



Report to the USM Board of Regents

Chancellor Jay A. Perman

Coppin State University | April 14, 2023

Thank you, Chair Gooden. What a terrific morning it's been already, with the recognition of our faculty award winners. It was an honor to celebrate their excellence. I join you in welcoming our new regents and thanking those whose service and leadership have meant so much to this board, to the System, and to our students.

I thank Dr. Bill Regli. ARLIS has proved indispensable to our nation's intelligence and security communities, and I'm grateful for College Park's leadership in protecting our country and its people.

And I'm delighted to welcome Dr. Jacob Ashby as our new executive director of the **USM at Hagerstown** (USMH). Dr. Ashby is a trusted leader in Hagerstown and the broader community, and he knows first-hand what a regional center like USMH can do for that community and its students. Dr. Ashby, welcome.

Let's get right into some important achievements across the System.

I begin with our host, **Coppin State University** (CSU). As President Jenkins noted, these are exciting times at CSU. I was honored to help cut the ribbon on the new Eagle Achievement Center supporting students' academic, personal, and professional success. The center benefits from a \$2 million grant from Truist—the largest corporate commitment in Coppin's history—which establishes the Truist Hub for Black Economic Mobility.

Just a few weeks after that, BGE announced \$1 million in scholarships to support Coppin's STEM students. And, Dr. Jenkins, I know it must have been a great honor for the CSU baseball team to meet with Gov. Moore and members of the General Assembly last month to celebrate their 2022 MEAC Championship. A stunning performance. Congratulations to you and to the entire CSU family.

I mentioned Coppin State's BGE STEM scholarships. Well, **Bowie State University** (BSU) shared in BGE's largesse. BSU also won a grant of \$1.5 million from the U.S. Department of Education to support its marquee Black Male Educators Project, whose goal is to put more Black men in the

classroom—for context, Black men make up only 4 percent of Maryland teachers—and to support them to teaching success. Earlier this month, Bowie State was featured in the *New York Times* for creating its own tech intern pipeline, connecting students directly with companies and bypassing an often draconian Silicon Valley vetting process. And with depression and anxiety spiking among our children, BSU has just won \$5 million from USDE to train school-based mental health providers and prepare grad students in culturally responsive practices.

And, finally, the white-hot spotlight on Bowie’s arts programs hasn’t dimmed: This month, music legend Dionne Warwick visited campus for the official naming of the Dionne Warwick Theater—the *only* performing arts space bearing her name. Congratulations, Dr. Breaux.

Researchers from the **University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science (UMCES)** have won a three-year, \$2 million grant from the U.S. Department of Energy to explore how microalgae can reduce carbon dioxide emissions from power plants. UMCES is also joining the University of Arizona in a \$5 million USDA grant, examining effective farming practices in a rapidly drying climate. UMCES will model growing conditions decades out to support a move to native and adaptive crops that cut water use, curb emissions, and weather climate uncertainty.

And UMCES is partnering with Frostburg State University to offer a joint master’s in Environmental Management in Sustainability. The program brings together the environmental expertise of UMCES and the large, diverse student body of FSU to populate academia, government, and business with leaders who can address our most urgent sustainability challenges. Thank you, Dr. Goodwin.

At the **University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC)**, I must congratulate two newly minted Goldwater Scholars: Arjun Kanjarpane in biochemistry and molecular biology, and Anya Viswanathan in biological sciences. The scholarships are the nation’s most prestigious for undergrads in the STEM disciplines.

But they’re not the *only* Retrievers celebrating awards: Several UMBC faculty have won highly sought NSF CAREER awards. Mercedes Burns will travel to Japan with a group of students to study arachnid evolution, focusing on the spider we all grew up calling “daddy long legs.” Deepak Koirala and his research team will examine RNA structures within the genetic material of certain viruses to learn how those structures enable the viruses to replicate. Deepa Madan’s research unlocks the secrets of materials that turn heat into electricity. And Tyler Josephson is developing a new approach to writing code in computational chemistry. Congratulations on this abundance of excellence, Ms. Dettloff.

Supported with funding from the HBCU settlement, the **University of Maryland Eastern Shore (UMES)** is introducing new academic programs, including interdisciplinary programs in art therapy and music production—both of them firsts for the System as a whole. The U.S.

Department of Commerce announced \$3 million going to UMES to expand broadband access and enhance cybersecurity on campus and in the Princess Anne community.

