



Report to the USM Board of Regents

Chancellor Jay A. Perman

Salisbury University | June 14, 2024

Thank you, Madame Chair. I join you in congratulating our Student Excellence award winners. The greatest prize of this job is meeting students whose contributions to our scholarship, our service, and our leadership not only fortify our strength but advance our humanity.

I also join you in welcoming Regent Lewis. Ms. Lewis, it's an honor to have you on this Board; I look forward to our work together.

I'm grateful to our hosts this morning, Salisbury University (SU) and President Lepre. For most of us, it's a long drive to get here, but the payoff is just incredible. Thank you for having us, Lyn.

I extend my thanks, as well, to Ms. Hansen for her presentation on using artificial intelligence to provide more effective student support. We know that AI presents not only significant challenges to higher education, but also enormous opportunities—a fact illuminated by the work of Ms. Hanson and her team.

As Chair Gooden mentioned, the June board report serves as a year-in-review—a year that's heralded both tremendous accomplishments and significant change.

LEADERSHIP TRANSITIONS

Our year started with Dr. Mark Ginsberg assuming the presidency of Towson University (TU). While he began his tenure in the fall, we made it official this spring with his formal installation. Mark, you've had much to celebrate at TU over these last several months. Congratulations on your inaugural year.

Our *next* year will begin with Dr. Fernando Miralles-Wilhelm taking on two roles: president of the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science (UMCES) and USM vice chancellor for sustainability. For the last year, UMCES has thrived under the leadership of Interim President Bill Dennison. Bill, thank you for your clear vision and steady hand.

At the System office, we welcomed two new senior leaders. Susan Lawrence expertly guided us through the legislative session as vice chancellor for government relations. And Mike Sandler joined us earlier this month as vice chancellor for communications and marketing. I thank Nan Mulqueen, who steered our communications ship through a hectic and challenging spring semester.

Unfortunately, we must pair these welcomes a few farewells. I add my thanks to the departing regents we acknowledged this morning: Bob Wallace, who stepped down from the Board last fall; Farah Helal, whose two-year term as student regent ends this month; and Robert Rauch, who's served two five-year terms—the maximum allowed—with great distinction. In addition, I'd like us to remember, again, Regent Doug Peters, whose life of service continues to animate and inspire the work that we must take on without him.

UNIVERSITY EXCELLENCE

Let me turn now to the excellence of our universities, recounting some of their *recent* good news, but also some of their biggest achievements over the past 12 months.

I begin with our host today, Salisbury University. As President Lepre's presentation made clear, SU is an asset not only for the Shore but for the entire state. Here on campus, initiatives like formalizing a Graduate School and a Research Office will drive significant growth in students, in prominence, and in rankings. Beyond campus, new partnerships will bring new opportunities. For example, SU's landmark agreement with NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center will offer learning experiences for Salisbury students at the Wallops Flight Facility; fortify the agency's presence on campus; and develop the state's aerospace workforce with new coursework and development opportunities.

And in downtown Salisbury, SU's impact is, quite literally, transformative. From locating the new Museum of Eastern Shore Culture in the city, to spearheading a \$100 million proposal to build a downtown performing arts center, SU lives its mission to anchor and invigorate this beautiful community. Thank you, President Lepre.

MEETING COMMUNITY NEED

Meeting community need is what we were founded to do. We are meant to go where the need is greatest—to apply our people, our expertise, our assets, and our influence to enriching our communities and securing their strength, resilience, and prosperity. It's a mission to which each of our universities is dedicated.

Our host, Salisbury University, is deploying trained tutors in Wicomico County public schools. SU students and retired educators provide rigorous intervention aimed at improving middle and high school math proficiency, especially among the county's highest need students.

At the University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB), the Embrace Resource Center opened a new space in West Baltimore. A partnership of UMB, local nonprofits, city agencies, and private businesses, the center will establish the Eutaw Street Corridor as a safe, thriving community for those living and working there.

