



## Report to the USM Board of Regents

Chancellor Jay A. Perman

Universities at Shady Grove | February 17, 2023

Thank you, Chair Gooden. And thank you, Dr. Masucci, for your presentation and for spotlighting Frostburg State University (FSU)—a terrific example of how our universities are anchoring and strengthening their communities. Dr. Nowaczyk, you know how impressed I've been. Thank you.

Before I begin, I'll note that you have a copy of the System's 2022 Annual Report. It's a great summary of what we achieved last year, and our progress toward important goals. I hope you'll give it a read.

As Chair Gooden noted, we come together during Black History Month. I thank all of our universities for the meaningful way you're honoring and celebrating Black history and culture. It is, of course, a *living* history—past, present, and future.

So I was deeply proud to see three of our colleagues on the *Baltimore Sun's* list of 25 Black Marylanders to Watch: University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC) President Valerie Sheares Ashby; Dr. Stacey Stephens from the University of Maryland, Baltimore's (UMB) School of Social Work; and Ms. Lindsey Spann, assistant coach for the women's basketball team at the University of Maryland, College Park (UMCP). Many more of the honorees are USM alumni, and it's inspiring to *me* to see the Black excellence we nurture.

### USM LEADERSHIP TRANSITIONS

Since we last got together in December, we've had some significant leadership news.

University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science (UMCES) President Peter Goodwin has announced that he will retire at the end of the academic year. Dr. Goodwin's leadership of UMCES has been vitally important to the state, the nation, and, indeed, the world, guiding our approach to urgent environmental and climate challenges. Peter, you will be greatly missed. I thank you for your service and for giving UMCES such an influential voice in environmental policy and practice.

Earlier this month, Dr. Melanie Perreault began her service as Towson University's (TU) interim president. As provost and executive vice president for academic and student affairs, Dr.

Perreault has been central to TU's growth and scholarly excellence over the past four years. It's great to have you at the table, Melanie.

Speaking of Towson, we announced last week the members of the president search committee. I thank Regent Ellen Fish for serving as its chair. She has tight ties to the university and to the community, and we both know this search will yield many outstanding candidates.

At the USM Office, Dr. Alison Wrynn has joined us as senior vice chancellor for academic and student affairs. She came to us from the California State University system, where she was associate vice chancellor for academic programs, innovation, and faculty development. Coming aboard this time of year is a trial by fire, and we've already sent her to testify in Annapolis, where she's done a terrific job. Welcome, Alison.

Of course, what that means is that we're saying goodbye to Dr. Jo Boughman. I'll say a few words about Jo at the end of my remarks—fewer than I will at her send-off next week. It's difficult to put into words what Dr. Boughman means to the University System—and to me. But I'll try.

### HOST INSTITUTION: UNIVERSITIES AT SHADY GROVE

I'll start with our host this morning, the Universities at Shady Grove (USG). I'm always inspired when I hear Dr. Khademian talk about her vision—USG's vision—for reimagining higher education; for building radical new models that center access, affordability, and equity. That Google has put its imprimatur on this work is a huge endorsement of USG's big ideas and compelling leadership.

In my testimony on the System's operating budget a couple of weeks ago, I highlighted USG: the workforce development funding included in the governor's budget, so vital for connecting higher ed to business and industry, and developing career-ready students. I spoke about the Institute for Intelligent and Immersive Computing in Montgomery County, a partnership of UMB and College Park that will offer research, training, and workforce opportunities for USG students.

Anne says all the time that regional centers like ours have an essential role to play in reshaping higher ed; in developing smart, efficient pathways for what she calls the "fluid student." I think so, too. So I thank Dr. Khademian, and Dr. Abel, and Dr. Weill for their leadership.

### ONLINE PROGRAM RANKINGS

Moving across the System, I'll note that *U.S. News & World Report* ranked the nation's Best Online Degrees, evaluating more than 1,800 bachelor's and master's programs. Seven USM institutions were recognized for a total of 24 programs.

FSU, Salisbury University (SU), TU, the University of Baltimore (UBalt), and UMBC were listed for programs in business, education, computer engineering, and more. UMB's School of Nursing was recognized among the nation's best in four nursing programs, including top 10 rankings in nursing education and nursing administration. And UMCP was listed among the best in nine programs, including top 10 rankings in its MBA for veterans, its business analytics MBA, and its MBA in marketing.

