



Report to the USM Board of Regents

Chancellor Jay A. Perman

June 17, 2021

Thank you, Chair Gooden. I echo your words on Juneteenth. While it's long been an important day in the Black community, it's gratifying to see people outside that community understand its significance. I'm glad we've instituted Juneteenth as an annual systemwide observance, and I'm glad the country might be following our lead.

EMERGING FROM CRISIS

We have so much to celebrate as we wrap up the academic year. Nearly three-quarters of Maryland adults are at least partially vaccinated against COVID. We're seeing our lowest positivity rates ever—under 1 percent by the start of this week. New cases are trending under 100 per day. COVID-related hospitalizations are at their lowest since March of 2020, the same month we pivoted to remote instruction and ushered in a year like no other.

We expect the Pfizer vaccine to secure FDA approval in maybe a month. Moderna should be close behind. The World Health Organization has now approved eight vaccines for use globally, which is great news for our international students. Plus, researchers are encouraged not only by the efficacy of the vaccines, but their efficacy over time—the *duration* of their benefit.

I'm not saying the crisis is over. It's not. We're particularly troubled by the fact that unvaccinated people are being hospitalized at the same rate they were during the very worst months of the pandemic. Young people now make up a growing share of COVID cases—and those young people are getting sick; they're being hospitalized. The COVID variants we're seeing in Maryland—especially the Delta variant—are very dangerous and very concerning.

Nonetheless, we *are* turning a corner. On Tuesday, Gov. Hogan announced that, while Maryland's state of emergency remains in place, the COVID-related emergency restrictions he's imposed will be lifted on July 1. At the same time, the governor recognizes the University System's authority to make decisions regarding mandatory vaccination. And the System presidents and I remain convinced that vaccination is both a reasonable and necessary means of protecting the health and safety of our students, faculty, staff, and neighbors.

It is, of course, vaccination that accounts for the falling cases I just mentioned, the falling infection rate, the falling death rate. And it's vaccination that is—still—our way out of this

pandemic. It's how we'll get students and employees safely back on campus; how we'll resume in-person teaching and learning; how we'll return to normal.

And that's precisely what our universities are planning to do this fall—as much as possible, return to normal. This fall, we'll be open for in-person learning and on-campus living. The universities are handling the logistics of vaccination requirements—for instance, the documentation of vaccination, exemptions from the mandate, help for our international students in securing vaccines authorized by the WHO.

We're still discussing COVID protocols on campus—such as testing, monitoring, and masking—and how they'll be applied to both vaccinated and unvaccinated populations. But our campuses will be full again this fall, and, for that, we're grateful.

A YEAR IN REVIEW

As Chair Gooden noted, the June Board meeting traditionally serves as the Chancellor's Annual Report, a year-in-review for the USM and its institutions. And while my comments will certainly include recent news, I'm glad for this chance to look back at some of the biggest achievements we've celebrated during this unprecedented year.

LEADERSHIP CHANGES, LEADERSHIP IMPACTS

I'll begin with a recap of leadership changes and impacts across the USM.

Our first major leadership change came last July, with Darryll Pines assuming the presidency of the University of Maryland, College Park (UMCP). Chair Gooden and I recently had the privilege of taking part in Dr. Pines' formal installation as 34th president of our flagship university. Since last summer, we've welcomed Dr. Bruce Jarrell as president of the University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB), Dr. Gregory Fowler as president of the University of Maryland Global Campus (UMGC), Dr. Anne Khademian as executive director of the Universities at Shady Grove (USG), and Dr. Eileen Abel as the inaugural executive director of the USM at Southern Maryland (USMSM).

All these leaders hit the ground running. President Pines outlined bold goals in faculty diversity, climate action, research and innovation, the arts, and honoring athletic trailblazers. President Fowler is expanding UMGC's partnerships, Dr. Khademian is raising USG's profile in virtual engagement, and Dr. Abel is positioning USMSM to meet the growing higher education and research demand in Southern Maryland. Under President Jarrell's leadership, UMB has been central in U.S. efforts to end COVID-19. In fact, just a few weeks ago, researchers at UMB's School of Medicine began enrolling children 6 months to 11 years old in the KidCOVE study—a clinical trial of the Moderna vaccine.

