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Out With The Old ...



Photo courtesy University Relations

You won't find this face at UMBC anymore. Dr. Michael Hooker is off to other pursuits, namely the University of Massachusetts System.

Jim Drenning
Retriever Staff Writer

Where's Hooker? We came back from Summer Break and he was gone! Dr. Michael K. Hooker, president of UMBC since July 1, 1986, no longer stands at the helm of this ship; he has passed the great tiller smoothly into the hands of former Vice Provost Freeman Hrabowski, while Hooker boards his new vessel, the University of Massachusetts System, where he will preside.

Michael Hooker's official last-day-in-office at UMBC was August 31, but by that time he was actually already at work at his new station in Boston, where he will chart the course of his new charge, consisting of five campuses and a billion-dollar budget. This move puts Dr. Hooker on the administrative level of Donald N. Langenberg, the Chancellor of the University of Maryland System.

Most of Michael Hooker's associates at the university agree that his tenure here was characterized by the "coming out" of UMBC into the light of recognition on both the local and the regional level of the business, social, and academic communities. They point, as one, to his

bestowal upon UMBC of a unified sense of purpose and self-worth, and his nurturing of ethnic diversity on campus. One of the most widely lauded of Hooker's achievements at UMBC (even his detractors concede) was the establishment of the Meyerhoff Scholarship Program, which purports to attract outstanding African American students into the study of science and mathematics, and was the flagship of his successful efforts to open the doors of the university to minorities.

Constance R. Beims has served as Vice President and Executive Assistant during Hooker's term. She speaks with enthusiasm about his accomplishments; enthusiasm with which, she says, he infected his entire staff.

"Michael made UMBC look at itself differently," she says. In realizing his vision of what was possible, his question was not: "Can we?" but: "How can we?" Beims says that Hooker's mission was to "uncover the hidden jewel in the university system." He made it possible for others to speak of UMBC with new respect, using unaccustomed words like "robotics" and "biochemistry."

(see HOOKER, page 2)

... In With The New

Pam Hawley
Retriever Editorial Staff

He is not at all a diminutive man, but the airy, spacious room on the tenth floor of the Administration building seems to engulf him. It is almost seven o'clock in the evening, yet he shows no signs of calling an end to the workday. Like a juggler on a tightrope, he dashes between a small meeting in an adjacent room and a reporter waiting in the front office.

Such is the life of a University President.

This particular University President, although new to his office, is no stranger to responsibility. Freeman Hrabowski had served UMBC as both Executive Vice President and Vice Provost before Sept. 1, 1992, when he officially stepped into the shoes of departing President Michael K. Hooker.

During his six years as Vice Provost, Hrabowski has earned great respect for his attempts at increasing UMBC's student retention rate and for his major role in developing the Meyerhoff Scholarship Program. And prior to joining UMBC's administration, he served as an Associate Dean at Alabama A&M University in Huntsville, and as Dean of Arts and Sciences and subsequently Vice President of Academic Affairs at Coppin State College.

"Throughout his academic career, Dr Hrabowski has demonstrated outstanding leadership abilities and a strong commitment to creating environments that encourage students to succeed," praised Chancellor Donald N. Langenberg in the news release that announced Hrabowski's appointment to UMBC's presidency.

Actually, Freeman Hrabowski is the interim President here at UMBC. But, he assures, he will hold this office for "a full academic year and possibly longer."

A search for a new president will not even begin until a final decision on the unification of UMBC and UMAB is made, he explains. Which makes sense — if the two schools become one, there will only be a need for one president.

Regardless of what the future brings in terms of unification, Hrabowski has an eventful year ahead of him. He takes the helm at a particularly difficult time, with the state budget axe about to fall on UMBC once again and projects such as the research park and daycare in what seems to be perpetual limbo. But Hrabowski remains optimistic that UMBC will continue to move forward in what he considers its most important functions: "to [provide students with] solid education and to support faculty in research efforts."

