary on the city line, a low-income/African American swath of West Baltimore was a loser in the battle, becoming the route of what came to be known as "the Road to Nowhere." The project resulted in a campus library exhibit, with a talk by the director of Baltimore parks and the publication of a booklet ("A Natural Legacy: Baltimore's Gwynns Falls and Leakin Parks"). In these recent pandemic years, I have returned to what I learned from the seminar experience with a series of walking tours on the park's history with a variety of groups, including The Wisdom Institute.

The request by residents of the small traditionally African American Cowdensville neighborhood on the southeast border of UMBC for help tracing records to document their belief that their ancestors had been free property owners in the pre-Civil War era, led to the topic for another research seminar. In their investigation into the U.S. Census and other data, my students discovered the residents were right on both grounds. Their family members had been both free and property owners at that time. As an additional result, we prepared an exhibit with photos shared by the residents and held a presentation to which members of the community were invited to the UMBC library to view the findings. The project led me to learn that one of Thurgood Marshall's very first civil rights cases originated in Cowdensville, when at an early point in his legal career on behalf of the NAACP, he stepped up to represent a young girl by challenging the absence of ANY high school grades for African Americans in Baltimore County. In taking on the case, he wrestled with the dilemma whether to press in court to



Ed Orser with students visiting Patapsco Valley State Park, site of CCC and CO projects in the 1930s and 1940s which helped establish the character of the park. Photo courtesy of Ed Orser

achieve racial integration or the establishment of new schools for African Americans, even if on a segregated basis. The initial result of the suit was that the county did establish its first high schools for Black students in 1939, not desegregating its school system until several years after the 1954 Supreme Court decision. My discovery of the Cowdensville case's importance resulted in an article in the Maryland Historical Magazine, "Neither Separate Nor Equal: Foreshadowing Brown in Baltimore County, 1935-1937."

community and proceeds to the Catonsville Historical Society.

Student reports on their family's history over recent generations, both White and Black, made me increasingly aware of the massive racial change that occurred in the Edmondson Village West Baltimore hillside rowhouse neighborhoods just to the east of my own home. Checking to confirm these family stories with census data, oral histories, and a variety of other records led me to

document that not only was the change massive, but it was rapid as well, as some twenty thousand people literally changed places in a period of only 10 years, from 1955 to 1965, producing enormous trauma on both sides of the racial divide. Trying to unravel that story and its consequences, I first began to document the nature of the community in the early period of Whites-only settlement, then to interrogate why they fled so rapidly when Black settlement began, as well as to examine the Black experience of in-migration as White neighbors hastened to leave. New to me, and no doubt to many, was the role of blockbusting and the reasons for its power in instigating White flight and Black in-migration. The practice opened areas for residency that Blacks long had been seeking, denied by both personal prejudice and institutional discrimination, but victimized both groups by the process of buying low and selling high, and, in the case of African Americans, on very shaky financial terms. Trying to unravel this traumatic story, I first published a series of articles, then the book, "Blockbusting in Baltimore: The Edmondson Village Story" (1994, 1997), one of the first to document a social phenomenon that had occurred almost simultaneously in many other American cities. 🔥

A request from the Catonsville Room of the community library led Joe Arnold (History) and me (American Studies) to collaborate on a research/teaching project to make use of the photographs acquired in its collection and put them in the context of an important era in Catonsville's history. The research provided an opportunity to include Catonsville's African American experience and European ethnic roots (German and Irish) into the record. Conducted with our students over two semester seminars, the project resulted in an exhibit (at UMBC and the Catonsville Library) entitled "From Village to Suburb: Catonsville, 1880-1940." Joe and I learned a lot from one another about this form of local social/cultural history, as did our History/American Studies majors. The exhibit texts and graphics (photographs, census records, etc.) became a book with the same title, whose cover shows the two of us standing in the middle of Frederick Road (and surviving!) with copies of the books often purchased by both old-timers and newcomers to the historic



Ed and his wife Jo introduce a Wisdom Institute tour group to the history of Gwynns Falls/Leakin Park earlier this year. Photo courtesy of Ed Orser

Armchair Travel Keeping Fit After Retirement

By Bryan MacKay

So now you've got more free time, and if you're like me, the aches and pains of age are catching up. The best way to keep healthy and fit is to exercise regularly. Walking is a great way to meet your exercise goals, and our local Maryland State Parks are the perfect venue.