## SYSTEMWIDE SUCCESS

In a different ranking—the NSF's Higher Education Research and Development survey—UMCP and UMB reported combined research expenditures of \$1.14 billion, placing the University of Maryland among the nation's top 10 public research universities for the third-straight year.

This partnership between our two biggest research universities is only one example of our collaborative success over the past few months. TEDCO's Open Institute for Black Women Entrepreneurs has announced significant new federal support enabling our three HBCUs—Bowie State University (BSU), Coppin State University (CSU), and the University of Maryland Eastern Shore (UMES)—to apply their expertise in developing entrepreneurial leaders and fostering resilience.

The Dingman Center for Entrepreneurship at UMCP's Smith School is expanding its annual pitch competition to include BSU, UBalt, and UMBC. And UMB and UMBC have partnered in the Sowebo Story Swap, bringing visual and performing artists together to help Southwest Baltimore residents tell their personal stories and connect with their neighbors across age and experience.

## INDIVIDUAL AND INSTITUTIONAL EXCELLENCE

Our individual—and institutional—excellence has shone bright this year. Let me start with a truly spectacular honor. Among master's institutions, Salisbury University was just named the nation's No. 1 producer of Fulbright students. SU led the field with an incredible nine awards. It's the sixth-straight year that Salisbury has claimed a spot among the most prolific Fulbright schools.

Of course, it's the most prestigious international exchange program in the world, established to advance global peace and goodwill. So I'm thrilled to note that Towson was *also* named a top Fulbright university, tying for eighth among master's institutions. Dr. Lepre, Dr. Perreault, congratulations.

Joining our Fulbright students are many more singled out for distinction. Christopher Slaughter, a computer engineering student at UMBC, has won a Gates Cambridge Scholarship to pursue a PhD in electrical engineering at the University of Cambridge next fall. Only two dozen of these scholarships are offered to U.S. students every year. So it's especially impressive that Mr. Slaughter is the *fifth* UMBC student to win the award. Congratulations, Dr. Ashby.

But once again, Towson would like to share this spotlight. Briseyda Barrientos Ariza, a recent TU alumna, also won the Gates Cambridge Scholarship, the first student to do so in Towson's history. Ms. Barrientos Ariza is a first-generation American and first-generation college graduate who majored in English literature and psychology.

At College Park, Kevin Tu has won a Churchill Scholarship, joining just 17 more STEM students nationwide. And he's the eighth College Park student in the last half-dozen years to be honored.

And if you're wondering who the American Sign Language interpreter was who *somehow* stole the Super Bowl spotlight from Rihanna, it was none other than Bowie State nursing student Justina Miles, the first deaf woman to sign the halftime show. She was all *over* the news after that stunning performance. Dr. Breaux, your students are on fire.

I want to mention here that we had a run of inspiring graduation stories last winter that crystallized exactly why we do what we do: The mother-son duo, Carolyn and Immanuel Patton, who graduated from UMGC together—20 years after 5-year-old Immanuel promised his mom they would. The identical twin brothers at Towson, Rasul and Malachi Wright, who shared twin 4.0 GPAs and a twin passion for service. Pete Engel, who—at 72 years of age—earned his *third* USM degree, a bachelor's in history from UMBC, which he added to his poli-sci degree from College Park and a JD from Maryland Carey Law.

Multiply those stories by the thousands, and *that's* why we do what we do.

In faculty excellence, College Park has a lot to celebrate. Three Clark School faculty were elected to the National Academy of Engineering, bringing the university's total to 33 NAE members, and 67 members of the National Academies. Meanwhile, seven College Park professors were named fellows of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the world's largest general scientific society.

And Dr. Deb Niemeier, the Clark Distinguished Chair of Energy and Sustainability, was given the Franklin Institute's 2023 Bower Award for her truly game-changing research on transportation systems and climate impact, and how engineering design can advance—or imperil—public health and environmental equity. What a run, Ms. Eastman. Congratulations.

Among our leaders, Bowie State President Aminta Breaux was named a Title IX Trailblazer by the Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association. And UBalt President Kurt Schmoke was honored in *Baltimore Magazine* among the city's royalty—John Waters, Joyce Scott, Barbara Mikulski, Carla Hayden, Brooks Robinson—as one of six “Baltimoreans Who Changed Everything.” President Breaux, President Schmoke, congratulations.