Despite the university's fiscal strife, Hrabowski hopes to continue developing UMBC's reputation as "a superior moderate-sized research university that believes strongly in a high quality undergraduate experience."



Photo courtesy University Relations

Our fearless new leader! Freeman Hrabowski takes the helm as interim president.

He wants to bring the campus and the Baltimore-metropolitan region together by encouraging UMBC-based community service, and by bringing members of the community in to learn about UMBC.

When he discusses the university, his thoughts appear to be racing. He sits relaxed in his chair, calmly discussing some aspect of UMBC. Then, without warning, he leans forward in his seat and jumps animatedly back to some goal he was discussing five minutes ago. In these moments, he is more like a youth at his first challenging job than a seasoned administrator. But this does not stem from uncertainty — it is more the result of a mind evaluating and re-evaluating every situation, constantly in search of solutions.

His enthusiasm for UMBC spills over into his attitude towards students. His pet project is getting students involved in campus life — making the college experience more than attending classes and going home. "Get to know other students and faculty. Get connected to campus," he heartily advises new students.

To ensure that they do so, he plans to work with "faculty and people in the support areas to create a warm campus climate."

The new UMBC President, whose hobbies include playing classical piano and reading nineteenth-century literature, is also a strong advocate of liberal education. He earned his own B.A. in mathematics, and recognizes a tendency in students of the sciences to overlook the value of non-technical courses.

"Take your work seriously, and not just in your major. All your courses will help you learn how to learn," he stresses.

"A large percentage [of UMBC students] come with an interest in science and engineering," he continues. He believes these students need reminded that a liberal arts education develops reading, thinking and writing skills essential for success in the professional world and in life.

"It is the courses in the arts and humanities that teach us how to live," he stresses.

And he makes it a point to let all students know that, more than anything, he wants UMBC to be a place where people learn how to live.

"Dive in with both feet. Get involved. Enjoy the experience."

Fall Frenzy drops its leaves; UMBC prepares to rake them in

Pam Hawley
Retriever Editorial Staff

It's eight-thirty in the morning, and there you are, blindly groping the desk in search of your coffee as the professor hands out the syllabus and drones on in a monotone voice. A week ago, eight-thirty in the morning meant you had four or five hours of good sleep left.

Where did the summer go? The first week of school can be rough, whether you are an entering freshman, a transfer student, or one of the honorary members of the UMBC stay-in-school-forever program.

That's why the Office of Student Affairs has concocted Fall Frenzy, "a non-stop, humongous, action-packed, fun-filled week of activities" to welcome you to UMBC. Their goal is to foster involvement

in both new and returning students — and that means finding unique ways to get YOU involved in campus life.

The frenzy kicks off today with the All-Campus Fair. Academic departments will set up booths in the University Center (UC) Plaza where students can obtain information on their programs. This is the perfect opportunity for students who are uncertain about their major to explore different options. In addition, the Wood Company will host a barbecue in the Plaza as an alternative to eating in the cafeterias, and various departments will also have arts and crafts to display.

Also today, as well as on the first day of classes, "locators" will set up in the Plaza to help new students find their way to classes and other locations on campus.

On Thursday and Friday, September 10 and 11, students will

have the opportunity to help Maryland's homeless by donating canned food items to the Maryland Food Bank. Donation stations will be set up in the UC Plaza.

The real Frenzy fun kicks off on Friday from 10:30 - 2:30, when student groups and organizations, as well as many Student Affairs departments, will gather in the UC Plaza for the Campus Activities fair. This is the time and the place to learn about any groups you may be thinking about joining, and to find out about groups you didn't even know existed! WUMD, UMBC's campus radio station, will provide musical entertainment, and many ethnic organizations will be offering cultural food items. So bring yourself, an appetite, and a desire to get involved this Fall!