UMB's School of Social Work is partnering with Coppin State University (CSU) and the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC) to expand training for school-based mental health providers. A \$5.5 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education will place more than 100 social work students each year in local public schools.

Coppin State inked a partnership with Baltimore City to place nursing students and RNs in public schools that struggle to staff pediatric nurses. UMB and the Universities at Shady Grove (USG) are teaming up to place nursing students in Prince George's County public *libraries*, where they can serve patients they might never see in a clinic.

With its new Urban Conflict Manager Program, the University of Baltimore (UBalt) is training the city's Safe Streets leaders in conflict management and violence prevention. And just this month, the Baltimore City school board approved a plan for UBalt to host City College students for three years during the renovation of the high school's century-old building. UBalt is leasing the space to City College for \$1 a year, so I expect the *real* payoff will be recruiting all those talented City Collegians to the University of Baltimore.

UMCES has partnered with Allegany County to provide access to its research services and facilities. The county-funded program offers local companies up to \$50,000 to cover costs associated with R&D conducted in partnership with UMCES's Appalachian Lab. The point is to spark innovation and product development that leads to long-term, sustainable jobs in Western Maryland.

And, in a truly moving development, Bowie State University (BSU) is teaming up with Anne Arundel County to reimagine the notorious Crownsville State Hospital, founded in 1911 as the Hospital for the Negro Insane. BSU will help transform the psychiatric facility—marked by the trauma its patients endured—into a place of education and healing. Building on BSU's historic relationship with the hospital, the initiative will seed educational programming, research, internships, and initiatives focused on health and wellness. The collaboration will promote community well-being and advocate for ongoing mental health reform.

ACADEMIC GROWTH

This is us putting our expertise to work. And that expertise is cultivated in our academic programs, which we evolve to prepare students for success in the world we know—and in the world we anticipate.

UBalt unveiled its MS in Artificial Intelligence for Business, launching this fall. It's the first program of its kind in Maryland, preparing graduates to ethically deploy AI and machine learning for greater productivity and innovation across business enterprises.

The University of Maryland Eastern Shore (UMES) won approval to pursue its highly anticipated School of Veterinary Medicine, the first in Maryland and the second at a U.S. HBCU. Last month, the program was included in a federal funding package sponsored by Sen. Cardin and Sen. Van Hollen. That \$1 million earmark joins \$5.5 million in support coming from the USDA.

A terrific collaboration between USG and Towson University, announced last week, addresses the ongoing teacher shortage in Montgomery County. TU will offer a dual certification program in Elementary Education and Special Education to paraprofessionals already employed in Montgomery County classrooms. And USG will pay in full whatever tuition cost isn't covered by

the school system. This is the kind of innovation we need to address a chronic teacher shortage that disadvantages our schools and our students.

Two programs launching this fall at the USM at Southern Maryland (USMSM) highlight the center's dual role. A master's program in Special Education offered by Bowie State grows USMSM's work in educating Southern Maryland students for high-demand careers. And a master's in Test and Evaluation of Autonomy, offered by the University of Maryland, College Park (UMD) raises the center's profile in autonomous systems R&D and workforce development. And here I have to congratulate Dr. Abel on 16 graduates this academic year in mechanical and electrical engineering. Well done.

This year, Bowie State became only the third HBCU to offer a PhD in Counselor Education and Supervision, cementing its leadership in combatting our nation's mental health crisis. Last fall, BSU welcomed the inaugural class of Public Health and Information Technology students. The novel program—training students to assess, diagnose, and treat public health events—is meant to diversify the fields of IT and informatics.

Frostburg State has a new undergraduate degree in Environmental Science, serving as a pathway to the MS in Environmental Management in Sustainability, which FSU launched last year in partnership with UMCES. And its new partnership with the West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine will allow FSU students to pursue an osteopathic career close to home, where critical care is often least accessible.

The University of Maryland Global Campus (UMGC) launched an accelerated MBA this year, listening to its students, who want faster time-to-degree-completion and lower out-of-pocket costs.

