

CHANCELLOR'S MESSAGE

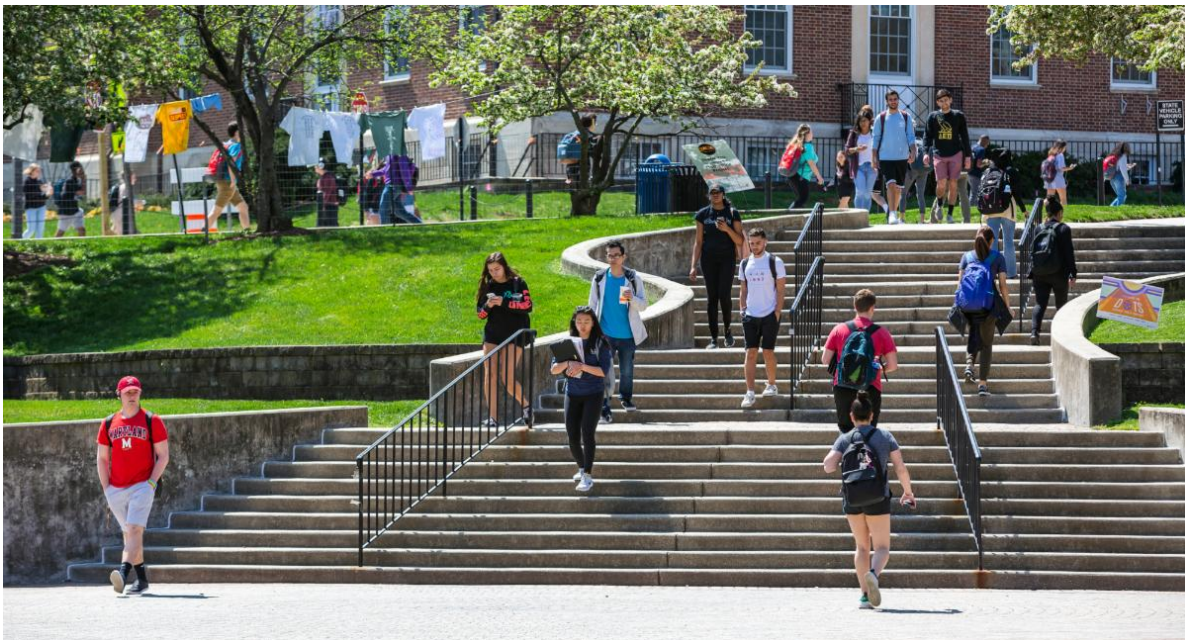
FROM JAY A. PERMAN



VISION 2030: From Excellence to Preeminence

This summer, the University System of Maryland unveiled a new 10-year strategic plan—[Vision 2030: From Excellence to Preeminence](#). The plan reflects 18 months of in-depth analysis. It coalesces intense discussions among dozens of groups of people with a stake in Maryland's public universities—people with different opinions on higher education's main objectives and different ideas on how to achieve them.

But one theme emerged across all groups: That students must serve as our starting point. They must set our agenda. They must center our work.



If you were to design a learner-centered organization from scratch, you'd design your processes and structures from the outside in—from your *students* in. But over centuries, complex organizations like a public university system can develop in ways that dilute that focus.

And so where our attention has been trained on our institutions and our processes, we will retrain it on our learners. Where we've prioritized degree output, we will prioritize student outcomes. Where we've been siloed, we will be collaborative. Where our innovation has been institution-bound, it will be scaled. Where our impact has been local, it will be global. And this is key: Where we've been

excellent—and we *have* been excellent—we will be preeminent.



For Our Students | For Maryland

Higher education is at an inflection point. Demographic shifts were already driving down enrollment, and those enrollment drops were then exacerbated by the pandemic. Disruption is rocking the sector, with new companies and new technologies challenging traditional university models.

Students are rethinking the very nature of education—where, when, and how they want to learn. Older students with jobs and families are coming to higher education in droves, their numbers eclipsing those of their “traditional” classmates. And as college costs and student debt climb, there’s growing public skepticism about the relative value of a degree.

Beyond these sector-specific challenges, there are plenty of existential threats facing our nation: threats to public health, to our environment, to our democracy, to racial and social justice, to our global innovation advantage.

Higher education is *made* to solve these problems. That’s our very mission—to teach, to discover, to innovate, to advocate, to drive prosperity and improve people’s lives. But we won’t achieve any of these aims without an agenda for change, a plan to transform what we do and how we do it. The five priorities that follow are the pillars of that plan.



Academic Excellence and Innovation

Achieving and maintaining academic excellence require investing in our people, our ideas, and our

institutions. We will attract more students to the USM by supporting a fair, flexible, and affordable tuition system. We will recruit and retain exceptional—and diverse—faculty and staff by securing for them competitive compensation and better job support.

We will enable pathbreaking instruction and research with state-of-the-art facilities. We will invest in digital technologies that allow us to personalize instruction and programs to individual learners. And we will scale academic and operational innovation by testing ideas and sharing resources across our USM universities.



Access, Affordability, and Achievement

The USM’s fundamental commitment is to give *every* learner the chance to succeed. That means embracing a culture of rigorous equity and inclusion. It means streamlining transfer pathways so that students from Maryland’s community colleges have easy entry into the USM. It means investing in our regional higher education centers so they can serve more students who want an education close to home.

It means expanding and improving our partnerships with preK–12 schools so that the students they graduate are ready for college-level work. And it means designing new programs and credentials for learners who aren’t looking for a four-year degree.