And just one alumnus story: Silver Spring teacher Dion Jones has been honored with the Milken Family Foundation's Educator Award. These awards are the “Oscars” for classroom teachers—

but even rarer. Just 32 educators were honored nationwide, and Mr. Jones's alma mater, Coppin State, has every reason to be proud.

Pivoting to academic news, UMES is unveiling academic programs in fashion merchandising, data science and analytics, electrical and mechatronics engineering, and applied computing. Salisbury will launch a new health education minor this fall—geared to education majors outside of public health fields. And I congratulate SU's nursing students, who've once again recorded the highest licensure pass rates among all BSN-granting colleges in Maryland. More than 89 percent passed the NCLEX.

Frostburg is offering two new nursing programs: a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) and an online LPN-to-BSN, helping licensed practical nurses take that important next step in their nursing careers. BSU is offering new programs this semester in cyber engineering operations, software engineering, and data science. Bowie is also one of four HBCUs designated an Adobe Creative Campus, giving more students access to innovative digital tools.

Congratulations go to UMGC on being designated a minority-serving institution by the U.S. Department of Education. Serving underrepresented students has always been essential to UMGC's mission—designation or no—but MSI status unlocks resources allowing the university to innovate how it does that.

## PARTNERSHIPS AND GRANTS

On to grants and partnerships, I have several to highlight.

UMB's School of Medicine—in collaboration with its School of Pharmacy—has been tapped to lead a four-year, \$46.4 million project to develop shelf-stable artificial blood to be used for transfusions at the point of injury, buying time for patients in danger of bleeding out. The funding comes from the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, and the massive undertaking will involve more than a dozen universities and biotech companies. Dr. Jarrell, congratulations.

Also at UMB, the School of Medicine has launched UM-MIND, a neuroscience institute accelerating translational research of the brain by promoting closer collaboration between basic and clinical scientists, and deepening joint projects across the university. The institute will recruit new faculty to campus, where 120 leading neuroscientists *already* practice.

A \$2.1 million NSF grant will launch BSU's Bulldog Cyber Scholarship for Service Program, growing and diversifying the pool of graduates entering the federal cybersecurity workforce. And Bowie State is part of a Howard University-led consortium of HBCUs collaborating on a University Affiliated Research Center, one of just 15 in the nation, and the only one associated

with the country's historically Black institutions. The Department of Defense is funneling \$90 million to this Air Force-sponsored effort in tactical autonomy.

The Department of Energy has awarded College Park \$4.86 million for a project focused on electric vehicle batteries—increasing their charge and discharge capability, energy density, and operating temperature. College Park is collaborating on two more grants in that 12-project solicitation, and leads the nation in ARPA-E awards with \$111 million since the agency's inception.

UMES announced \$1.5 million in federal support for its Entrepreneurship and Innovation Center, which helps small and minority businesses get off the ground. And new language included in the HBCU RISE Act will mean millions in Defense Department dollars supporting UMES's pursuit of R1 status. President Anderson, congratulations.

Towson is one of five institutions collaborating on a three-year, \$3.2 million NSF grant supporting science teacher education. TU's work involves avatar-based simulations that help pre-service teachers practice engaging students in scientific argumentation.

And at College Park, the Center for International Development and Conflict Management is being supported with \$4.2 million from USAID to thwart terrorism in West Africa. The project reinforces a sense of community and shared values among different groups in northern Ghana to keep terrorist factions out of the region.

## COMMUNITY-ENGAGED SERVICE

I'm grateful for our universities' commitment to community-engaged scholarship and service. I'll share just a few examples of the impact of this work.

Coppin State won a \$3.9 million grant from the Department of Commerce to close the digital divide in West Baltimore, where close to one-third of households don't have a computer and almost half don't have broadband. Providing technology, training, and affordable high-speed internet, CSU's ConnectEagle Nation will bring more Marylanders into the digital economy. It was a great day, Dr. Wilks. Thank you.

A \$2.2 million grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation will launch a College Park-led initiative to address the effects of environmental racism. The Mid-Atlantic Climate Action Hub will target financial support, training, and policy action to vulnerable communities disproportionately harmed by climate change and environmental hazards.