And in a couple of weeks, several of us will join President Anderson to officially open the Pharmacy and Health Sciences Complex at UMES. The 130,000-square-foot building consolidates the university's nine health programs—the most at *any* U.S. HBCU—and represents UMES's commitment to taking exceptional care of its Eastern Shore neighbors. President Anderson, I'm looking forward to it.

The **University of Maryland, Baltimore** (UMB) has just announced a huge sustainability milestone: With three renewable energy purchase agreements and the use of Renewable Energy Certificates, UMB has reached—for the first time ever—100 percent renewable electricity.

Also at UMB, the School of Nursing and the Enoch Pratt Free Library have partnered in a program placing nursing students in city library branches. The students get relevant clinical experience, and Baltimore residents get no-cost health services. It's the first program of its kind in the state, modeled on a popular UMB program that places social workers in libraries. These services fill growing gaps in community care, allowing UMB students and faculty to meet neighbors where they are, in a place they trust.

And Dr. Nadine Finigan-Carr in UMB's School of Social Work was just named executive director of the UMB Center for Violence Prevention, a partnership with the R Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Center to marshal expertise and resources in curbing violence in Baltimore City.

The **University of Maryland, College Park** (UMD) is *also* addressing the existential threat of gun violence. It's part of a consortium of DC metro universities that released a comprehensive set of evidence-based recommendations to end this national crisis. Dr. Jarrell, Dr. Pines, I thank you for taking up this fight; there's none more important.

College Park's Grand Challenges Grants represent its largest-ever investment in projects addressing humanity's gravest problems. Across the university, \$30 million is going to 50 projects—in global health, clean water, social justice, democratic strength, ethical technology, climate change, and more. And speaking to the grand challenge of climate change, UMD will support Maryland's new environmental law, Climate Solutions Now. Its Center for Global Sustainability will team with Maryland's Department of the Environment to model cross-sector emissions cuts and catalyze policies that move us to net-zero.

Earlier, I mentioned UMBC's Goldwater Scholars. Well, College Park boasts three more: Neel Panchwagh and Corinne Martin in bioengineering, and Deven Bowman in physics and math. College Park leads the nation with 49 Goldwater scholarships awarded over the past 15 years. This is the excellence UMD is opening up to *all* students: It's just joined 15 leading universities

committed to serving students from small and rural communities, building accessible pathways into higher ed.

Frostburg State University (FSU) knows something about serving rural students. FSU has won \$3.5 million from the U.S. Department of Education for the REACH project, partnering with five area school districts to grow the number of highly effective, culturally responsive special educators in rural Appalachia. In addition, FSU and Allegany County Public Schools have inked a new dual-enrollment program—the Bobcat Academy—giving local high school students no-cost access to introductory courses in four popular majors. President Nowaczyk, as Frostburg celebrates its 125th anniversary this year, we're all so proud of the way you serve your students and shape your community. Thank you.

Gov. Moore heaped praise on **Salisbury University** (SU) students this spring at the Posters on the Bay undergraduate research showcase in Annapolis, which returned this year after a three-year pandemic hiatus. Students presented their projects on a variety of topics in medicine and health, social justice and economic inclusion, and climate and the environment. It's an important reminder to state lawmakers that undergraduate research *matters*.

I want to commend the Seidel School of Education at Salisbury: Of the 46 tri-county semifinalists for Maryland's Teacher of the Year—representing Wicomico, Worcester, and Somerset counties—more than three-quarters are Seidel School alumni. To me, that proves two things: 1) Seidel alums are committed to serving schoolchildren on the Lower Shore; and 2) those alumni are some of the best teachers around.

The last time we were together, I commended SU for its title as the nation's No. 1 producer of Fulbright Students among master's universities. Well, Salisbury's Fulbright success is poised to continue, as this year, SU has 12 semifinalists. More than half of the university's student applicants reached the semifinalist stage. Congratulations, Dr. Lepre.

Towson University (TU) is also well represented among Fulbright candidates, with six students selected as semifinalists—the most in its history. Additionally, in the *Poets & Quants* list of Best Undergraduate Business Schools, TU's College of Business & Economics was ranked 26th among public business schools and named one of just 11 schools to watch in 2023. And watch we will.

A few weeks ago, Towson announced its membership in the American Talent Initiative, an alliance of more than 130 four-year colleges with a shared goal of enrolling, supporting, and graduating an *additional* 50,000 lower-income students by 2025. It's undeniably essential work, and I thank you, Dr. Perreault.