There's one benefit to aging: if you are over age 62, you are eligible for a Maryland Golden Age Pass. It gives you free entry to any Maryland State Park, and some other useful benefits as well. It costs only \$10 and is good for your lifetime! You can apply online at <https://www.shopdnr.com/marylandstateparkpassports.aspx> Or, you can visit our closest (to UMBC) state park, Patapsco Valley, whose office is at 8020 Baltimore National Pike, Ellicott City, MD 21043, to obtain your Pass in person.



Swallows Falls State Park. Photo by Brian McKay

Patapsco Valley State Park is one of Maryland's biggest and best, and it's only a short distance from UMBC. There are over 200 miles of backcountry trails, but perhaps the most scenic pathway for those new to walking is the paved, almost flat, Grist Mill Trail. It's about three miles in length, runs parallel to the Patapsco River, and is shady and cool even on a hot summer day.

However, avoid the park on summer weekends, when it is so crowded entry to the park may be suspended.

I'm often asked about my favorite Maryland State Parks. I have never found one I didn't like, but my three favorites are Soldiers Delight, Swallow Falls, and Pocomoke River.

Soldiers Delight is actually a Natural Environmental Area, not a park, so you won't find picnic areas, playgrounds, etc. What you will find is the most unique natural area in Maryland. It's a serpentine barren, underlain by an unusual geology and populated with rare and uncommon plants. Read up on the area before you go, and you'll better appreciate Soldiers Delight. Soldiers Delight is near Owings Mills, MD, about a 30-minute drive from UMBC.

Swallow Falls State Park is near Deep Creek Lake in far western Maryland, a solid three-hour drive from UMBC. Swallow Falls is a small park, but it packs an incredible amount of mountain scenery into just 257 acres. Maryland's tallest waterfall, a deep rock-strewn river gorge, and a virgin hemlock forest are all accessible via a mile-long, rocky hiking trail.

Pocomoke River State Park (Shad Landing area) is a terrific place to visit, and is about a three-hour drive from UMBC on Maryland's Eastern Shore. The park has canoe and kayak rentals that you can use to explore mile-long Corkers Creek. It's a narrow, shady, tidal creek passing through a scenic bald cypress swamp alive with wildlife. The campground is excellent, and can be used as a base to explore Ocean City and Chincoteague, both just a 45-minute drive.

So use your new-found free time to both stay fit and to explore the scenic wonders of our Free State! 🐾

Bryan MacKay retired from UMBC in 2012 after 33 years teaching in the Department of Biological Sciences. He is also a double alumnus, BA '73 and MS '79. He is the author of seven books, all published by Johns Hopkins Press, about nature and the outdoors in Maryland, including two about hiking, Hike Maryland and Baltimore Trails.



Maverick Lee photo courtesy of Diane Lee.

Maverick's Corner

Ah, the dog days of summer. Did you know the phrase dates back to the ancient Greeks and Romans? The star Sirius was known as the "dog star" because it made up the nose of a constellation shaped like a dog. When Sirius would appear in the sky just before the sun, near the end of July, it marked the beginning of the very hottest days of the year. The Romans referred to this period as "dies caniculares" or "days of the dog star," which was eventually translated as just "dog days."

According to National Geographic, the Earth's rotation wobbles, meaning Sirius does not appear in the sky at the same time of year as it did back then. The Farmer's Almanac lists the modern "dog days" as lasting 40 days from July 3- August 11. Since the rotation will continue to wobble, however, that means one day, thousands of years from now, Sirius will rise with the sun during the "dog days of winter." I must admit, I like the sound of this change as I am part Husky.

We are excited to announce that "**Maverick's Corner**" will be a new feature in our newsletter. Thanks to everyone who wrote and suggested we make this a regular piece. Actually, we want to make this "Maverick and Friends" in the future. We know there are a lot of animal lovers out there and we invite you to submit a high quality photo of your pet or favorite critter (furry or otherwise). Send it to wisdominstitute@umbc.edu along with your name, permission to include the photo in the newsletter and/or on our website, and the pet's name as appropriate. We hope to include as many of your submissions as we can. 🐾

Creative Endeavors Unearthing Your Hidden Talent

By Betty J. Glascoe



Photo by Betty Glascoe.

How often have you asked yourself, “What can I do with the time that retirement affords me?” For me, I must use my time wisely while growing/learning from every experience. I have volunteered, taught drama classes, enriched my garden, decorated interiors, and designed clothing. However, it was in 2015 when a group of friends did our monthly museum and luncheon tours in DC that I shared that many of the paintings were like child’s play, and I could do better. Everyone laughed. I said, “God, show me additional talents.”

