



Report to the USM Board of Regents

Chancellor Jay A. Perman

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Thank you, Chair Gooden. Let me also thank Mr. Wildavsky for his presentation.

As always, it's wonderful to be with you this morning, and it's wonderful to be with you during Black History Month. It was regrettable that we had to begin this month not with celebration but with condemnation. Bomb threats at two of our HBCUs, and many more across the country, were intended to menace and intimidate.

But I'll say today what I said then: These threats will fail. If they were meant to restrict access to higher ed, they will fail. If they were meant to sow division, they will fail. If they were meant to terrorize students and communities of color, they will fail. Because you cannot suppress Black excellence, and you cannot snuff out the light of our HBCUs—not when they're getting the attention and acclaim and resources they deserve. We are a better System for our historically Black institutions—Bowie, Coppin, UMES—and we stand with you. Now and always.

Of course, I thank our hosts this morning, the University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB) and President Bruce Jarrell. It's impossible to overstate how vital UMB has been to the System's pandemic response—and to the state's. The work of UMB, the work of its partner, the University of Maryland Medical System, has steered us through the eye of this storm. Their leadership of the Unified Command has guided our path and secured Maryland's success in managing this crisis. It's backbreaking work. It's heartbreaking work. And they've been doing it for two years. I can't thank them enough.

Returning to UMB is still a special homecoming for me. And as President Jarrell and Dr. Fraser showed us, these are exciting times here at the university. UMB made headlines around the world when surgeons from the School of Medicine performed the first-ever successful transplant of a pig's heart into a human patient. The feat is poised to revolutionize xenotransplantation, and gives hope to thousands of patients who die each year awaiting an organ transplant.

In its annual R&D survey released last month, the NSF ranked the combined research enterprise of UMB and the University of Maryland, College Park (UMCP) in the top 10 among U.S. public

universities—and in the top 20 among *all* U.S. universities. To keep this amazing momentum going, Dr. Gregory Ball was just named the next vice president for research at UMB and UMCP. In another research win for the UMB/College Park alliance, the Institute for Bioscience and Biotechnology Research announced a five-year, \$16.8 million investment from the National Institute of Standards and Technology.

The Maryland Poison Center, operated by UMB's School of Pharmacy, is turning 50 this year. The center has reached well over 100,000 people through its public education programs, addressed more than 1.5 million human exposure cases, and saved thousands of lives.

UMB's School of Nursing has twice been honored in recent weeks: For the fourth year in a row, the school won the Health Professions Higher Education Excellence in Diversity Award from *INSIGHT Into Diversity* magazine. And in the *U.S. News & World Report* rankings of Best Online Programs, the school's Master's in Nursing programs were listed among the nation's best. Its Master's in Nursing Administration and Master's in Nursing Education were both ranked fifth nationwide.

The CURE Scholars program here at UMB, which engages West Baltimore students in STEM discovery starting in middle school, just reached a milestone that's particularly touching to me. In 2015, nearly two dozen talented 6th graders comprised the very first CURE class. And now those 20 high school seniors have racked up 72 offers of admission to 44 colleges. I remember them in their very first lab coats, and I'm overwhelmed.

I thank UMB for its abiding excellence. Of course, there's no shortage of notable achievements across the System.

PROGRAM RANKINGS

I'll continue with the *U.S. News* Best Online Programs for 2022, in which 1,700-plus online bachelor's and master's degrees were evaluated. Seven USM universities were recognized for a total of 11 programs:

- I've already mentioned UMB's Master's in Nursing programs.
- Frostburg State University (FSU) made the list for its bachelor's programs and MBA programs.
- Salisbury University (SU) got the nod for its MBA and Master's in Nursing.
- Towson University (TU) was listed for its Master's in Education and Master's in IT.
- The University of Baltimore (UBalt) was included for its MBA.
- The University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC) was ranked for its Master's in IT.
- And at College Park, the Master's in Engineering and MBA programs were both ranked 12th.

In a separate ranking from *U.S. News*, the University of Maryland Global Campus (UMGC) tops their list of colleges that enroll the most transfer students. UMGC enrolled more than 9,500 new transfer students in fall 2020, significantly more than its nearest competitor. And while we're on the topic of UMGC, I hope you all got to see the great coverage late last year of two sisters—both in their 60s—completing their master's degrees at UMGC. It illustrates so well what the university makes possible, for all learners.

And staying with rankings, Towson University ranked No. 27 among public institutions nationwide in a list of best undergraduate business schools by the business ed magazine *Poets & Quants*. TU ranked 17th among public colleges in the career outcomes measure, which looks at student internships, employment, and salaries, and it ranked 4th in business schools with the highest percentage of minority and international students. Forty-nine percent of last year's incoming class identify as underrepresented minorities. As a former business school dean and business executive, President Kim Schatzel must be very, very proud.

STUDENT EXCELLENCE

Let me talk about those learners for a minute. Since we last got together, several USM students have been recognized on the national stage.