UMB is teaming with the T. Rowe Price Foundation on an incubator that helps new nonprofits access money and services. UMB serves as a fiscal sponsor, connecting organizations to foundation dollars until they're large enough to branch out on their own. Also at UMB, the

School of Nursing's building expansion honors two alumnae whose courage and care leave me awestruck: Sen. Shirley Nathan-Pulliam, whose pioneering work in West Baltimore closes gaps in health care access, equity, and outcomes; and Esther McCready, who fought to integrate the school at just 19 years old, with the help of her attorney Thurgood Marshall.

With \$750,000 in federal funding, the FSU Regional Science Center will expand programming for middle school students in western Maryland. At the science center, students explore space via simulation—NASA astronaut Richard Arnold is an FSU alum—and take robotics and coding classes.

The USM at Southern Maryland (USMSM) is engaging with local students—those attending the College of Southern Maryland and juniors and seniors from the tri-county high schools—as they chart their path from high school to college to career. Events promoting USMSM and its partner schools are designed to show students frictionless pathways to a four-year degree.

The USM at Hagerstown (USMH) hosted a community event of its own: an art show with Washington County Public Schools. In all, the county's high school students submitted 120 pieces, which were judged across several categories and displayed in USMH's main building.

And if our concept of community is capacious—indeed, global—then I'll mention here that UMGC is now offering online and in-person education to servicemembers near Ukraine. Staff spent the fall assessing, preparing, and mobilizing to meet military learners where they are, and offer the programs—like language and culture classes—that support NATO's efforts to fortify Ukrainian resistance.

## **FY 2024 BUDGET PROPOSAL**

Before I close with a tribute to Dr. Boughman, I want to speak very quickly to the governor's proposed USM budget. It's a \$2.1 billion proposal, an increase of \$204.6 million—10.8 percent—over our FY23 appropriation.

Included in the budget is nearly \$189 million to cover recent COLA and merit increases for System employees, as well as the climbing cost of benefits. On this point, I want to acknowledge the incredible work of those who serve the System and our students; I'm grateful their impact is recognized and rewarded.

The budget also includes \$36.2 million in new funding for our historically Black institutions. It's the second installment of the HBCU settlement, and supports the universities' priorities in financial aid, student support, faculty recruitment, and program expansion.

I want to note here how great it is to see our universities connecting so quickly with Gov. Moore. He's already held a cabinet meeting at Towson University, he was at Coppin State to

celebrate the broadband grant, and one of the six Marylanders he honored in his State of the State address was UMES alum Ronnie Beard, now a teacher in Frederick County. I know Gov. Moore, and I know he values public higher education broadly, and the USM specifically.

This budget shows that support. And that support will allow us to keep a USM education within reach of every Maryland student. I thank everyone who's testified on behalf of the System or our universities, or supported those who have. Every year, we get a chance to show lawmakers what we do—and why it matters. I can't tell you how grateful I am that, every year, we make the most of it.

### SENIOR VICE CHANCELLOR JO BOUGHMAN

As promised, I'll end with just a few words about my colleague and friend Dr. Boughman. I'll keep it short so that Jo might address you herself.

Gratefully, it's not my only opportunity to share what she means to the USM—which is, in short, *everything*. Her name is virtually synonymous with the System's. And because Jo is such a connector of people, such a supportive colleague, you might forget that she's *also* a trailblazing scientist, and a gifted administrator, and a policy wonk, and a logistics czar ...

But I imagine our students will remember her primarily as an ally, an advocate, a lifeline. Jo understands how vital it is that we have student representation on this Board of Regents. But she was concerned that the considerable hours this board requires might prevent many students from applying—especially those who must work to pay for their education. She knew that constraint would likely limit the size of the applicant pool *and* its diversity. This concern was alleviated for *second*-year student regents with the passage of a bill permitting tuition remission. But no comparable program existed for their first-year counterparts.

And so, working with the USM Foundation, Jo established and funded an endowment for our first-year regents. The Student Voice Legacy Trust will serve as a tribute to Jo's passionate commitment not only to student leadership but to the imperative that our student leaders reflect the full diversity of those they represent—so that their voices are never silenced.

True to form, Jo has not only established and funded this trust, she's also been testifying on its behalf in Annapolis. We suspect the bill will sail through the General Assembly. Because anyone who knows Jo—and *everyone* knows Jo—understands that this endowment is the legacy befitting a leader of her brilliance, her stature, and her character.

And so, in this venue where she's done so much good, could we give Dr. Joann Boughman one *last* round of applause?

Jo, would you say a few words?