(see FRENZY, page 2)

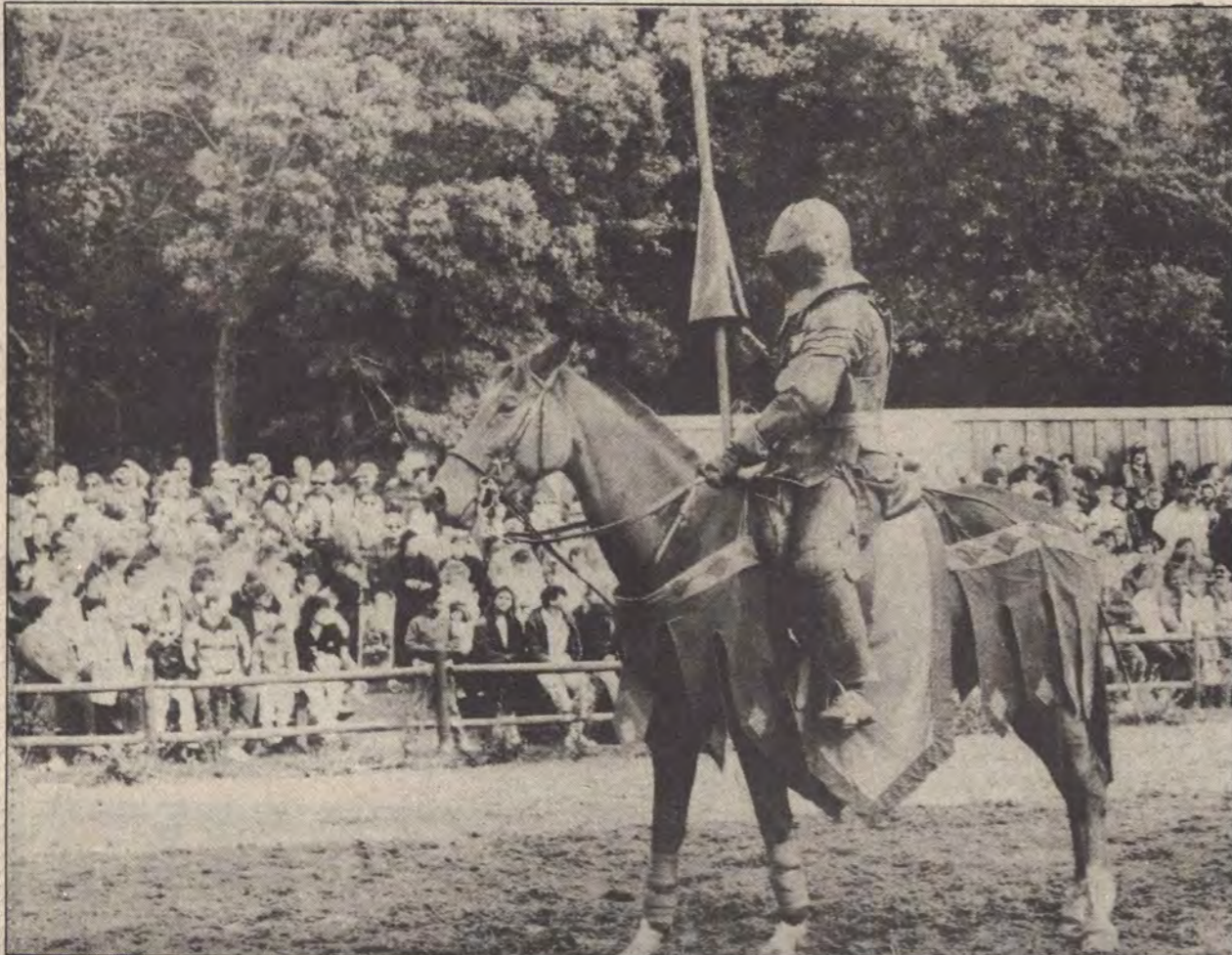


Photo courtesy MD Renaissance Festival

A Brave competitor for the presidency of UMBC? Jousting is one of the many activities that take place at Renfest. For details see page 7.

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