Bowie State University (BSU) senior Sharone Townsend is one of three students whose artwork was chosen for Target's national "Black Beyond Measure" HBCU Design Challenge. His design, emphasizing unity, is featured on clothing sold by the retailer to mark Black History Month.

Two College Park seniors—Steven Jin and Naveen Raman—have won the prestigious Winston Churchill Scholarship, joining only 14 other STEM students nationwide. The two will receive full funding to pursue a one-year master's degree at the University of Cambridge in the UK.

Joshua Slaughter, a senior computer engineering major at UMBC, won the Marshall Scholarship. He'll pursue his PhD in informatics at the University of Edinburgh, with the goal of advancing equity in personalized medicine.

Six UMGC students have been named finalists for the esteemed Presidential Management Fellows Program, a leadership development program specifically for graduate students.

The Baltimore Sun ran a great feature on the first graduate of UBalt's Second Chance College Program. James Ruffin III earned his BA in Human Services Administration, which he'll use in pursuit of his goal: establishing a nonprofit to help those transitioning to life after prison.

And Jay Copeland, a recent SU alum who sang at the inauguration of President Chuck Wight, will compete on the 20th season of *American Idol*.

INSTITUTIONAL LEADERSHIP

Let me broaden my scope from our students to the institutions they attend and the leaders who guide them.

On Wednesday came the news that UMBC President Freeman Hrabowski was elected to the National Academy of Engineering. It's exceedingly rare that someone who's *not* an engineer is offered membership in the academy. Freeman's nod came for his role in developing a national model for enrolling diverse students in engineering programs and nurturing their success.

University of Maryland Eastern Shore (UMES) President Heidi Anderson and Coppin State University (CSU) President Anthony Jenkins were named among the 10 Most Dominant HBCU leaders of 2022 by the HBCU Campaign Fund. The honor recognizes their influence in shaping policies that strengthen higher education.

President Jenkins and Regent Michelle Gourdine joined *The Baltimore Sun's* list of 25 Black Marylanders to Watch. In the same edition, the *Sun* named five Living Legends—leaders already responsible for transformative change, but still doing the work of equity, opportunity, and enrichment. UBalt President Kurt Schmoke is deservedly on that list. Kurt, congratulations.

In fact, President Schmoke has been getting a *lot* of love lately. He coauthored a piece in *USA Today*, reflecting on his early activism as a leader in Yale's Black Student Alliance. And the *Sun* penned a great piece on Kurt's return to the classroom as co-teacher of a course on Baltimore City's history. What a gift to those students to see behind the decisions that shape a city.

Kurt's fellow president, Chuck Wight, gave time to Salisbury's ABC affiliate to reflect on the incredible challenges, and important victories, he's experienced while navigating the COVID pandemic. He said he believes that this crisis, while testing students, has ultimately made them more resilient. I've talked with enough students over the past two years to earnestly agree.

Several members of Frostburg's leadership team—including President Ron Nowaczyk—were honored with Impact Leader Awards from the National Society of Leadership and Success. The award recognizes their commitment to developing student leaders. Joining Ron in the awards are Dr. Artie Travis, Frostburg's vice president of student affairs; Dr. Jeffrey Graham, senior associate vice president of student affairs; and Robert Cooper, director of student life.

The University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science (UMCES) has issued a first-of-its-kind report card on Maryland's coastal adaptation to climate change. With 72 percent of Maryland's population living and working along the state's 3,000 miles of shoreline, our communities are particularly threatened by a changing climate. UMCES's grade of B— highlights progress, outlines areas for improvement, and establishes a framework for resiliency in the face of climate crisis.

Towson is once again proving its commitment to positive community impact. In a partnership that benefits both the university and the city of Towson, TU has funded a grant to the Baltimore County Police Department to provide additional public safety resources in downtown Towson.

College Park is stepping up in a different way. A ceremony was held last year—attended by campus, state, and tribal leaders—to bless the ground and announce the name of a new dining hall—the first campus building whose name honors Indigenous peoples. The dining hall will be called Yahentamitsi, which means “a place to go to eat” in the Algonquian language spoken by the Piscataway. President Pines says this is part of an ongoing commitment to more fully acknowledge the university’s history and embrace its diversity.

Just a few days ago, the Universities at Shady Grove (USG) launched its 10-year strategic plan, USG 2.0. I’ve been so impressed with the planning process and with the ambitions that USG has laid out—ambitions to pioneer change in access and affordability, in equity and opportunity. USG gives the System a laboratory to be the innovators we promise to be—the innovators that our learners, our employers, and our communities deserve.

And let me just say that USG isn’t alone in this. All three of our regional centers—USG, the USM at Hagerstown, the USM at Southern Maryland—give us a structure to revolutionize how we meet and serve our learners, and how we prepare them for the careers that fulfill them personally, that enrich their families and invigorate our communities.

