

2019 ANNUAL REPORT



**SHERMAN
CENTER**

for Early Learning
in Urban Communities



UMBC





The Sherman Center for Early Learning in Urban Communities was conceived from a deep desire to improve the educational experiences and outcomes of young children in Baltimore and similar contexts. In 2019, we came closer to achieving this goal - fully implementing the theories of change that guide the work of the Sherman Center and one of its key initiatives, the Maryland Early Childhood Leadership Project. In this annual report, we present these theories of change and highlight activities and individuals at the center of their execution. Of course, we are leaving out of this report more than we are including. We cannot fully capture the time, energy, and caring that characterizes each Sherman Center activity or all the individuals at UMBC, our partner schools and organizations, and Baltimore City Schools, who have supported the work at every stage of its development. While recognizing its limitations, we hope that the 2019 Annual Report provides you with a meaningful glimpse into the mission and heart of the Sherman Center.

Dr. Mavis G. Sanders, Director

Sherman Center Theory of Change

The Sherman Center for Early Learning in Urban Communities seeks to build a strong foundation for lifelong learning and academic success by connecting theory, evidence, and practice.

PARTNERSHIPS.
Collaborating to expand resources and opportunities for young learners, birth to eight.
Activities: Diverse Books Project; Families, Libraries, and Early Literacy Project; Literacy Fellows Program

MULTIDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP.
Producing and disseminating new knowledge on early childhood education policies and practices.
Activities: Faculty Recruitment, Faculty Research Award



PROFESSIONAL AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT.
Building professional knowledge and leadership in early childhood to promote transformational change.
Activities: Teacher Summer Institute, Maryland Early Childhood Leadership Program



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PARTNERSHIPS

The Sherman Center collaborates with schools, families, and community partners to enrich learning experiences for children birth to eight. In 2019, the Sherman Center continued its focus on literacy – a gateway to knowledge across all curriculum areas.

The Diverse Books Project

Book-rich classrooms positively affect children's reading comprehension and motivation. Research further shows that culturally responsive book-rich classrooms enhance literacy gains for children of color. The goal of the Diverse Books Project is to ensure that early childhood educators at our partner schools have access to high quality, multicultural children's books, and opportunities to share ideas and insights about their use. UMBC experts in the field of children's literature curated a selection of exemplary books for this on-going project. Each grading period, early childhood educators have the opportunity to review 15 of these books located in a designated space in their schools (the "Book Nook"), and request one or multiple copies of a book for their classrooms.



Families, Libraries, and Early Literacy Project

The goal of the Early Literacy Project is to introduce Judy Center parents and caretakers of young children (birth-3) to the wonderful services and resources available to them through the Enoch Pratt Free Library system, and facilitate their regular use of the system to promote their children's language and literacy development. In addition to encouraging families' use of the library to create literacy rich home environments, the Sherman Center provides families with choices of books from its Diverse Books Collection to enhance their personal collection of beloved stories. Four times per year, staff at the Sherman Center, Lakeland and Curtis Bay Judy Centers, and the Brooklyn Branch of the Enoch Pratt Free Library meet with families at community-based locations to share books and information, develop materials, and model activities to promote early literacy and young children's love of reading.



Sherman Center/Shriver Center Literacy Fellows Program

The Sherman Center/Shriver Center Literacy Fellows Program is a collaboration to provide literacy volunteers for two Sherman Center partner schools: Bay Brook and Curtis Bay. Literacy Fellows, UMBC undergraduate students with interests in education and community service, are enrolled in The Shriver Center's 096 Community Service & Learning Practicum (Leadership Section), and responsible for recruiting and organizing other UMBC students to serve as classroom literacy volunteers for young learners in grades 1 and 2.



PARTNERSHIPS, 2019 BY THE NUMBERS

8

Partners collaborated with the Sherman Center to improve literacy experiences and outcomes for young learners in Baltimore.

- Bay Brook Elementary/Middle School
- Curtis Bay Elementary/Middle School
- Curtis Bay Judy Center
- Lakeland Elementary/Middle School
- Lakeland Judy Center
- Maree G. Farring Elementary/
Middle School
- Shriver Center, UMBC
- Enoch Pratt Free Library
(Brooklyn Branch & Central Office)

43

Early childhood educators at our four partner schools requested over 250 multicultural books for their classroom libraries through the Diverse Books Project.

178

Multicultural books from the Sherman Center's Diverse Books Collection were distributed to families at Curtis Bay and Lakeland Judy Centers through the Families, Libraries, and Early Literacy Project.

525

Hours were volunteered during the literacy block in 10 first and second grade classrooms at Bay Brook and Curtis Bay Elementary/Middle Schools through the Sherman Center/Shriver Center Literacy Fellows Program.

MULTIDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP

The Sherman Center Faculty Research Award seeks to expand knowledge about policies and practices that enhance the learning of young children in urban communities like Baltimore. The competition is open to all faculty who hold academic appointments at UMBC and who are eligible to submit applications for external support. Co-investigators may include individuals not affiliated with UMBC. The 2019 Sherman Center award recipients, Dr. Susan Sonnenschein, Professor of Psychology at UMBC, and Dr. Claudia Galindo, Associate Professor of Education at the University of Maryland, College Park, are conducting a three-year study examining the implementation and effects of the Sherman Center/Shriver Center Literacy Fellows Program.

2019 Faculty Research Award Winners - Total Award, \$95,769.00



Dr. Susan Sonnenschein



Dr. Claudia Galindo

"We are honored to be recipients of the 2019 Sherman Center Faculty Research Award. Our evaluation examines how the Literacy Fellows program impacts young children's reading development. We have completed the first semester of the evaluation at Bay Brook and Curtis Bay Elementary/Middle Schools with first and second graders, their teachers, and the literacy fellows and volunteers. The teachers and students are very excited to be able to work with these talented UMBC volunteers. Not only do they provide needed "extra hands" in the classroom, but also serve as positive role models for the children. As the study continues, we hope our findings facilitate program improvement and help to advance the work of the Sherman Center."

PROFESSIONAL AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Deep and lasting change requires professionals and leaders prepared to execute it. The Teacher Summer Institute (TSI) and the Maryland Early Childhood Leadership Program, which is described in depth in the next few pages of this report, are two Sherman Center initiatives focused on building the capacity of early childhood educators to serve as agents of change. Below, we share highlights from the 2019 TSI focused on Translanguaging in the Early Childhood Classroom, facilitated by Dr. Jennifer Mata-McMahon.



35

early childhood educators at our four partner schools attended the four-day TSI

100%

of participants rated the quality of the TSI a "5" (Excellent) on a 5-point scale.

Reported Growth:

Participants rated their knowledge on translanguaging at the beginning and end of the TSI using the following scale: 1(novice), 2(intermediate), 3(advanced) and 4(expert). The results are below.

Fig. 1 "Rate knowledge about Translanguaging as an instructional technology strategy": TSI Participant Response in %.

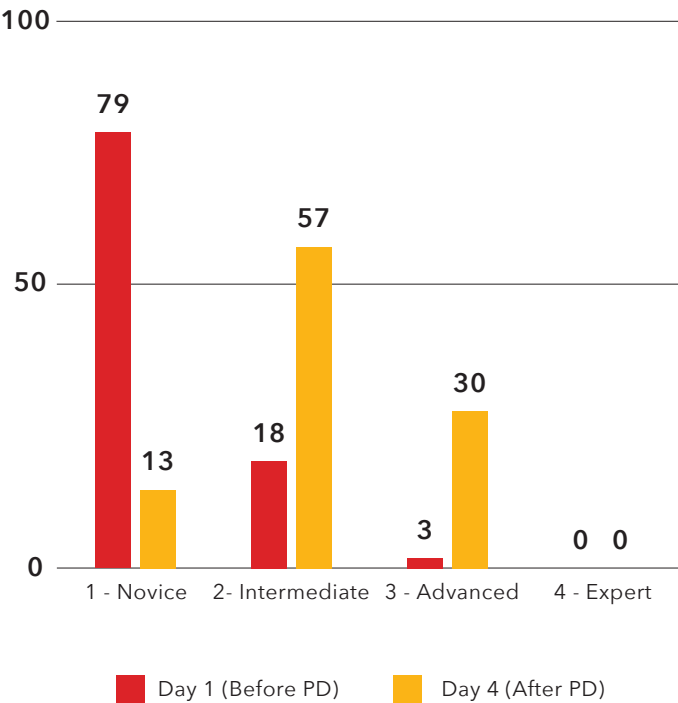
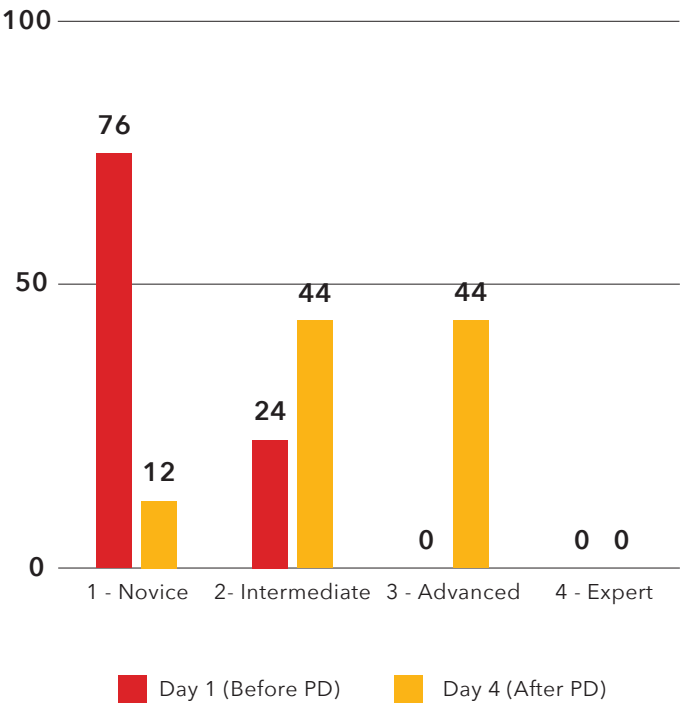