CENTERS AND PROGRAMS

UMCES launched its Chesapeake Global Collaboratory, harnessing big data and advanced cyberinfrastructure to tackle environmental challenges. The collaboratory brings together more people, deeper information, and better technology to shape environmental action that's more nimble, transparent, and democratic.

The University of Maryland Institute for Health Computing—a partnership among UMB, UMD, and the University of Maryland Medical System—opened in North Bethesda. The institute uses advanced computing and a massive cache of de-identified patient data to create a learning health system that improves care and outcomes across patient demographics and closes gaps of equity by transforming community-focused research.

UBalt inaugurated the multidisciplinary Center for Advancing Prevention Excellence, supporting local and national communities in improving mental health and community health by tackling underlying issues that lead to substance use and behavioral challenges.

Together, UMBC and UMB are creating a \$4 million NIH accelerator to grow faculty-developed technologies in biomedicine and life sciences.

College Park launched the Artificial Intelligence Interdisciplinary Institute at Maryland, supporting collaborative faculty research and experiential learning in AI, with a focus on developing responsible AI technology and ethical AI leaders.

The University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC) is among the founding institutions of a national effort to improve pathways for women of color in tech. The program, spearheaded by the National Academy of Science, aims to advance equity and inclusion in STEM and relies on its participating organizations—all leaders in diversifying technical fields—to share best practices and build the evidence base for what works.

CAMPUS GROWTH

This academic growth feeds, in turn, the *physical* growth of our campuses.

Coppin State cut the ribbon on its new College of Business last fall. The \$45 million facility—the first new building to open at Coppin since 2015—will be a hub for business education in Baltimore and a catalyst for university growth and community development.

Frostburg State opened its \$82 million Education and Health Sciences Center, where the university will prepare students to fill critical workforce gaps in Maryland’s classrooms, clinics, and hospitals.

Towson University launched a \$150 million renovation of Smith Hall, where a state-of-the-art communications hub is taking shape.

UMD celebrated the opening of its National Quantum Laboratory, truly a one-of-a-kind quantum research center developed in partnership with College Park-based IonQ. Our flagship has staked its ground as the worldwide Capital of Quantum, and every day, it proves the name is apt.

UMES broke ground on its Agricultural Research & Education Center. Supported with \$10 million from USDA and \$17 million from the state, the new building will provide a modern space for teaching, research, and extension, and support agribusiness as one of Maryland’s leading economic developers.

At UMB, the nearly complete 4MLK tower will add several dozen new biotech companies to the university’s BioPark—already Baltimore’s biggest bioscience cluster. And with Greater Baltimore named a Federal Tech Hub in predictive health care, there’s tremendous potential for even more growth. I thank our universities in the tech hub consortium: UMB, Coppin, UMBC, and TU.

Several miles away at UMD, the university’s annexation of 22 acres for its Discovery District research park promises even more R&D partnerships and productivity.

GRANTS AND CONTRACTS

Moving to some significant grants and contracts, I'll start with the FDA's new five-year, \$50 million cooperative agreement with M-CERSI. The center of excellence in regulatory science is a partnership between College Park and UMB, focused on improving the way drugs and devices are reviewed and evaluated.

With nearly half-a-million dollars from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, UMGC is identifying new models for closing the higher ed equity gap and quickly scaling programs and pathways for underrepresented students.

At Bowie State, three new U.S. Department of Education grants totaling \$3.5 million provide scholarships to future teachers and leaders serving children in special education.

UMBC will lead a \$10 million international partnership to scale land-based Atlantic salmon aquaculture, advancing global food security, environmental sustainability, and economic resilience. And the university won funding as part of Affirming Multivocal Humanities, an \$18 million Mellon Foundation initiative supporting innovative scholarship and teaching on race, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality.

A \$1.2 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education will help Coppin State improve literacy, math, and social-emotional outcomes for school-age children with disabilities, particularly children of color and multilingual children. And an Open Works Maker Space is coming to CSU. Supported with \$2 million in federal funding, the facility will give students and faculty access to an industrial co-working space and high-tech tools.