The next day I went to Michaels arts store, purchased a large canvas and paints, but had no idea what I would do next. A young lady standing near asked me if I was an artist. I said that I was not, but I was interested in learning. She proceeded to advise me on supplies that would give paintings texture.

I made numerous mistakes on this canvas, but I kept modifying and repainting. It was an awful mess! However, a financially successful nephew loved it and wanted to buy it. I was quite pleased and gifted him the painting. Beauty is definitely in the eye of the beholder.

The painting on the left is 18x24 inches, wrapped in protective plastic on its way to the new home. I have entitled it HEART OF GOLD. The new owners are ecstatic about their newly acquired art.

I have not retired. I have career transitioned!!!!

Creative Endeavors: *This new feature in the Wisdom Institute newsletter will showcase projects of a creative nature. These can include visual arts such as paintings, sculptures, and photographs; written works such as poems and short stories; performing arts, such as theatrical and musical performances; decorative arts such as crafts and woodworking; and anything else one might consider creative. We invite members to share their creative endeavors via photograph, text, and/or a link to online access. A statement of up to 250 words may accompany the creative submission. Please submit inquiries or materials to wisdominstitute@umbc.edu.* 🐾

New Campus ID Cards



The new UMBC Photo ID.

Did you know UMBC replaced the red ID card with a new black and gold ID card? Retirees interested in having a new ID card may go to the Campus Card office on the first floor of the University Center (near the post office) to obtain a new card. You may have a new photo taken and your card will be printed on the spot.

ID cards for retirees had to be specially printed as the template was modified and the card cannot be used for government identification. With this in mind, there will be a \$10.00 discounted fee for retirees for the new card. Campus Card does not

take cash or credit card payment. You may add \$10.00 to your account to cover the fee.

Log onto myUMBC.edu.

1. Click “Profile” at the top of the page.
2. Click “Campus Card – View More.”
3. Check your Retriever Dollars balance to see if there is at least \$10 available. If not, proceed.
4. Click “Deposit Here.”
5. Under “Account,” select “Retriever Dollars.”
6. Complete the amount with \$10.00.
7. Complete email address.
8. Click “Continue to Payment.”
9. Complete the Billing Information and Payment Details and click “pay.”

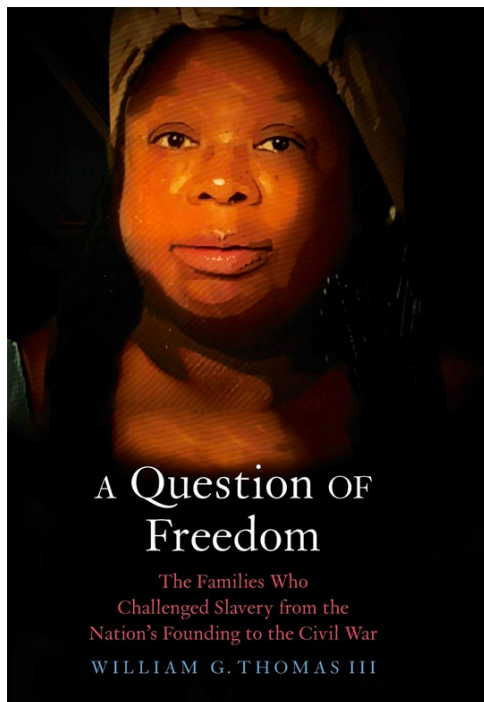
Retirees who already have the black and gold card and want to update their photo may do so at no cost. You may also provide a photo and there will be no additional cost. Guidelines for providing your own photo are as follows:

- It must be a recent photo (taken within 1 year).
- The photo must be in color taken against a solid white, off-white, or lightly colored background.
- The photo must be from the top of shoulders to top of head with some blank space between the head and top edge of the photo (similar to a passport photo).
- The photo must be straight-on and eyes looking directly at the camera (no profile or angled pictures).
- This picture is for identification purposes. The picture must clearly identify your person. No hats, sunglasses, camera flash reflections, red-eye, lens flares, filters, animals, props, additional persons, or jewelry or garments that obstruct a clear view of the face.
- Photo must be in JPEG format only.

Campus ID cards are used to borrow books from the library, obtain the senior discount at many arts performances, gain access to the RAC (emeritus employees are free and others may pay a fee for usage), and to participate in some campus activities. Most Wisdom Institute activities and programs do not require ID. 🐾

Book Talk

by Pamela Morgan



A Question of Freedom: The Families Who Challenged Slavery from the Nation's Founding to the Civil War.