Since we last met, the **University of Maryland Global Campus** (UMGC) has announced three new partnerships. An alliance with the Association for Supply Chain Management—the largest in the industry—will serve its members and their families by lowering cost and increasing speed to

a bachelor's degree. UMGC is also teaming up with Armstrong World Industries, a multinational manufacturer of ceiling and wall systems, to open higher ed access to the company's 2,800 employees. And UMGC and Purdue University Global have announced a multi-year partnership with GetSet's new Sponsored Degree Platform to help employers fill key job openings in cybersecurity. Thank you, Dr. Pomietto.

The **University of Baltimore** (UBalt) was once again named a Voter Friendly Campus by two national nonpartisan organizations: the Fair Election Center's Campus Vote Project and NASPA. Joining UBalt in this recognition are Towson University, Frostburg State, and UMBC.

Neha Lall, director of externships at the UBalt School of Law, has been named one of five Bellow Scholars for her research into "Paid Externships as a Tool to Advance Student Equity and Autonomy." And UBalt's Schaefer Center for Public Policy is leading a multifaceted effort to grow the number of students pursuing public service—including internships, a new public service minor, and a non-degree certificate. The goal is to swell state government capacity with a dedicated, diverse corps of servant-leaders. Badly needed. Thank you, President Schmoke.

At our regional centers, the **USM at Southern Maryland** will be hosting a free summer camp for high school students interested in STEM. The Camp for Future Problem Solvers focuses on mechanical design, electronics, and coding—but math and engineering skills are paired with teamwork and innovation, preparing students for creative, collaborative leadership.

And the **Universities at Shady Grove** (USG) is launching a new digital and TV ad campaign, highlighting the strengths of USG's close-knit campus community and its emphasis not only on academic excellence but on career success. Dr. Khademian, Dr. Abel, thank you.

2023 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

As you all know, we marked *sine die* earlier this week, so I'll turn now to the just completed legislative session.

Starting with our operating budget, we have good news. State support to the USM will total \$2.1 billion in FY24, an increase of \$205 million—nearly 11 percent—over this year's adjusted budget. This support allows us to limit our tuition increase for in-state undergraduates; it funds Year 2 of enhanced investment in our HBCUs; and it supports the operation of new facilities, expanding our academic and research capacity across the state. The budget also covers climbing benefits costs for our employees and fully funds pay increases, helping us attract and retain the faculty and staff who drive our excellence.

Turning to the capital budget, again we see strong support. Gov. Moore's proposed capital budget included \$272 million for construction projects across the System. The legislature then allocated additional money, bringing our total to nearly \$295 million. Projects funded or

advanced include \$30 million for the new Interdisciplinary Engineering Research Building at College Park, \$20 million for the renovation of Smith Hall at Towson University, \$12 million for the Agricultural Research Education Center at UMES, and \$25 million for facilities renewal Systemwide.

In terms of legislation, as always, there were a significant number of bills that would impact the System and our people. Of course, I'm not going to speak to all of them. But there are two bills that won passage that I want to highlight.

Senate Bill 426 authorizes this board to establish a quasi-endowment fund of up to \$150 million, which will generate income to support financial aid for our students. It's managed by the USM Foundation, and our universities can allocate money to it. The fund is designed to ensure that it grows in value each year, and is managed to maintain its purchasing power into the future.

This quasi-endowment is just one way we're serving our lower income students, doing our part to ensure not only that they can access a USM education, but that they can afford to stay in school until they have that diploma in hand.

A second bill that passed this session—Senate Bill 142—is one I mentioned at our last meeting. It authorizes this board to award a grant, supported by private donor funds, to our student regent for the first year of their two-year term. This does *not* impact the tuition waiver already granted for the second year of board service.

All of us get to see up close how much time and effort our student regents commit to this board. Acknowledging that sacrifice by providing some relief is an important incentive for students interested in this demanding role. And I'd be remiss if I didn't again honor the leadership and generosity of our colleague and friend of so many years, former Senior Vice Chancellor Jo Boughman, who inspired this effort.

I'm grateful to all of Maryland's elected leaders for their commitment to the System and to the work we do. I'm grateful for their faith in our students and their boldest ambitions. I'm grateful, as well, to our USM government relations team, to their colleagues across the System, and to *everyone* who undertook the hard work of steering us through such a productive session. For all who can manage it, I wish you rest.

Madame Chair, this concludes my report.

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