Last summer, the U.S. Department of Transportation awarded College Park nearly \$40 million to fast-track the conversion of its bus fleet from diesel vehicles to electric. As climate change accelerates extreme weather events, UMD has joined a \$6.6 million consortium to improve data assimilation used to predict weather and to train the next generation of atmospheric scientists.

UMD is also taking part in a \$5 million NASA grant to explore the potential of a satellite mission mapping climate change. The Earth Dynamics Geodetic Explorer—or EDGE—mission would launch in several years. But UMD already *has* a part of them in space. Aerospace Engineering alumna Dr. Jeanette Epps is aboard the International Space Station for six months as a mission specialist.

And finally, just a few weeks ago, the UMD Applied Research Laboratory for Intelligence and Security announced the largest research contract in the university's history, \$500 million from the Department of Defense.

Moving back to space for a moment, the UMBC-developed HARP II—part of NASA's PACE mission—is sending data back to Earth analyzing aerosol particles and clouds as a means of illuminating our air quality, climate, and climate change. And another UMBC instrument launches in two years: Astronauts will deploy the university's Lunar Environment Monitoring

Station, an autonomous seismometer, as part of NASA's forthcoming Artemis III lunar landing mission.

Closer to home, new faculty hires in UMBC's College of Engineering and Information Technology—specializing in sustainability and renewable energy R&D—are boosting the university's commitment to Earth-friendly research, from solar energy harvesting to advanced batteries. And UMBC's Maryland Technology Internship Program—which helps Maryland retain tech talent by offering paid internships—is doubling capacity this summer, thanks to a \$700,000 investment from Gov. Moore and the Maryland General Assembly.

The NSF selected UMCES to lead the Global Nitrogen Innovation Center for Clean Energy and the Environment. Working with U.S. and international universities, UMCES will investigate green ammonia, an emerging technology that could prove critical in providing clean energy and supporting food production while mitigating climate change. UMCES also received a \$2 million award from NOAA to support a three-year project to explore how existing infrastructure like wastewater treatment plants could be used to mitigate global warming.

UMES won \$5 million from the U.S. Department of Education to establish a Futures Institute, accelerating the university's push to Research 1 status. The grant will help recruit faculty, doctoral students, scientists, and research mentors, all focused on three grand challenges—climate change, AI, and health care—and, specifically, on generating new knowledge in areas with documented gaps in research on the African-American experience.

UMES is one of 19 HBCUs sharing \$33 million from the USDA to support research and education at historically Black land-grant institutions. The five projects at UMES, focusing on food safety and agricultural innovation, won more than \$2.5 million combined. And as part of UMES's bid to develop the next generation of aviation professionals, it's sharing in \$13.5 million in FAA grants to attract and train students for careers as pilots, engineers, technicians, and drone operators.

With \$10.6 million from the state, UMB will take a leadership role in shoring up abortion access in Maryland. UMB's Abortion Care Clinical Training Program will expand and diversify the pool of health care professionals trained to provide abortions and reproductive health care. Timely, indeed. That awards joins some huge UMB grants over this semester *alone*: \$30 million to prevent rehospitalization among IV drug users, \$9 million to improve vaccine efficacy, \$7 million to innovate trauma triage technology for mass casualty events.

PHILANTHROPY

This productivity in our sponsored programs was matched by our fundraising success.

Bowie State's BSU Bold campaign reached its \$50 million goal more than two years ahead of schedule. The campaign grew BSU's endowment more than 500 percent—from \$7 million to \$40 million—positioning BSU for even greater leadership, and making significantly more scholarship funding available to students.

FSU's Forging Futures campaign has hit its initial fundraising goal, raising \$25 million for students, the university, and the region. Towson University completed its largest-ever fundraising campaign: \$102 million to support research, student programs, and capital improvements. CSU launched a \$25 million campaign, the largest in Coppin's history, to support student achievement and retention, and academic and research excellence.