By William G. Thomas III

New Haven: Yale University Press. 2020

ISBN: 978-0-300-23412-1

I recently came across the sign pictured below on social media, and it totally captured my current situation and dilemma. I indeed have been unfaithful in my relationship—with books, that is!! I have been trying to draft a book talk, but I have started and stopped reading at least four books lately, causing that dreaded feeling of having a book report due on Friday for an unfinished book. Without a doubt, I know many of you can relate.

To make matters even more intriguing, the book that I chose to share in this book talk is one that was recommended reading by one of my favorite undergraduate English professors who also is one of my Sorority sisters. I reconnected with Dr. Eleanor Queen Tignor, my former professor, in 2008 when I was working on my dissertation. Because she no longer resides in Maryland, we have maintained contact to a limited extent ever since. A little over a year ago, I invited Dr. Tignor to

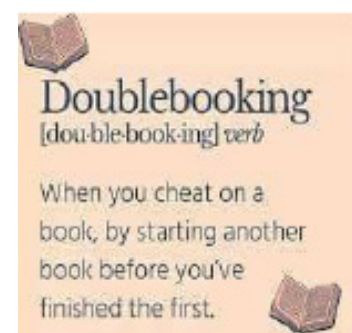
attend the virtual class reunion for my college graduating class, and she accepted. About that same time, she informed me of a book that included members of her family, the Queen Family, and other families who fought legally for their freedom while enslaved or in some cases erroneously designated as slaves. She informed me that I would see a photograph of two of her cousins on page 235 of the book. One cousin, Dr. Letitia Clark, is the great-granddaughter of a brother of Dr. Tignor's father (her uncle). Guilford Queen, the other cousin pictured, is the grandson of the same uncle. She told me that they all grew up and lived in Queenstown, Maryland. She shared other fond memories regarding which relatives she had met as well as details about those encounters. Since my maternal grandmother's married name was "Queen," Dr. Tignor and I revisited her suspicions that she and I may be related. I let her know that it truly would be the joy of a lifetime to learn that she and I are relatives--on the Queen side--in addition to the lifetime bond of being sorority sisters. Such a revelation would add a new dimension to our original professor-student relationship.

My former professor admonished me to "be prepared for a legal and historic mindset" as I read "this very well researched book." Her admonition was definitely on point. While not an easy read, *A Question of Freedom...* by William G. Thomas III, is definitely captivating, especially for the Maryland native that I am. At times it became emotionally draining and too heavy to continue as I pondered the injustices the families were forced to endure at the hands of the Jesuit order. Thomas, an acclaimed historian and University of Nebraska professor, devoted ten years of his life researching and writing this powerful, fascinating work of nonfiction. His sources included, but were not limited to, interviews with descendants of the Butler, Queen, Mahoney, and other families who filed "freedom" suits. He also pored over a multitude of court records as well as the archives of relevant institutions and jurisdictions.

As I began reading this book in earnest in spring 2021, I could actually envision many of the places Thomas cited—Prince George's County, Charles County, St. Mary's County, the Eastern Shore of

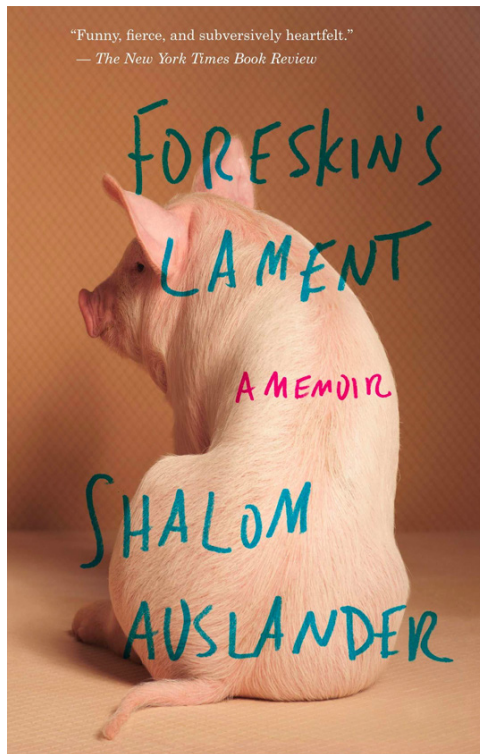
Maryland, Annapolis, and Baltimore. His discussions about Georgetown University caused me to reflect on my semesters completing coursework at a local Jesuit institution of higher education. Each time that I read the name of the matriarch of the Queen family, "Mary Queen," whose questionable status as an American slave was the subject of freedom suits, I experienced flashbacks to my own grandmother and the matriarch of my family, "Mary Queen." I thought about my shopping trips to The Prime Outlets just on the other side of the Bay Bridge in Queenstown, the town founded by the Queen family after most of them won their freedom suit and eventually their freedom. I was astonished to discover that among the attorneys representing these families in their pursuit of freedom was Francis Scott Key. My astonishment was the result of having visited Mr. Key's Terra Rubra birthplace and homestead in Carroll County over a decade ago. I personally saw the originally unmarked burial plot of enslaved people who had been Key's human property. According to the Carroll County native who accompanied my group, a gravestone inscribed, "THE KEYS SLAVES BURYING GROUND, CIRCA 1780," was installed by the Historical Society of Carroll County centuries later.

