



# UMBC

## Center for Democracy and Civic Life



# FALL 2023

## EVENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

# CENTER FOR DEMOCRACY AND CIVIC LIFE FALL 2023 COMMUNITY EVENTS

Visit [my.umbc.edu/groups/CivicLife](https://my.umbc.edu/groups/CivicLife) for more information about each event and links to register.

## Center for Democracy and Civic Life Open House Friday, September 1 • Noon - 2 p.m. • The Commons 2B24

Join Center for Democracy and Civic Life staff and affiliates to make new friends and enjoy some light refreshments. You also will learn about:

- immersive experiences where you'll build skills and get inspired to lead and make an impact on the social world (STRiVE and Alternative Spring Break);
- conversation programs focused on campus and local issues and national events (Change Makers Dinner, Real Talk, and more); and
- opportunities to shape your UMBC experience and make contributions as a member of the campus community.

We will have a station where you can check your voter registration and register to vote. We're looking forward to seeing/meeting you.

## First Connect Tuesday, September 12 • 4 - 5 p.m. • The Commons 318

First Connect is a space for students new to college to talk about their experiences, make friends, ask questions, and learn about opportunities to get involved in the UMBC community. If you are a first-year student interested in a fun, low-key way to process your first experiences at UMBC and get connected and inspired, First Connect is for you.

## UMBC Student Empowerment Tour Tuesday, September 19 • 1 - 2 p.m. • The Commons 329

On September 19, 1966, UMBC opened its doors to its first class of students. Join the Center for Democracy and Civic Life for a special 57th anniversary tour of campus to learn the stories of UMBC programs, initiatives, and landmarks shaped by students over the last six decades. You will also learn and reflect on ways you too can make changes on campus and participate in the UMBC tradition of co-creating our community.

This session will start and end in Commons 329, but much of the tour will take place outside. Be sure to dress appropriately (sunscreen, hat, walking shoes, etc.).



## Real Talk: Fall 2023 Hopes Friday, September 22 • 3 - 4:30 p.m. • Online

Come chat with UMBC community members about important issues that affect our lives! Real Talk creates opportunities for group reflection and discussion about personal experiences and what they mean for the lives we are building together. UMBC student, faculty, staff, and alumni participants respond to Real Talk prompts by sharing and discussing their reflections.

The September 2023 prompt is: *What is your biggest hope for this academic year (for yourself personally, and for UMBC)?*

Everyone is welcome. Join us for an enriching conversation.

## Dinner with Friends Tuesday, September 26 • 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. • On Campus

The Dinner with Friends program brings UMBC students, faculty, staff, and alumni together for engaging, facilitated small-group conversations about issues affecting our campus community. You will spend the evening enjoying good food, learning about each other's experiences, and discussing how we can move forward together.

You can choose which of several small-group conversation topics interests you most. Visit our myUMBC page to view a list of topics to choose from as well as a link to RSVP for Dinner with Friends.

This Dinner with Friends program is organized by the Center for Democracy and Civic Life in collaboration with Initiatives for Identity, Inclusion & Belonging (i3b), Off-Campus Student Services, and the Student Government Association.



*"Thanks to the Center for Democracy and Civic Life, I learned to think about the world differently. For me, being civically engaged now means changing the narrative about our circumstances, not just improving material conditions."*

# CENTER FOR DEMOCRACY AND CIVIC LIFE FALL 2023 COMMUNITY EVENTS

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*"I enjoyed being in community and having conversations with people I wouldn't typically be in space with."*



## Make UMBC Yours

*Monday, October 2 • Noon - 1 p.m. • The Commons 329*

How do students become leaders and shapers of UMBC? Join Center for Democracy and Civic Life staff for a workshop that will help you explore the kind of difference you want to make and how to make it. UMBC is a community co-created by its members, including students; let's talk about what that means for you.