Of course, institutions throughout the USM have been engaged in the fight against COVID. Towson University (TU) offered nursing students early graduation, and dozens took the option,

joining their colleagues on COVID's front lines. Salisbury University (SU) donated laptops to schools in Baltimore City and Wicomico County to help students struggling to access distance learning.

Bowie State University (BSU) launched a research initiative to better understand COVID's disproportionate impact on minority communities. And I'm proud to once again note that Dr. Kizzmekia Corbett, an alumna of the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC), led the team of NIH scientists helping develop the Moderna vaccine.

As we all know, our COVID fight is by no means finished. But as we look back at our combined efforts over the past year, we can do so with great pride.

We can also take great satisfaction in the academic excellence of our institutions, which continue to be nationally acclaimed. Literally every eligible USM institution was recognized among the *U.S. News & World Report* rankings of undergraduate, graduate, and online programs. Additionally, the USM excelled in rankings based on the combination of education quality, affordability, and alumni success. *Forbes Magazine* (America's Top Colleges), *MONEY Magazine* (Best Value Colleges), *Kiplinger's Personal Finance* (Best College Values), and the *Princeton Review* (Best Colleges) place the USM among the nation's best-value universities.

And no review of the USM's excellence would be complete without acknowledging the many honors won by our people. There are far too many to name, but I'll congratulate President Kim Schatzel and President Aminta Breaux on being named Influential Marylanders by the *Daily Record*, and I'll congratulate Regent Bill Wood on being named to that paper's Leadership in Law list.

I'll also note that UMCP was a Top Producer of Fulbright Scholars, with six awards—and three USM institutions were Top Producers of Fulbright Students: UMCP, with 16 awards; UMBC, with 11; and Salisbury, with six. In addition, two University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science (UMCES) scientists were named 2021–22 Fulbright Scholars. And the University of Baltimore (UB) has seven faculty members serving in the U.S. Fulbright Specialist Program. Finally, late last year, UMBC senior Sam Patterson was one of 32 U.S. students awarded the prestigious Rhodes Scholarship.

GROWTH IN ACADEMIC PROGRAMS AND CAMPUS FACILITIES

The past year was also marked by growth in academic programs and campus facilities.

Towson University's new Science Complex—now the largest academic building on TU's campus—will support the university's nationally recognized STEM programming. And with the new College of Health Professions building set to break ground this summer, TU's impact will only deepen.

Frostburg State University (FSU) broke ground on its Education and Health Sciences Center. Once finished, the \$80 million facility will be the new academic home for students studying to become educators, nurses, and other health professionals.

Salisbury University's Patricia R. Guerrieri Academic Commons has been named one of the U.S.'s top 20 university libraries by *The Princeton Review*. At USMSM, progress continues on the \$86 million Southern Maryland Autonomous Research and Technology (SMART) Building. Opening this fall, the SMART building will catalyze new opportunities for education, research, and economic growth.

Advancing its 70-year mission to educate U.S. military personnel serving overseas, UMGC has opened a new permanent office at Spain's Morón Air Force Base. It becomes the university's 51st permanent location in Europe, and the second in Spain.

At the end of April, I joined students, faculty, and staff at the University of Maryland Eastern Shore (UMES) for a hard hat ceremony marking the halfway point on construction of the new \$90 million School of Pharmacy, which will feature state-of-the-art laboratories for training and pharmaceutical research. And last fall, UMES welcomed a 17-student charter class to its new graduate-level physician assistant program.

At the University of Maryland School of Pharmacy at UMB, 132 students graduated in the first class of the Medical Cannabis Science and Therapeutics master's program, the only program of its kind in the nation.

Coppin State University (CSU) launched two new master's programs last fall: an MS in Applied Molecular Biology and Biochemistry, and an MS in Polymer and Materials Science. In fall 2021, CSU will add a BSN-to-DNP program, allowing nursing students to progress to the Doctor of Nursing Practice degree.