Apparently, accepting the challenge of reading *A Question of Freedom...* is prompting more feelings and flashbacks than I ever imagined it would, and I have so much more of this text to devour. If you do not mind "facing history and ourselves," this book is one you certainly should read. As one reviewer stated, "This is an eye-opener of a book," and to think that after all of these decades, one of my favorite undergraduate English professors is still influencing my reading options and interests. As for the question of kinship, that inquiry is to be continued. 📖



Book Talk

By Fred Pincus



Foreskin's Lament: A Memoir

By Shalom Auslander

Riverhead Books, 2007

ISBN: 978-1594483332

I was listening to "This American Life" on NPR and some guy was talking about a Blessing Bee at his ultra-Orthodox Jewish Yeshiva in upstate New York. The Rabbi would give the name of a food (for example, apple) and the student would name the blessing required before eating the food. If you got it right, you went to the next round. If you got it wrong, you're out of the bee. He wrote this with wonderful humor, and I decided to find his memoir.

When I looked it up in the Enoch Pratt Library catalogue, there was an electronic and a print version, so I downloaded the electronic book and began reading immediately. After a page or two I started to get suspicious since the author was talking about rugby in New Zealand. One of the characters was named "Foreskin." Also, it was a play, not a memoir. What the hell is going on, I thought to myself.

I looked back at the cover and saw that the author's name was Greg McGee, not Shalom Auslander. Unbelievable! There are TWO books with the weird title of Foreskin's Lament. Who would have thought?

I returned the electronic book and put a hold on the print book. I thoroughly enjoyed Auslander's discussion of his rebellion against his ultra-Orthodox upbringing and his adult struggle coming to terms with God and religion. 🕯

UMBC Stories

The Visitor

By Fred Pincus

I was sitting in my office sometime in the 1980s, when I heard a knock on the door. I looked up and saw a large, white man in a dark business suit standing in the doorway. I was immediately drawn to his closely cut, blond hair; almost a crew cut. "Dr. Pincus?" he said with a serious look on his face. "Yes," I said, wondering who could he be? He took a few steps toward me, held out his badge and said, "I'm Special Agent Smith from the FBI." Whoa! I say to myself. What does he want with me? Am I being investigated?

"How can I help you," I said, with a polite smile. "One of your former students has applied for a position in the FBI and I'm doing a background check on her," he said. "She gave your name as a reference." Why would she give ME as a reference for a job in the FBI? Is she that dull that she didn't know about my politics? "Please sit down," I said. I explained that I mentored her for a few weeks about 3 or 4 years earlier. "Was she a good student?" he asked. She wasn't UMBC's greatest student. "She was kind of an average student," I told Special Agent Smith. "I've had better and I've had worse." Then he got to the big stuff. "Is she patriotic?" Hey, man, look around you, I wanted to say. One of my posters boldly proclaimed "U.S. Out of El Salvador." Another talked about political repression against blacks in the United States. Pictures of Chairman Mao and Karl Marx looked down on us both. My office screamed radical politics. "Well, she never said anything that would make me doubt her patrio-

tism," I said, trying not to laugh. "Do you know if she is a member of any radical groups that want to overthrow the government of the United States," he asked. This guy is unbelievable, I said to myself. He keeps on asking these stupid questions without seeming to realize that I, as a reference, would never pass his background check. "Not that I know of," I replied. After asking a few more questions, Agent Smith thanked me for my time, shook my hand, and left my office. I never did learn if she ever became a special agent. 🕯

Poetry Corner

by Robert Deluty

Empathy

One-year-old,
Teething, miserable,
Refuses to suffer quietly.
Mother tries every trick:
Each is met with tears, tantrums.
Exhausted, hopeless,
Mother screams, then sobs.
Seeing an adult cry
For the first time,
Child quiets down,
Hands her the bottle.