## First Connect

*Tuesday, October 3 • 4 - 5 p.m. • The Commons 318*

First Connect is a space for students new to college to talk about their experiences, make friends, ask questions, and learn about opportunities to get involved in the UMBC community. If you are a first-year student interested in a fun, low-key way to process your first experiences at UMBC and get connected and inspired, First Connect is for you.

## Real Talk

*Tuesday, October 17 • 3 - 4:30 p.m. • Online*

Come chat with UMBC community members about important issues that affect our lives! Real Talk creates opportunities for group reflection and discussion about personal experiences and what they mean for the lives we are building together. UMBC student, faculty, staff, and alumni participants respond to Real Talk prompts by sharing and discussing their reflections.

Visit our myUMBC page to view the October 2023 prompt.

Everyone is welcome. Join us for an enriching conversation.

## Change Makers Dinner

*Tuesday, October 24 • 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. • On Campus*

The Change Makers Dinner program brings UMBC students, faculty, staff, and alumni together for guided small-group conversations with local leaders who are making a difference in their communities. Meet local leaders and learn about their work and how to make a difference in connection with important issues. Dinner will be provided.

Visit our myUMBC page to view the topic for this Change Makers Dinner, a list of the Change Makers who will be in attendance, and a link to RSVP for the program.

## Story Circle: Mapping Our Lives

*Monday, October 30 • Noon - 1 p.m. • The Commons 331*

"Life maps" are simple illustrations of key events in our lives. They help us to reflect on the ways our values and aspirations are shaped by our life stories. In this program, you will create your own life map and share stories with other members of the UMBC community. No artistic skill or experience is required to participate.

# CENTER FOR DEMOCRACY AND CIVIC LIFE FALL 2023 COMMUNITY EVENTS

Visit [my.umbc.edu/groups/CivicLife](https://my.umbc.edu/groups/CivicLife) for more information about each event and links to register.

## First Connect

Tuesday, October 31 • 4 - 5 p.m. • The Commons 318

First Connect is a space for students new to college to talk about their experiences, make friends, ask questions, and learn about opportunities to get involved in the UMBC community. If you are a first-year student interested in a fun, low-key way to process your first experiences at UMBC and get connected and inspired, First Connect is for you.



## Changing Maryland

Thursday, November 16 • 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. • On Campus

Learn how UMBC students, faculty, staff, and alumni can get involved in shaping legislation in Annapolis to address pressing issues in the 2024 Maryland legislative session. Participants will meet elected officials and other state leaders to learn about their work, experiences, and aspirations. Part of this program will take place in small groups where participants will have a chance to interact directly with our special guests and each other. Dinner will be provided.

Visit our myUMBC page to view a list of the state leaders who will be in attendance and a link to RSVP for the program.

## First Connect

Tuesday, November 28 • 4 - 5 p.m. • The Commons 318

First Connect is a space for students new to college to talk about their experiences, make friends, ask questions, and learn about opportunities to get involved in the UMBC community. If you are a first-year student interested in a fun, low-key way to process your first experiences at UMBC and get connected and inspired, First Connect is for you.

## Real Talk

Tuesday, December 5 • 2:30 - 4 p.m. • Online

Come chat with UMBC community members about important issues that affect our lives! Real Talk creates opportunities for group reflection and discussion about personal experiences and what they mean for the lives we are building together. UMBC student, faculty, staff, and alumni participants respond to Real Talk prompts by sharing and discussing their reflections.

Visit our myUMBC page to view the December 2023 prompt.

Everyone is welcome. Join us for an enriching conversation.

## First Connect

Tuesday, December 12 • 4 - 5 p.m. • The Commons 318

First Connect is a space for students new to college to talk about their experiences, make friends, ask questions, and learn about opportunities to get involved in the UMBC community. If you are a first-year student interested in a fun, low-key way to process your first experiences at UMBC and get connected and inspired, First Connect is for you.