Salisbury has announced a new integrated science major, the first in the USM. The major accommodates students who wish to develop programs of study in two or more STEM disciplines or create a major in a STEM discipline not offered by any department at SU.

UMBC's newest undergraduate degree, the BS in Translational Life Science Technology, received the inaugural BioBuzz Workforce Champion of the Year award for its contributions to the regional biotech workforce.

Bowie State will establish an endowed chair of cybersecurity, who will serve as director of the Center for Cybersecurity and Emerging Technologies in the Department of Computer Science.

In response to the urgent demand for high-quality remote and hybrid instruction, Towson has launched a post-baccalaureate certificate in online learning and teaching. FSU is expanding its academic programs with a bachelor's degree in Life-Cycle Facilities Management.

UMCES launched its first edX professional certificate course—Science for Environmental Management—helping UMCES develop the next generation of scientists, business leaders, policymakers, and educators equipped to meet emerging environmental challenges.

USG added several new academic programs from partner universities, including Translational Life Science Technology, Computer Science, Biotechnology, Cybersecurity, and Data Science from UMBC; the Clinical Dental Hygiene Leader program from the School of Dentistry at UMB; Information Science, Embedded Systems, and Biocomputational Engineering from UMCP; and a BFA in Graphic Design from Salisbury.

And at the University System of Maryland at Hagerstown (USMH), the first cohort of FSU's physician assistants—25 students in all—celebrated their graduation in May.

PHILANTHROPY, PARTNERSHIPS, AND ECONOMIC IMPACT

While this past year was one of tremendous challenges, it was also one that saw the USM excel in philanthropy, partnerships, and economic impact.

I begin with the historic generosity of philanthropist MacKenzie Scott. Her gifts—\$25 million to Bowie State and \$20 million to UMES—are among the largest unrestricted gifts ever awarded to an institution within the USM. These gifts will allow the universities to increase financial aid, invest in academic programs and innovations, and expand the institutions' endowments, enabling long-term stability and growth.

Earlier this month, Baltimore Ravens owner Steve Bisciotti announced that he's honoring the team's former general manager, Ozzie Newsome, with a \$4 million gift to Maryland's HBCUs: \$1 million each to Bowie, UMES, and Coppin. The Ozzie Newsome Scholars Program will fund scholarships for Baltimore City public school graduates who attend an HBCU in Maryland.

This spring, UB received a record \$5 million gift from real estate developer Samuel G. Rose to create a new scholarship fund for students having trouble affording tuition.

Last fall, Bob Clarke and Glenda Chatham—longtime supporters of Salisbury—announced a \$1.5 million planned endowment to benefit the Honors College, now named the Glenda Chatham and Robert G. Clarke Honors College in recognition of their commitment.

Towson celebrated the largest single donation from an alum in the institution's history—a \$5.3 million gift from Dr. Fran Soistman Jr., class of 1979. The gift will be used to support the College of Health Professions, the College of Business & Economics, TU athletics, and programming to

advance diversity, equity, and inclusion. And just last month—during National Nurses Week—Alena and David M. Schwaber gave \$1.32 million to Towson’s College of Health Professions, creating scholarships for 10 nursing students each year.

At USMH, the second annual Spirit Run and the annual Feaste & Frolic—both held virtually due to the pandemic—combined to raise nearly \$60,000 in scholarship support for USMH students.

The University of Maryland School of Nursing at UMB has received a commitment of nearly \$14 million from Bill and Joanne Conway. This gift—the largest in the school’s history and the fourth from the Conways—will create an *additional* 345 Conway Scholarships, covering tuition and fees for undergraduate and graduate nursing students. The gift also includes \$1 million to support renovation of the nursing building at USG.

At UMGC, alumna Bonnie Broh-Kahn and her husband established endowment funds through a \$1 million bequest to the university. The gift provides funding for scholarships as well as support for the Student Aid Fund for Emergency Relief to help students facing financial hardships.