Special Delivery from Korea
Airport as maternity hospital.
Arrival gate as waiting room.
Pilots, social worker: midwives.
Baby, conceived and born
Half-a-world away, comes home
To anxious, joyous
Adoptive parents.

Dr. Robert H. Deluty is Associate Dean Emeritus of the Graduate School. A psychology professor at UMBC from 1980 to 2016, he was named Presidential Teaching Professor in 2002. Robert's poems and essays have been published in The Wall Street Journal, The Baltimore Sun, The Peg-asus Review, Modern Haiku, Voices: The Art and Science of Psychotherapy, Psychiatric Times, the Journal of Poetry Therapy, Welcome Home, Muse of Fire, Maryland Family Magazine, and many other newspapers, journals, and anthologies. Two poems are shared here for you to enjoy. 🕯



Prescription Drug Benefits

Maryland State Prescription Drug Plan

The 2022 Maryland General Assembly adjourned on April 11, 2022. Unfortunately, we were not successful in getting either bill passed to restore prescription drug benefits this year. The prescription legislation that would return retiree prescription benefits to those vested retirees who began state service before July 1, 2011, and who have reached the age of Medicare eligibility did not go anywhere in 2022. Despite many co-sponsors in both the House and Senate, the bills were not voted on in either chamber. The Chairs of the committees assigned to review the legislation in both chambers never called for a vote. We will be fighting for legislation next year and will need the help of all retirees to get it through the legislature. We need all concerned to reach out to their personal and professional networks and connect with state retirees who worked at other colleges and universities or other state agencies. All 240,000+ state retirees are impacted, and our voices need to be heard in Annapolis. There is no central registry of retirees that we can access, so please start collecting names and emails of prescription-benefit-impacted people now. We can share information and get them involved as a legislative push develops late in 2022 and early in 2023 for the next session of the Maryland General Assembly in January 2023. Be ready to pass on the information.

The current retiree prescription drug plan will remain in effect through at least the end of December 2023. Per Maryland State Department of Budget and Management – 03-29-2022

For more information please see: <https://dbm.maryland.gov/benefits/pages/SB946.aspx>

The relationship between the most recently proposed legislation and the ongoing lawsuit, which is responsible for our current access to these promised benefits, isn't straightforward. The lawsuit and the legislation differ in their focus on when you retire vs when you were hired. The lawsuit filed to challenge the prescription benefit changes that were to be implemented in 2018 is still pending, but there has been one recent judicial ruling from December 2021 [see judicial ruling article <https://thedailyrecord.com/2021/12/30/judge-some-maryland-retirees-have-contract-right-to-prescription-benefits-for-a-summary>]. We currently retain benefits because of a court-ordered injunction as a result of this lawsuit. The judicial ruling allows certain retirees to proceed with the lawsuit, while others have been dismissed. Of course there are, or will be, appeals. A positive finding in the lawsuit will bring state prescription benefits to retirement-qualified employees who retired by June 30, 2011, and those who retired between July 1, 2011 and Dec. 31, 2018. The legislation, on the other hand, would provide benefits for all those vested retirees who began service prior to July 2011 without regard to the date of retirement.

Joining United We Matter, Inc. (<https://unitedwematter.com/>) is a way for all of us to keep up with news and other information about the status of efforts of the State of Maryland to renege on its

contract with employees nearing retirement. United We Matter has broadened its scope of interest to include threats to limit or reduce Maryland State pensions and other benefits for retirees.

To support Deborah Hill, the attorney for United We Matter, Inc., please send donations to:

Law Office of Deborah Hill
P. O. Box 465
Cockeysville MD 21030

Become Active in The Wisdom Institute

The Wisdom Institute offers many opportunities for you to contribute your time and expertise. Help expand the reach and contributions of The Wisdom Institute:

- Stand for election to the Wisdom Institute Board
- Join a committee
- Participate in Wisdom Institute events
- Contribute UMBC Stories, Book Talks, Armchair Travel, Scholarly Articles, Creative Endeavors, Maverick's Corner, and other items to The Wisdom Institute Newsletter
- Mentor students
- Support Retriever Essentials
- Volunteer to lead a new activity, host a virtual luncheon, or share an idea

Need more information, want to offer a suggestion, or offer to lead an activity?

