

CHANCELLOR'S MESSAGE

FROM JAY A. PERMAN



Looking Back with Pride—and Forward with Purpose

At the University System of Maryland, January brings with it the chance to reflect on a year of accomplishment and anticipate a year of impact. Because, despite the challenges of the past several months, we're still doing the work we were built to do. Our students are excelling. Our scholarship is making change. Our research is solving problems. Our service is improving lives.

This is a direct credit to the people of the USM. As COVID upended our academic enterprise and administrative operations, our people kept working harder, with a clarity of purpose and a devotion to mission that is, to me, breathtaking. The achievements and ambitions I share here honor their dedication.

The State of the USM

Locally and nationally, the pandemic has taken a toll on college-going plans. And yet despite an overall student population that's dipped since the onset of COVID, the USM's first-time, full-time enrollment has actually grown. On the whole, applications to our schools are up, as are applications from in-state students. Our six-year graduation rate is 72 percent, a record high for the University System, and our average time-to-degree-completion is 4.6 years, nearly a full year shorter than at public universities nationwide.

The USM reflects Maryland's rich diversity. Enrollment among minority students has climbed 26 percent in the last decade, and now half of our students are students of color. We're distributing more financial aid than ever before, alleviating pandemic-era hardships that, for many students, put their college careers at risk. Our in-state cost of education and student debt burden remain competitive with public universities nationwide.

Our alumni are doing the work that keeps Maryland—and Marylanders—strong. We graduated more than 1,500 teachers last year, 7,200 computer scientists, 2,100 engineers, and 4,000 health professionals, including 1,700 nurses amid a historic shortage that’s imperiling health care access and quality across the state.

Meanwhile, our extramural funding and research expenditures keep growing, as do the measures we use to gauge how well we translate our ideas into market-ready solutions: inventions disclosed, patents granted, startups launched, technologies licensed by industry partners.



The USM’s [2021 Annual Report](#) spotlights our performance on these indicators and many more.

Powering Maryland's Prosperity

All of this work—education, R&D, tech transfer, workforce development—has an impact on Maryland’s economy. And it’s huge. A study put out by the University of Baltimore’s Jacob France Institute (JFI) estimates that the USM generated \$10.4 billion in economic impact last fiscal year and supported 57,500 Maryland jobs. For every dollar the state invests in the USM, we return \$2–\$3 to Maryland’s people, families, and communities.



THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF MARYLAND

A HUMAN CAPITAL INVESTMENT AND FISCAL ANALYSIS | FY2019

By Richard Clinch, The Jacob France Institute, University of Baltimore



The [Economic Impact of the University System of Maryland](#) breaks down how the USM enriches the state.

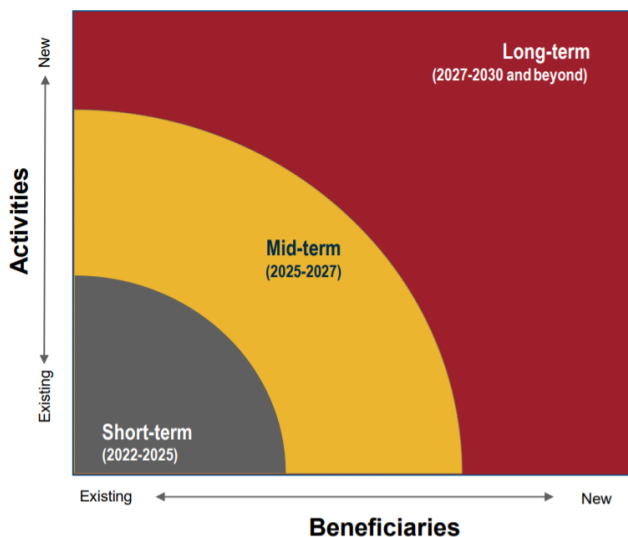
Much of that impact derives *not* from the money we spend, or the people we employ, or the out-of-state revenues we attract into Maryland. It derives from our alumni. According to the JFI study, over a lifetime, USM graduates earn millions of dollars more than those with only a high school diploma, and as one’s degree level rises, so does income. Those higher earnings are invested back into the places where our graduates live and work. And given that eight in 10 USM students are Maryland residents, “the places where our graduates live and work”—where they pay taxes, where they start companies, where they hire employees—are often right here in Maryland.

There’s no doubt that this human capital is Maryland’s premier strength. Maryland has one of the most educated, most innovative, most entrepreneurial, and most successful populations in the country. We rank third nationwide in the share of residents with a

bachelor's degree, second with a graduate or professional degree, second with a STEM or health degree. And if education correlates with earnings—and it does—it's not surprising that Maryland ranks second in median household income.

A Vision for the Future

This is exactly why higher education—why a USM education—must be accessible to all Maryland learners. Because, in terms of economic outcomes, the point of higher education isn't only, or even primarily, to drive prosperity in the aggregate; it's to build wealth for the individual. The point is to enable and accelerate social mobility; to give everyone an equitable chance at a good job, a good income, career advancement, professional fulfillment.



The [USM Strategic Plan](#) includes short-term, mid-term, and long-term goals—in access and achievement, academic excellence, economic development, and research—to address immediate challenges and achieve transformational change.

Access matters. It's just one part of one pillar of our USM Strategic Plan, in development now.

Access entails a host of things: keeping tuition prices down, targeting financial aid to students who need it most, leveraging technology and academic innovation to reduce our costs and enlarge our reach. It means expanding programs and enrollment at our regional higher education centers so that students with jobs and families can live and work near school and still get their degree.

Access means simplifying the transfer process so that students from Maryland's community colleges can enroll in a USM university without losing credits, time, and money, and confident they're prepared for the coursework ahead. It involves helping adult and nontraditional learners get the education they need from us—when and where and how they need it—and making sure we're opening our doors wide to those who've historically been shut out of college: low-income students, first-generation students, underrepresented minority students.

Access joins several other themes in our Strategic Plan, so you can imagine how capacious—how ambitious—the plan really is. We look forward to bringing the final plan to the Board of Regents for approval this spring, and getting to work immediately on its goals.

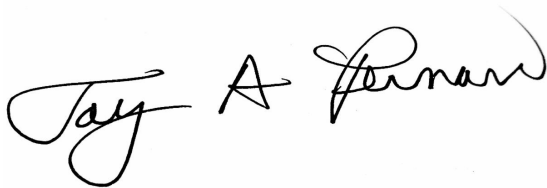
Serving a State That Supports Education

Our elected leaders, meanwhile, have begun their work of the 2022 legislative session. Last week, Gov. Hogan released his [FY23 budget proposal](#), which includes a substantial increase in state funding to the University System.

It's a budget that recognizes not only the critical work of the USM, but how important that work is to Maryland's vitality. It's a budget invested in our students, faculty, and staff. A budget invested in our ideas, our solutions, our service. A budget invested in the premise that the USM's strength is the state's.

I thank the governor for his confidence in what we do—and how well we do it. I thank Maryland's legislators, who have long valued the University System and, with courage, long supported us. My colleagues and I look forward to working with state leaders to make the Maryland each of us deserves.

Sincerely,



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