At UMCP, Phillip and Elizabeth Gross announced a \$6.8 million gift to expand the Incentive Awards Program, supporting students with significant financial need. And a \$9 million gift from the Brin Family Foundation will seed UMCP’s campuswide effort to reimagine performing arts education.

Also at UMCP, IonQ—a revolutionary quantum computing company headquartered in College Park’s Discovery District—became the first-ever quantum company to go public, doing so with a \$2 billion valuation. To grow and support College Park as a national hub of quantum research and commercialization, UMCP has launched the Quantum Startup Foundry, created through an initial \$25 million investment from the university’s new Discovery Fund.

UMCP also received \$3 million from JPMorgan Chase to create the Small Business Anti-Displacement Network, creating tools and pushing policies to prevent the displacement or closure of vulnerable businesses—especially minority-owned businesses, which have been particularly hard-hit during COVID.

UMBC received a three-year, \$1.3 million grant from the U.S. Department of Commerce to create the Maryland New Venture Fellowship for Cybersecurity. And UMBC’s HARP Satellite, which has been flying in low-Earth orbit since February, was named the Small Satellite Mission of the Year by the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics.

Together, UMCP and UMBC have partnered with the U.S. Army Research Lab on a five-year, \$68 million project to strengthen artificial intelligence technology to meet national defense threats. In addition, the Center for Research and Exploration in Space Science & Technology II (CRESST II), a partnership between NASA’s Goddard Space Flight Center and four universities—led by

UMCP and including UMBC—has had its cooperative agreement extended through 2027, funded with \$178 million.

At UMES, the School of Agriculture and Natural Sciences has received \$2.25 million in scholarship funding from the USDA to help close the national shortfall in graduates trained in food, agriculture, and renewable natural resources.

Bowie has been selected by Google as one of the U.S.'s first four historically Black institutions participating in the Grow with Google HBCU Career Readiness Program. Google has committed more than \$1 million to HBCU career service centers nationwide to help students and recent graduates develop digital skills for internships and jobs. Also at Bowie, LAIKA is building the nation's first stop-motion animation studio at an HBCU. The company, one of Hollywood's most awarded animation studios, says the partnership with Bowie is important to diversifying the animation industry.

FSU welcomed the first tenant—Delmock Technologies—to its Advanced Technology Center. The company provides complex IT and health solutions.

And since this board last met in April, UMGC has announced several corporate partnerships and education alliances. UMGC will expand access to higher education for Uber's 20,000+ corporate employees, and will offer discounted tuition to SAIC's 26,000 employees and their families. UMGC has teamed up with Anne Arundel Community College to create degree pathways in computer science, and has entered into an alliance with the Kentucky Community Technical College System, which enrolls more than 100,000 students in 16 colleges.

OUTREACH AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

Throughout this past year, the USM has reaffirmed its commitment to outreach and community service.

Salisbury University has been named an AmeriCorps School of National Service and will provide in-state tuition, deferred admission, and recognition of AmeriCorps status in the admissions process for all AmeriCorps members and alumni. And Salisbury's annual Sea Gull Century—its nationally known bike ride benefitting dozens of local nonprofits as well as student scholarships—is set to be held in person this fall.

UMBC won Campus Compact Mid-Atlantic's 2020 Engaged Campus Award for its commitment to service-learning and community engagement. At UMB, the CURE Scholars Program, an intensive STEM mentoring program for West Baltimore middle and high school students, was honored with a 2020 Inspiring Programs in STEM Award from *INSIGHT Into Diversity* magazine.

The CSU College of Business has introduced the Center for Strategic Entrepreneurship, designed to nourish an entrepreneurial ecosystem in West Baltimore. This spring, five USM institutions—

UMES, Frostburg, UB, Towson, and UMBC—earned the Voter-Friendly Campus designation from the Fair Elections Center’s Campus Vote Project. And just last month, Stacey Abrams, perhaps the nation’s best-known champion of voter rights, delivered the commencement address at Bowie State.