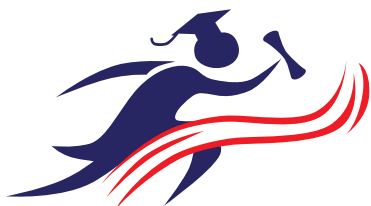
Contact wisdominstitute@umbc.edu.

We would love to hear from you! 🙌



*Basketball night at the UMBC Event Center.
Photo courtesy of Marlayna Demond*

ISO: Once-a-Week Volunteer Tutors



¡Adelante Latina!

¡Adelante Latina!, a three-year, after-school, college access program for high-achieving, 10th-12th grades Baltimore City Latina girls, is searching for volunteers to tutor once a week – on either Tuesdays or Thursdays -- during the school year. The program's focus is to improve student vocabulary, reading comprehension and writing skills, as well as helping them with SAT preparation.

Our goal is to prepare the students for college and, in their senior year, to help them with the college and scholarship application process.

¡Adelante Latina! meets from 4:10-6:15 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays from early September to late May, with a 5-week break from mid-December to late January twice a week. On one day, students meet as sophomore, junior and senior cohorts with a teacher, on the other day each student has a one-on-one volunteer tutor.

The location for the program for fall of 2022 will be Notre Dame of Maryland University.

VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENTS:

NO SPANISH REQUIRED! Volunteer tutors do not need to speak Spanish, as all of our students are bi-lingual. A love of the English language, reading and writing, patience with teenagers and a sense of humor are needed. Although teaching experience is not required, it is helpful. Tutors must be able to guide students in assignments in reading comprehension, writing skills and vocabulary on a high school level.


Tutors are assigned to one student for the year and work with them on assignments provided by



*Jack Sinnigen and his student, Ashley Ruano Hurtarte at Ashley's graduation from UMBC.
Photo courtesy of Jack Sinnigen*

¡Adelante Latina! teachers. And occasionally some school homework as well. We ask for a commitment of at least one school year. Ideally, the same tutor will remain with the same student for all 3 years of the student's time in the program.

Tutors working with juniors or seniors will also help with the SAT verbal test preparation. Answers to the SAT questions are always provided but the teacher is expected to explain them. Senior tutors help with college and scholarship applications.

For more information, please contact Ellen Spokes at ellen@adelantelatina.com or see, www.adelantelatinabaltimore.org. 



*Preparing for a hike.
Photo courtesy of Leslie Morgan*

Past Events

December 2021 Holiday Happy Hour

A group of WI members from both staff and faculty joined together at the Erickson School to enjoy conversation, holiday treats and festive beverages. We had a great time, so we plan to repeat this event in early December of 2022. Join us!

January 2022 Support Retriever Essentials

Friends and colleagues met on campus for a "drive through" collection of non-perishable food and toiletries for UMBC community members in need. A significant amount of food and clothing was collected for those in need in the campus community.

February 2022 At-Home Watch Party: Super Hummingbirds

During the doldrums of winter, a group of WI members joined together virtually for a slice of summer. We watched a beautiful video with close-up shots of these amazing birds and learned about their impressive abilities in a beautifully filmed video.

March 2022 Avoiding Scams and Frauds #2

Last year we held an informative and well-received session on how to avoid scams, identity theft, and fraud. This online session, led by an expert from AARP of Maryland, shared more options to take to keep yourself safe.

June 2022 Morning Hike and Brown Bag at Centennial Park

A group of stalwart WI members joined together for a warm walk around the lovely Centennial Park Lake on a sunny morning early in June.

July 2022 Flatland Bluegrass Drive at Lurman Woodland Theatre-

The bluegrass music at Lurman Woodland Theatre was enjoyed by all in our group on the steamy evening.

Join AARP'S FRAUD WATCH NETWORK

877-908-3360

aarp.org/fraudwatchnetwork

Information presented in this workshop is intended to be for informational and educational purposes only.