Fig. 2 "Rate your knowledge about Translanguaging strategies for the early childhood classrooms": TSI Participant Response in %





Maryland Early Childhood Leadership Program Theory of Action

The Maryland Early Childhood Leadership Program (MECLP) is a workforce development initiative designed to accelerate cross-sector leadership in early childhood.



FROM NEED TO SOLUTION - 2019 TIMELINE

Building on MECLP's significant success in 2018, our progress in 2019 illustrates substantial growth in accelerating leadership in a variety of programs, classrooms and associated fields that make up Maryland's early childhood system.

January

Released Request for Proposal (RFP) to identify vendor to develop an innovative learning model, content and training materials for MECLP's leadership development curriculum.

February

Eight RFP submissions reviewed.

March

Institute for Early Childhood Education and Leadership (IEELI) at UMASS Boston selected to modify existing curriculum to meet MECLP's identified competencies.

May

Application broadly released to identify early childhood professionals interested in becoming MECLP's inaugural cohort fellows.

**June -
August**

44 applications received and reviewed; 20 candidates interviewed.

September

14 inaugural cohort fellows selected representing the ethnic, geographic and affiliation diversity in Maryland's early childhood system.

December

Kick-off and orientation of MECLP's SHER 601 course.

MECLP's first course – SHER 601 – Leading for Change in Early Childhood Education – builds on the research-based course developed by Dr. Anne Douglass, founder and executive director of the Institute for Early Education Leadership and Innovation, University of Massachusetts, Boston, and incorporates key competencies tailored to the specific needs of Maryland's early childhood community. The Leading for Change course provides a mix of in-person daylong learning sessions, guest presentations, asynchronous online learning sessions, and individual and small group projects. Each MECLP fellow/pioneer is expected to complete a capstone project focused on an issue specific to early childhood education in Maryland. SHER 601 is taught by Dr. Douglass, a recently appointed member of UMBC's graduate faculty and teaching assistant, Amanda Lopes. The course is offered by the Sherman Center and the Division of Professional Studies (DPS) at UMBC, and funded by a generous grant from the Maryland State Department of Education.

"Leadership from early educators is integral to the future of early childhood education. In Maryland, this first cohort of early childhood education leaders reflects the rich diversity of early childhood settings, programs, systems and geography. Exposed to training in entrepreneurial leadership, cohort members will advance their knowledge, become more effective leaders, and implement new practices and systems to better support young children, their families and communities."

Dr. Anne Douglass



Dr. Anne Douglass

Dr. Anne Douglass is associate professor and director of the bachelor's degree and leadership programs in early childhood education at the University of Massachusetts, Boston. Dr. Douglass is an expert on leadership, quality improvement, and professional development strategies and policies that promote talented, diverse, entrepreneurial leadership within early childhood education. She is author of *Leading for Change in Early Care and Education: Cultivating Leadership from Within*. Dr. Douglass has a PhD in Social Policy from Brandeis University, a master's degree in education from Harvard University, and a bachelor's degree in political science from Wellesley College.



Amanda Lopes

Amanda Lopes is a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Massachusetts, Boston with 25 years of experience as an early educator, program administrator, consultant, and trainer. She has a bachelor's degree in Theater Arts from the University of Puget Sound, a master's in education from the College of Saint Rose, and a Post Master's Certificate in Early Childhood Education Research, Policy, and Practice from the University of Massachusetts, Boston. Amanda currently teaches courses focused on the creative arts curriculum, and is a leadership and professional development consultant for early education programs throughout the northeast.

Meeting the need for more skilled leaders poised to improve outcomes for young children.