*"I learned that anyone at UMBC can make a real, tangible difference."*

**CENTER FOR DEMOCRACY AND CIVIC LIFE  
IMMERSIVE PROGRAMS**



**STRiVE**

**Leadership for Public Purpose**

**January 8 – 12, 2024**

STRiVE is a five-day, off-campus program that inspires and supports students in becoming more effective leaders in their communities. STRiVE participants develop friendships; discover their strengths and values; learn how to work more effectively in groups; envision how they can make a difference at UMBC; engage issues relating to identity, privilege, and systemic oppression; and tackle challenges that are common in leadership and social change. As a result of their STRiVE experiences, past participants have become deeply involved in campus organizations and initiatives, and have taken on critical leadership roles and made phenomenal contributions at UMBC and beyond.



*"I feel confident in taking leadership roles now because STRiVE gave me hope and trust in the [UMBC] community."*



Applications will open in mid-October. Visit [my.umbc.edu/groups/CivicLife](http://my.umbc.edu/groups/CivicLife) to learn more.



*"ASB [...] has not only taught me but shown me that I am powerful and can do a lot more than I thought I could."*



**ALTERNATIVE SPRING BREAK  
March 18 - 22, 2024**

Alternative Spring Break (ASB) is a five-day learning experience in which participants explore the systemic and human dimensions of complex social issues in Baltimore. What does it take to address deep, structural issues that have real impacts on people's lives? Participants build connections with local leaders, organizations, and policy makers and develop a sophisticated understanding of the resources and challenges that present themselves in the work it takes to make a better world. The program helps participants identify pathways to long-term community engagement.

## CENTER FOR DEMOCRACY AND CIVIC LIFE FALL 2023 OPPORTUNITIES

### REQUEST A WORKSHOP

Center for Democracy and Civic Life workshops build relationships among participants while orienting them to new possibilities for their engagement in civic life. You can work with Center staff to develop a workshop for your campus group (e.g. student organization; class; residential floor). Workshops the Center offers include:

- **Civic Autobiography Workshops:** Consider your civic aspirations and imagine how you can shape the future of your communities.
- **Civic Courage Workshops:** Explore how to pursue long-term social change effectively and sustainably.
- **Co-Create UMBC Workshops:** Learn the stories of campus landmarks and envision contributions you want to make at UMBC.
- **Meaningful Careers / Research Workshops:** Identify connections among your passions, values, strengths, and career or research aspirations.

To view a full list of workshop topics and learn how to work with Center for Democracy and Civic Life staff members to develop a workshop appropriate to your group, visit [tinyurl.com/CivicLifeWorkshops](https://tinyurl.com/CivicLifeWorkshops).

## CENTER FOR DEMOCRACY AND CIVIC LIFE FALL 2023 STAFF TEAM



**Ricky Blissett** (they/he)  
Associate Director



**Katie Brungard** (she/her)  
Evaluation and Special  
Projects Intern



**Meghna Chandrasekaran**  
(she/her)  
Research Intern



**Olivia Giuliano** (she/her)  
Evaluation and Special  
Projects Intern



**David Hoffman** (he/him)  
Director



**Nia Hopkins** (she/her)  
Evaluation and Special  
Projects Intern



**Brianna Malbon** (she/they)  
Civic Conversation Intern



**Tess McRae** (she/her)  
Coordinator for  
Civic Design



**Adam Watkins** (he/him)  
Administrative Assistant

UMBC  
**BreakingGround**  
DIG IN. SHAPE YOUR WORLD.

BreakingGround grants are available to students, faculty, and staff who are infusing civic values, practices, and experiences in existing or new projects and courses. To learn more, visit [tinyurl.com/BreakingGroundUMBC](https://tinyurl.com/BreakingGroundUMBC).

Center for Democracy and Civic Life staff members hold office hours to connect with other members of the UMBC community and support their aspirations. Sign up to meet with us during office hours at [tinyurl.com/CivicLifeOfficeHours](https://tinyurl.com/CivicLifeOfficeHours).



# UMBC

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## CENTER FOR DEMOCRACY AND CIVIC LIFE



The Commons 2B24



[civiclif.umbc.edu](http://civiclif.umbc.edu)



[civiclif@umbc.edu](mailto:civiclif@umbc.edu)



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