General ID protection

- Don't leave mail or personal information unsecured
- Use credit cards instead of debit cards
- Make a copy everything you carry in your wallet
- Micro shred everything

Computer Safety

- Create secure passwords for every account - The longer the better and phrases are good
- Use a password vault, i.e. LastPass, Dashlane, Zoho Vault
- Don't leave pins and passwords around for others to see
- Make sure the URL is https
- Update software on computers and devices and keep antivirus and spyware protection up to date
- Use a VPN (Virtual Private Network) in public places
- Use two step authentication
- NEVER CLICK ON A LINK OR OPEN A FILE THAT YOU ARE NOT SURE ABOUT

Financial protection

- Monitor bills & financial accounts online instead of by mail
- Freeze your credit with each of the three major credit bureaus:
 - Equifax (1-800-349-9960)
 - TransUnion (1-888-909-8872)
 - Experian (1-888-397-3742).
- Store the passwords you'll need to unfreeze your credit in a safe place

Spam calls

- Never say "yes"
- Remember the perfect refusal script; "I don't know why, I just don't want it."
- Question everything – assume it's a scam
- Don't give information over the phone unless you initiated the call
- Don't call back unidentified numbers
 - See if phone company will disallow international calls
- Social Security/IRS will never call on phone
- **NEVER GIVE INFORMATION UNLESS YOU INITIATED THE CALL**

Resources

- Do Not Call Registry
 - donotcall.gov
 - 888-382-1222
- Verify charities
 - charitywatch.org / charitynavigator.org
- Stop credit and insurance offers
 - optoutprescreen.com
 - 888-5-OPT-OUT
- Do your homework before investing
 - <http://smartcheck.gov>
- Limit mail
 - dmachoice.org
- Check and monitor credit reports
 - www.annualcreditreport.com
 - 877-322-8228
- Check <https://haveibeenpwned.com/> to see which of your accounts has been compromised
- <https://www.aarp.org/money/scams-fraud/tracking-map/>
- Baltimore office of the FBI
 - 410-265-8080
 - www.iC3.gov
- Better Business Bureau
 - 410-347-3990
 - <https://www.bbb.org/scamtracker>
- Federal Trade Commission
 - 888-225-5322
 - <http://reportfraud.ftc.gov> and IdentityTheft.gov
- National Elder Fraud Hotline
 - 833-372-8311

If your identity is stolen NOTIFY, NOTIFY, NOTIFY, DOCUMENT, DOCUMENT, DOCUMENT

- Keep notes and records of all calls and contacts
- Place fraud alert with credit bureaus
- Call AARP's Fraud Watch Network (877-908-3360)
- Notify banks and credit card companies
- Contact local police department and file a report
- Call the Social Security Administration's fraud alert line (800-269-0271)
- Call the Federal Trade Commission,
 - (877-FTC-HELP)
- Contact your insurance provider
- If Medical Identity Theft report it at
 - 1-800-447-8477 / OIG.HHS.gov/fraud/hotline

Upcoming Wisdom Institute Events Fall 2022



October

Celtic Music with Tim Topoleski...In Person! **October 1 – 1 - 4:30 p.m.**

Enjoy an in-person session with Tim Topoleski playing fiddle and, perhaps, other instruments, too, as he teaches us about Celtic music. His first concert with the WI [on Zoom] was among our most popular events. This event will be held in the Skylight Room, 3rd Floor, The Commons.



Retriever Essentials and Winter Wear Collection **October 19 – Noon - 1:30 p.m.**

We invite WI members and friends to donate nonperishable foods, toiletries, winter wear [lightly worn coats, hats, gloves, boots] or cash to support UMBC community members in need. Our donations to Retriever Essentials have helped many people already. The collection will be held at the Catonsville Park & Ride, off South Rolling Road.

December

Happy Hour **December 6 - 5:30 p.m.**

Join friends, old and new, at our 2nd holiday get-together at the Erickson School, located in UMBC's Research Park. Bring your favorite beverage and, if you wish, a favorite festive food treat to share. It's a great chance to catch up...invite a WI friend!



ATTENTION ALL WISDOM INSTITUTE MEMBERS **Affiliate Membership in the Wisdom Institute**

Did you know that not only are UMBC retirees members of the Wisdom Institute, additionally, we have affiliate members? Affiliate members are spouses and life partners of UMBC retirees. Also, upon request, former UMBC employees who retired from a non-UMBC position and who wish to join The Wisdom Institute can do so as Affiliate Members. Please spread the word!

For those who are interested in joining in on the fun and community, just send an email to wisdominstitute@umbc.edu.

University of Maryland, Baltimore County
1000 Hilltop Circle
Sherman Hall 117
Baltimore, MD 21250



Attendees at the 2022 Signature Event

Join fellow members of the WI for community and fun.