Now, I’ve saved some of the best institutional news for last: As you all know, UMBC has just reached the Carnegie Classification’s highest level of research performance, earning Research 1 status. President Hrabowski said reaching the R1 pinnacle took the hard work of many, many people. And while true, I think we can all look at this distinction as yet another fitting capstone to Freeman’s 30 years of extraordinary leadership at UMBC. Congratulations to Freeman and his team.

PARTNERSHIPS, GRANTS, ECONOMIC IMPACT

Of course, *many* of our universities are proving their excellence with new partnerships, impressive grants, and transformational research.

Coppin State is one of six HBCUs nationwide selected by Complete College America to take part in a Digital Learning Infrastructure project. The \$2.5 million research and design initiative will build an integrated framework for digital learning at HBCUs. Participating colleges were selected for their track record of innovation, their commitment to student success, and their novel use of technology to deliver exceptional learning and campus experiences. Closer to home, Coppin’s College of Business has entered into a partnership with Montgomery College to create degree pathways for community college students transferring to CSU.

UMCES has launched a NOAA-funded study of microplastics moving through Maryland’s waterways—tracking where the plastics come from and where they end up. With marine debris a significant ecological problem, UMCES’s work will provide the science that lawmakers need to take meaningful action.

UMBC has won a Beckman Foundation Award to launch a Beckman Scholars Program for high-achieving students interested in graduate study in the biological or chemical sciences. Only 14 institutions across the country are new recipients of these three-year awards, totaling \$2.1 million. At UMBC, the program will support six students aspiring to the MD/PhD degree, and each will be paired with a mentor. Plus, with a \$900,000 grant from the National Institute for Innovation in Manufacturing Biopharmaceuticals, UMBC will develop a short-term biomanufacturing training program to meet critical workforce needs.

At College Park, Professor Emeritus Michael Brin, his wife Eugenia, and the Sergey Brin Family Foundation are establishing the Brin Mathematics Research Center. Their \$4.75 million gift will seed a center that expands math and statistics research and education programs, and supports visiting scholars, workshops, and symposia. The goal is to foster interactions between mathematicians at College Park and those around the world.

And in a well-deserved recognition of UMCP’s pathbreaking leadership, Analytics Insight ranked College Park among the top 10 universities *worldwide* for quantum research. Maryland joins Harvard, Berkeley, the University of Tokyo, and China’s University of Science and Technology on this best-of-the-best list.

Bowie State has entered into a partnership with the U.S. Census Bureau to support students studying data science and analytics, and help build a high-quality, diverse workforce in the growing field.

UBalt’s School of Law is joining with the Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service—the state’s largest provider of pro bono civil legal services—in a \$600,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Justice to significantly expand their Human Trafficking Prevention Project. The project supports survivors of human trafficking and populations at high risk of exploitation.

USM FY23 OPERATING BUDGET

I’ll conclude my remarks by commenting on the governor’s budget proposal for the USM. No one knows better than all of you here how enormously challenging the last two years have been in terms of budget cuts and revenue losses—how deeply they’ve affected the work we do.

And so the governor’s FY23 proposal of \$1.67 billion in state support to the System is incredibly gratifying. It’s an 11.5 percent increase over our FY22 appropriation. The proposal would fully

restore the \$93.8 million cut to the USM’s base budget made by the Board of Public Works in July 2020, and allow us to moderate tuition increases next year for in-state students.

The budget includes \$22 million in new funding for our three HBCUs—the first installment of the \$577 million settlement that Maryland finalized last year. It includes \$14 million to support the MPower partnership between UMB and College Park; \$7 million to support UMB’s critical care services—funding that’s especially important in terms of strengthening rural health care in Maryland—and \$3.7 million to help offset operating expenses associated with some of our newly opened buildings, many housing STEM and health sciences programs.

I should note that Gov. Hogan’s *state* budget proposal provides an additional \$198 million to cover cost-of-living and merit increases for USM employees. If that budget action, too, is approved by the legislature, then, all told, the USM is looking at a nearly 25 percent increase over our FY22 appropriation. After two years of watching our faculty and staff work so very hard to make sure our students kept learning and our scholarship kept making change—two years of keeping our people safe and our campuses operational—I’m deeply grateful to see their efforts acknowledged in this way.

Of course, I ask all of you to voice your own support for the governor’s budget proposal as you talk with policymakers, colleagues, and constituents.

I should also note that I’ll be leaving this meeting briefly today to testify before lawmakers on the USM *Office’s* FY23 operating budget. I’m delighted that Chair Gooden will join me. It’s an important opportunity to remind legislators just how much the System Office accomplishes on a very small budget. Less than one-half of 1 percent of the entire USM budget goes to administrative costs at the System Office, making us the third most efficient out of 29 such systems nationwide. I thank my entire team at the USMO for doing *so* much with the resources we have.

Madam Chair, this concludes my report.

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