Earlier this month, USG and the Maryland Tech Council hosted a life sciences industry roundtable to address workforce issues in key sectors like biological research, diagnostics, and manufacturing. And this week, Chair Gooden and I helped kick off USG’s first-ever strategic planning process, as the center seeks to amplify its regional impact in economic and workforce development.

Also in support of regional economic growth, SU’s Perdue School of Business awarded more than \$200,000 to Mid-Atlantic startups through its spring Student Entrepreneurship Competitions and Shore Hatchery program. Similarly, UB awarded nearly \$30,000 in prize money to six winning students and recent alumni in its Rise to the Challenge business pitch competition.

Last fall, Bowie State and UMCP launched the BSU–UMD Social Justice Alliance, promoting dialogue and direct action on issues of racial and social justice. The alliance honors the memory of BSU alumnus 1st Lt. Richard W. Collins III.

RACIAL AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

In fact, while this past year was obviously dominated by our response to COVID, I believe it will ultimately be our commitment to racial and social justice that distinguishes these months within the USM.

This spring, in the wake of appalling acts of brutality against BIPOC communities across the country, I wrote to the USM’s students, faculty, and staff. I said that our outrage at these acts is genuine. But it’s also easy. It’s easy to condemn hate, and racism, and bigotry, and stubborn ignorance. It’s much harder to do the work that resists them—the work of education, tolerance, and love.

The only valid response to hate is not more words denouncing it, but sustained action that starves it of fuel, that renders it weak and, in time, irrelevant. That’s the work to which the USM and its people are committed: securing equity for all members of our communities, demanding justice on their behalf, and defending the principles on which this country was founded and which it struggles still to honor.

In addition to the BSU–UMD Social Justice Alliance, UMCP recently announced an investment of \$40 million to create the Faculty Advancement at Maryland for Inclusive Learning and Excellence (FAMILE) program. Through FAMILE, the university will recruit and retain more than 100 tenured and tenure-track faculty from underrepresented backgrounds over the next 10 years.

UMCP is also honoring trailblazers within its own university community. The new Johnson-Whittle Hall honors Elaine Johnson Coates, the first African American woman to graduate from UMCP with an undergraduate degree, and Hiram Whittle, the first African American man to be admitted to the university. Pyon-Chen Hall pays tribute to Pyon Su, the first Korean student to receive a degree from any American university, and Chunjen Constant Chen, the first Chinese student to enroll at what is now UMCP. Earlier this month, UMCP unveiled the Jones-Hill House, named for former Maryland basketball player Billy Jones and former football player Darryl Hill, both of whom broke the university's color barrier in athletics.

Two Frostburg campus buildings will now commemorate the history and legacy of Frostburg's African American community. A new residence hall will be known as Brownsville Hall, honoring the largely African American community that was displaced between the 1920s and the 1960s as FSU's campus footprint grew. And the Lincoln School—the site of a one-room, segregated schoolhouse for Brownsville residents—will become the Adams/Wyche Multicultural Center at the Lincoln School, thanks to a generous gift from FSU alumni Sandra Wyche Adams, class of 1986, and Tyrone Adams, class of 1987.

At UMB, the Francis King Carey School of Law received a \$5 million gift from biotech entrepreneurs Marco and Debbie Chacón to establish the Chacón Center for Immigrant Justice. The center provides direct representation on asylum cases, advocates for law and policy reforms to fundamentally improve the U.S. immigration system, and trains future lawyers in asylum and immigration issues.

The schools of nursing at both UMB and TU were honored with a Higher Education Excellence in Diversity (HEED) Award. The HEED Award recognizes colleges and universities that demonstrate an outstanding commitment to diversity and inclusion.

UB President Kurt Schmoke joined UMB President Bruce Jarrell for a President's Panel on Social Justice and Structural Racism in Baltimore, discussing education, housing, drug decriminalization, and the importance of opportunity in marginalized communities. Also at UB, second-year law student Ernesto Villaseñor was tapped to serve as the Delegate for Diversity and Inclusion on the American Bar Association Law Student Division's 2021–22 Council.