Workforce and Economic Development

The USM drives Maryland’s prosperity, producing the graduates who run the industries that enrich the entire state. Maryland’s population is among the nation’s most educated. Our workforce, heavy in science and engineering, is highly degreed.

To equip learners for our dynamic workplaces—and to fortify Maryland’s strength—we will develop an academic portfolio that prepares students for the state’s emerging and high-demand sectors. We will graduate more underrepresented students in the fields that fuel Maryland’s wealth.

We will be the go-to resource for workers who want to improve their skills to advance in their current career or reskill for a new one. We will remove the obstacles that prevent students from becoming teachers. And we will help our people commercialize their ideas and innovations, growing the number

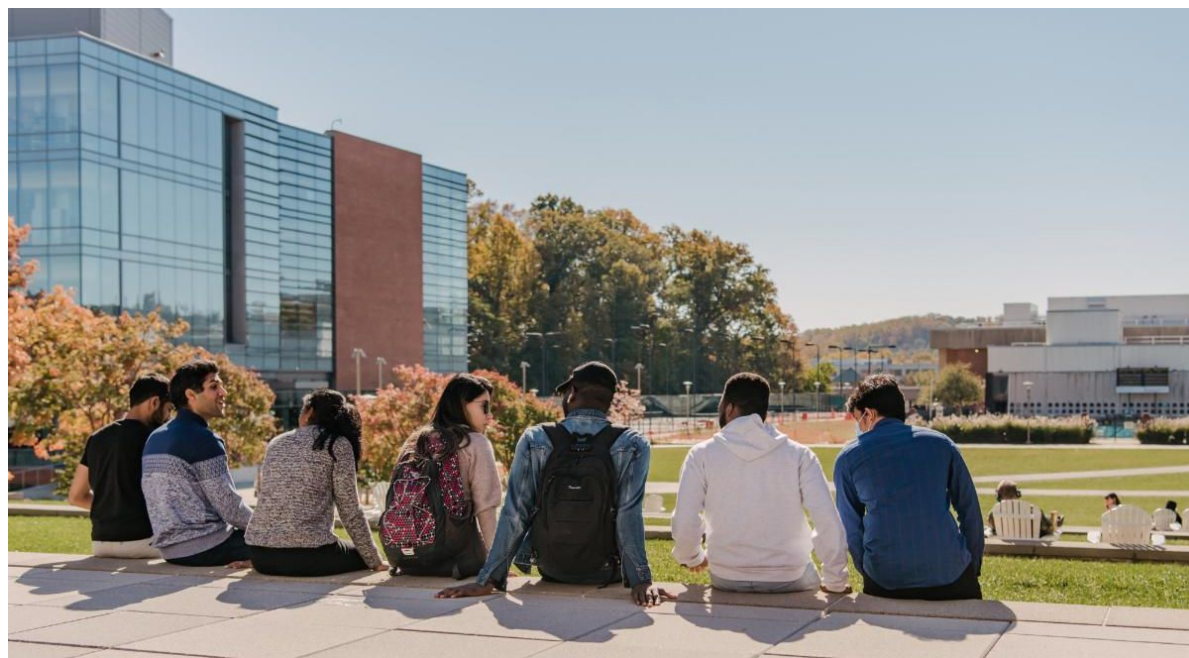
of products they develop, technologies they license, and startups they launch.



Research

The USM is an R&D powerhouse, and our ideas change the world. Research shapes key sectors of Maryland's economy and gives our students the chance to write the future of human health and well-being, national security and defense, equity and justice, and environmental sustainability.

To grow our discovery enterprise and attract more money to our projects, we will align our research with federal R&D priorities and exploit areas of research strength. We will expand community-based research to invigorate the neighborhoods, towns, and cities where our universities are located. We will diversify our sources of R&D funding, attracting more private-sector support for basic research. We will expand collaborative research projects that cross universities, disciplines, and departments.



Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

In every discussion with our many different stakeholders, we heard that equity and racial justice must be central to everything we do. And so we didn't just identify diversity, equity, and inclusion as a priority, we also suffused its goals throughout every *other* priority.

That means we will increase diversity among our students, faculty, and staff so that they reflect the full racial and ethnic diversity of Maryland. We will create a significant research initiative on diversity, equity, and justice; globalization; and sustainability—and the role that race, identity, and systemic racism play in them. We will support our HBCUs as they implement ambitious enrollment and student success strategies. We will educate our students to be engaged citizens in our democracy, capable of leading change that advances racial and social justice.

Action and Accountability

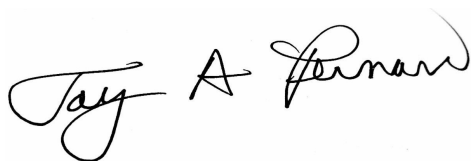
Developing this plan was a challenge—a good one. It's a challenge to reach consensus on goals when there are so many goals to achieve; when there are so many people with compelling reasons for wanting their own advanced. But as difficult as this plan-building was, it's not nearly as difficult as the work ahead: making good on our promises.

We've begun developing an implementation plan that will operationalize our vision. It will define what success looks like, refine the strategies we'll use to achieve it, and identify the people responsible for progress.

When we began drafting *Vision 2030*, we said it is—by intention and design—more than a plan to sustain what has been. It's a promise to transform what will be.

Transformation takes courage. It takes faith in the goals set forth. And it takes the hard, hard work of tens-of-thousands of people across our University System whose individual efforts will combine and compound until we are the preeminent system of American higher education. Because our goal is nothing less.

Sincerely,



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