2019 - 2020 Inaugural Cohort



Philanthropist, Betsy Sherman; Sherman Center Director, Dr. Mavis Sanders; MECLP Co-Founder and Sherman Center Visiting Executive in Residence, Louise Corwin; MECLP Co-Founder and Harvard Advanced Leadership Initiative Senior Fellow, Meredith Callanan

Jennifer Arnaiz: Director of the Child Care Resource and Referral Center, Early Childhood Services Division, Department of Health and Human Services, Montgomery County Government.

Erin Bonzon: Administrator in the Office of Children and Families, Department of Community Resources and Services, Howard County Government.

Leslie Frei: Teacher Specialist in Early Childhood Education, Frederick County Public Schools.

Stephanie Geddie: Instructional Facilitator for Early Childhood Programs, Howard County Public School System.

Cheri Helmstetter: Birth - Age 4 Literacy Coach for the Allegany County Public Schools' Striving Readers Grant.

Candise Hill: Literacy Coach at Robert W. Coleman Elementary School, Baltimore City Public Schools.

Laura Hutton: Associate Professor and Education Department Coordinator at Harford Community College.

Tiffany Jones: Level 5 EXCELS family childcare provider in Montgomery County.

Tomeaka Jupiter: Director of Healthy Families Baltimore County, a program of the non-profit Abilities Network.

Christine Lopez: Early Childhood Instructional Resource Teacher for PreK classrooms in the Early Childhood Office, Prince George's County Public Schools and current President of MDAEYC.

Carolina Reyes: Owner/Director of the Arco Iris Bilingual Children's Center (AIBCC) in Prince George's County, a bilingual childcare center serving 61 children.

Naina Schneiderman: Infant and Toddler Special Educator in Montgomery County's Infant and Toddler Program.

Rebecca (Becki) Vivrette: Clinical Psychologist in the Maryland Child Trends Office and an affiliate of the National Child Traumatic Stress Network.

Rudi Zelman: Program Manager of The Literacy Lab, a non-profit in Baltimore City.



George and Betsy Sherman

George and Betsy Sherman have a profound belief in the power of education to create better opportunities, better communities, and stronger families. Through their foundation, they make long-term, strategic investments in programs that are scalable and have compelling evidence of helping vulnerable, economically disadvantaged children and their families achieve better outcomes in all aspects of their lives. George Sherman says about his wife, "Betsy's lifelong commitment to child advocacy drives our family's focus to improve the lives of children." George and Betsy Sherman have been recognized for their philanthropy through several awards. Most recently, they were named honorees of the *Baltimore Sun's* Business and Civic Hall of Fame and 2018 Maryland Outstanding Philanthropists by the Association of Fundraising Professionals.



Donna Helm and Louise Goodrich Izat

New Scholarship: Supporting Future Literacy Leaders in Maryland

In 2019, UMBC alumnae, Donna Helm '70 and Louise Goodrich Izat '70, made a generous gift to the Sherman Center to establish the Childhood Literacy Scholarship in memory of their UMBC Professor, Dr. May Roswell. The scholarship will provide financial support for undergraduate students at UMBC who are committed to supporting the literacy development of children in the early grades. The first scholarship recipient will be named in fall 2020.

Dr. Mavis Sanders
Director and Professor of Education

Ms. Melissa Bailey
Program Coordinator

Ms. Louise Corwin
Visiting Executive in Residence

Dr. Jennifer Mata-McMahon
Research Faculty/Associate Professor of Education

Ms. Laurel Burggraf Bassett
Graduate Assistant, Language, Literacy and Culture Doctoral Program

Campus Advisory Committee

Dr. Linda Baker
Professor of Psychology

Dr. James Bembry
Associate Professor of Social Work

Dr. Chris Curran
Assistant Professor of Public Policy

Dr. Anita Komlodi
Associate Professor of Information Systems

Dr. Jeff Leips
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Ms. Marie Lilly
Director, Community Engagement

Ms. Rehana Shafi
Director of Sherman STEM Teacher Scholars Program

Dr. Michele Stites
Assistant Professor of Education

Steering Committee

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Dean of the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences

Gregory Simmons
Vice President for Institutional Advancement



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Sherman Center Campus Advisory Committee Member – Dr. James Bembry

Associate Professor of Social Work at UMBC, Dr. James Bembry is an inaugural member of the Sherman Center Campus Advisory Committee. Dr. Bembry earned a doctoral degree in social work and community planning from the University of Maryland at Baltimore. He began as an assistant professor at UMBC in 1993 and has had a productive career of scholarship, teaching, and service. His research focuses on strengthening families and communities through innovative social work therapies. In addition to his academic writing, Dr. Bembry is currently working on his second novel. His first novel, *A Crack in the Heights*, was published in 2017.

For more information, visit us at:
shermancenter.umbc.edu and meclp.umbc.edu