UMES President Heidi Anderson initiated a year-long social justice symposium series, attracting speakers who addressed trending topics in racial equity and justice. Given the symposium's popularity, UMES is looking to continue it next year.

And UMBC President Freeman Hrabowski, his senior advisor, Dr. Peter Henderson, and Dr. Kate Tracy, professor of epidemiology at UMB's School of Medicine, coauthored a widely read piece in *The Atlantic* on the academy's obligation to lead the dismantling of structural racism.

These are, of course, just a handful of projects emblematic of the important work taking place on campuses across the USM. I thank our university leaders for putting the principles of social and racial justice into real and meaningful action.

MY OWN RETURN TO CAMPUS

As I said at the beginning of my remarks, this June meeting has traditionally been a year-in-review for the USM. But in many ways, I see it as broader than that. As our institutions make plans for a return to campus this fall, the board is also making plans for a return to normal. This is the *last* scheduled meeting of the full board to be held over Zoom. The next full board meeting on September 10 will take place at UMGC. So you can see why I feel as if we're turning the page on more than just a year.

I look forward to us meeting once again in person and on campus, and I'm grateful I've been able to get a jump start on these university visits. Last fall, I showed you a slideshow of my own personal "return to campus," documenting visits to USMSM, Bowie State, UMBC, Coppin, and College Park. Since then, I've added five institutions to my list.

- At Towson, I met with university leaders and faculty, and took in an Advanced Modern Dance class.
- At Frostburg, President Nowaczyk and I spoke with WFWM, the university's NPR affiliate. Plus, I took a look at the Education & Health Sciences Building going up on campus.
- At Salisbury, I got a tour of the school's COVID testing operation. I joined President Wight for his weekly briefing to the SU community. But the *most* fun was dropping in on a glass-blowing class.
- At UMES, I took part in the hard hat celebration for the new pharmacy building and had a chance to talk with health professions students.
- At UMCES, I went from west to east—from the Appalachian Lab in Frostburg to Horn Point on the Shore—and learned a little about the science of stewarding our ecological health. I got a crash course in aquaculture, and saw the oyster setting pier and hatchery.

Let's have a look at the photos.

THE USM CLASS OF 2021

There was one more campus visit I got to make this spring. On a beautiful day in mid-May, I addressed the Class of 2021 at Coppin State University. I'd spoken at a couple of *virtual* commencements—UMCES and UMB—but Coppin's was my only in-person ceremony.

So I'd like to end my report by telling you what I told the students that day. And I'd like to show you another set of photos—photos of graduates from *across* the USM, because they're the reason we're here, they're the reason we do the work we do, the reason we keep going—just

like *they* have every day of this most difficult year. I saw in those 400 Coppin graduates the entire USM Class of 2021. Now I'd like you to see them, too.

Let's start the slideshow.

I think it's important to remember that we have students who earned their degrees this year while also taking care of their children, their parents, their partners, and neighbors. Many worked long hours in hard jobs so they could afford a college education. Many suffered COVID's collateral damage: isolation, anxiety, stress, loneliness, loss. Some buried friends and family who succumbed to the disease.

And so I thanked the Class of 2021 for showing all of us what it looks like to face extraordinary challenges, and *persevere* anyway. *Succeed* anyway. *Shine* anyway. Despite an objectively terrible year, they fought through it. They threw down the obstacles in their way, and somehow made a path forward.

And so I asked them to remember what they accomplished this year. Every time new challenges present themselves, I asked them to remember exactly what it took to prevail—it took their focus, their resilience, their grit, their hard, hard work.

I told them they were powerful, and I asked them to nurture that power in someone else—to give a little bit of their strength to the communities and people who need them. And let me say this: We *all* need them. We all need leaders like the class we just graduated—leaders who can light a path forward in the darkness—and **shine**.

At the end of the day, this leadership is what we're cultivating. And it's such an honor to do it. I thank every member of this board—because you have a vital piece of this work. Our graduates owe a debt of gratitude to you, as do I.

Madame Chair, this concludes my report. Thank you.

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