In just *one day*—its 11th annual Giving Day—the University of Maryland raised more than \$4 million to support university priorities. And a \$27 million gift from Professor Emeritus Michael Brin and his wife Eugenia advances mathematics teaching, research, and enrichment. The gift is the largest-ever to the math department, and the university's fourth-largest outright gift from an individual.

SERVING THE PUBLIC GOOD

These assets are deployed not only to strengthen our academic mission but to serve the public good.

This spring, Towson University launched its inaugural Impact TU, a revamp of The Big Event. More than 500 Towson students took part in projects focused on environmental stewardship, economic security, and social well-being. TU's Office of Civic Engagement & Social Responsibility has added an educational component, helping students better understand the value of civic engagement and how to foster sustainable communities.

And TU's new Sandra R. Berman Center for Humanity, Tolerance and Holocaust Education supports a new generation of leaders in shaping a world free from bigotry, hatred, and genocide. Critical as ever.

At UMB, the Gibson-Banks Center for Race and the Law, launched last fall, is providing a badly needed space for scholarship, engagement, and action on issues of equality and justice, with a focus on systems and institutions.

UBalt was named an inaugural Host Partner for the Maryland Corps Program, the Moore administration's keystone initiative to strengthen Maryland's workforce through service learning, volunteerism, and the strategic matching of talent with need.

And Coppin State has joined Baltimore City's HBCU Fellowship Initiative, providing recent graduates nine-month internships with city agencies in a bid to create a robust pipeline into public service careers.

AWARDS AND HONORS

A few times a year, national higher ed rankings are released, judging the relative performance—the relative value—of U.S. colleges and universities in any number of categories. And each time these rankings are posted, I dutifully report where we land. I won't recount our rankings here, but I will share some honors that our universities earned this year; honors that mean a lot to them; honors that reflect who we are as a System—what we value and what we stand for.

This year, the NSA validated UMGC as a National Center of Academic Excellence for its cybersecurity programming. The *Military Times* ranked UMGC No. 1 among online & hybrid universities in educating veterans, and No. 1 overall in employing them. And Frostburg State just won the Military Friendly School designation—for the 13th straight year.

For the third-straight year, UMES led the country's HBCUs with the highest student pass rate on the national pharmacy licensure exam. Last week, the NCAA's MEAC conference announced that UMES has the conference's highest academic progress rate—and that, for the third-straight year, Coppin State posted the conference's top graduation rate.

The USM at Hagerstown was named Small Business of the Year by the Washington County Chamber of Commerce. The regional center gives back to its community in myriad ways—not least of which is \$80,000 in scholarships last year going to local students.

This Pride Month, it's fitting that I acknowledge College Park's inclusion on *Newsweek's* Top Workplaces for LGBTQ+ employees. It follows UMD's ranking some weeks ago in the magazine's Top Workplaces for Women.

These recognitions matter. They're emblematic of who we are: Excellent. Inclusive. Always striving for more.

OUR MISSION IN TIMES OF CHALLENGE

Without question, this was a challenging spring. Our universities are still dealing with the federal government's regrettable FAFSA rollout. Our financial aid officers, admissions officers, student affairs staff are still hard at work. But we are resolute. We remain dedicated to our foundational principles: Access for all. Affordability for all. Inclusion for all.

We're still raw from a spring that saw anger and suffering and pain on our campuses. Protests and demonstrations. But we are resolute. Because our job is exactly this: To educate for democracy. To educate for citizenship. To prepare the leaders who can make good and productive change. To provide the space to engage with one another across our differences, and connect people who have the desire, the ability, and the empathy to solve our most persistent, most complex challenges.

This is what we were *made* to do. But that doesn't mean it's easy. So I ask our university leaders to share my gratitude with your people, whose unflagging dedication to our students this spring leaves me in awe—of their care and compassion, and their unfaltering fidelity to our most important mission.

Madame Chair, this concludes my report.

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