Report to the Board of Regents

Chancellor Jay A. Perman

University of Maryland Global Campus | October 31, 2025

Thank you, Madame Chair. Good morning, everyone.

ENDORSING OUR EXCELLENCE

We often talk about the System's path to preeminence, and there are, of course, a number of ways to measure our quality, the value we return to our students. National rankings have long reflected our excellence, and I want to start my report by highlighting just a few.

U.S. News last month released its annual Best Colleges list, and we notched some notable laurels. The University of Maryland, College Park earned its highest-ever ranking, No. 16 among public universities. UMBC rose 11 spots to No. 63, with an overall top 20 placement for Most Innovative Schools. UMB's undergraduate nursing program made the top 10 among public universities, while undergraduate engineering at College Park came in at No. 12.

Among public universities in the North, Towson ranks No. 3, Salisbury, No. 18, UBalt, No. 25, Frostburg, No. 33. Bowie State ranks among the magazine's top 5 public HBCUs.

In *Forbes*'s list of America's Top Colleges, UMD came in at No. 10 among public universities—another climb to its highest rank. UMBC, Towson, and Salisbury also made the coveted list.

In *Washington Monthly*'s rankings, Towson was named a Top 25 Best in Class University and notched our highest ranking, No. 28, in the Best Bang for the Buck category—unsurprisingly, a category in which our universities are exceptionally well-represented. In the *Wall Street Journal*'s rankings, Towson scored a top 50 spot for Social Mobility; UMGC, for Best Salaries; College Park, for Best Value.

The *Princeton Review* gave the nod to College Park, UMBC, and Salisbury. *Money* magazine ranked Towson, College Park, Salisbury, UMBC, and Bowie State.

The accolades I've shared don't do justice to the hundreds of rankings that endorse our universities' excellence and value, the quality we offer students and the return they see on their investment in us. We excel on the very indicators we consider mission-critical Systemwide: access and outcomes, affordability and economic mobility, service to our students and to the communities we call home.

Maybe that explains, in part, why our enrollment keeps growing. Without stealing the thunder of Regent Fish and Associate Vice Chancellor Muntz, I want to note that we're breaking records this year—in undergraduate enrollment; in first-time, full-time enrollment; in total enrollment. Let me repeat that: In *total* enrollment.

Salisbury and College Park each have their highest-ever first-time, full-time class. Together, our HBCUs are recording their fourth-straight year of growth, led by Coppin, who—clinching a 25-year enrollment high—well exceeded its projections.

Another university did the same, exceeding projections by nearly 5,000 students. Of course, that's our host today, UMGC. President Fowler and his team can explain far better than I how they're achieving this incredible growth, reaching the students we otherwise wouldn't. But I do know that UMGC continues to increase the number of alumni who return to the university to enroll in another program. That alumni-return rate is up 19% over last year. This is the endorsement we're after: students who see us as a proven value, who know they can count on us to get them where they want to be.

Let me stick with our host today and thank UMGC for joining an initiative to connect displaced federal workers across the DMV with personalized career pathways. Spearheaded by DC's Deputy Mayor of Education, the initiative brings together government, employers, and colleges to deliver free and reduced-price academic programs, training, coaching, and job-matching services. It's directly aligned with UMGC's commitment to expanding opportunities for learners navigating career transition. Thank you, President Fowler.

I'll share another endorsement of our work—the gifts we get from our friends and donors. Philanthropist MacKenzie Scott has given the University of Maryland Eastern Shore the single largest gift in its history, $38 million. You'll recall that Ms. Scott gave $20 million to UMES just five years ago. These are transformational gifts that prove her confidence in UMES's direction and momentum—and in the dynamic leadership of President Anderson.

The money will go to the strategic priorities on which UMES has made such significant progress: opening student access to a UMES education and improving completion rates, expanding the university's research portfolio, and deepening strategic regional partnerships. Dr. Anderson, I know my congratulations pale in comparison to $38 million, but I offer them anyway.

Meanwhile, Coppin State capped its first 125 years with a friend-filled, sold-out gala catapulting CSU over the top of its BE MORE capital campaign goal. Coppin raised $25.5 million, the largest campaign total in university history and an affirmation of the university's enduring impact on its students, its city, its state.

How about the endorsement of our corporate partners? Microsoft will soon open a major quantum research lab at College Park, sparking discovery, creating jobs, and invigorating Maryland's economy. Gov. Moore announced the news while addressing the Quantum World Congress.

Since the governor launched his Capital of Quantum initiative nine months ago, UMD's Discovery District has welcomed nearly a dozen quantum startups. The district's anchor, IonQ, is expanding its research park footprint and doubling its Maryland workforce. And the university formalized a partnership with DARPA to test and evaluate quantum information science, unlocking millions in federal funds. Provost Pomietto, this momentum is hard-earned and well-deserved. Congratulations.

HOW WE ENDURE

Several of our universities are celebrating milestone years, recalling the past that brought them to this point and imagining the future to come.

The University of Baltimore will cap its year-long centennial celebration next month, with an event inviting the UBalt community to look back and to look ahead. The celebration will feature exhibits integrating a vision for UBalt that captures its core strengths and carries the university into its *next* 100 years. I look forward to it, President Schmoke.

Bowie State marked 160 years with a new street sign in Baltimore City, marking the site of BSU's birth at the corner of Calvert and Saratoga streets. Founded in the basement of an African American church the year the Civil War ended, "School #1" had just 12 students. At the unveiling, President Breaux called them "the brave souls who met here and refused to be bound by ignorance, who believed that education could open the door to freedom."

At UMCES's centennial kickoff this month, President Miralles-Wilhelm shared his biggest goals for the university's next 100 years: Expand UMCES's educational footprint—at home and abroad. Strengthen collaborations with universities, NGOs, and the private sector to catalyze environmental solutions. Increase investments in science—especially from non-government sources. And explore new research areas focused on ending poverty, disease, hunger, and violence. Appropriately ambitious, President Miralles-Wilhelm.

The USM at Hagerstown celebrated 20 years of impact this month. Twenty years of expanding access to affordable higher education. Twenty years of opportunity, partnership, and community impact. Last month's annual fundraiser brought together donors, students, faculty, and staff—with all dollars raised going directly to student scholarships. Dr. Ashby, I've heard nothing but wonderful things.

The same goes for another fundraiser 50-some miles from Hagerstown. The Montgomery County Business Hall of Fame inducted its latest class of luminaries. The event doubles as a fundraiser for the business community's greatest asset, The Universities at Shady Grove. This year's luncheon netted $200,000 for deserving students. Congratulations, Dr. Khademian.

WHERE WE INVEST

New programs at our universities not only grow opportunities for our students; they signal what we value, what we invest in.

THE ARTS

With a national culture around STEM that sometimes crowds out everything else, UMBC is doubling down on the arts. The university's Arts+ initiative—launched with an on-campus BSO concert—lifts up the university's visual and performing arts programs and brings the community to campus to share in the celebration of human creativity.

Ambitious events throughout the year will raise the power and profile of UMBC's arts programs, excite and unite the campus community, and establish the university as a destination for exhibitions, performances, concerts, and lectures. Congratulations, President Sheares Ashby.

CIVIC EDUCATION + ENGAGEMENT

Towson University is proving its commitment to engaged citizenship and respectful debate. The Ben and Myrna Cardin Center for Civic Engagement and Civil Discourse will be an academic and research hub advancing public service, strengthening democratic values, and promoting constructive dialogue on the issues that most imperil—and most divide—our state and our nation. Sen. Cardin will lead the center, joining TU as its second Presidential Scholar.

The center's launch comes as two TU students, Sierra Nathan and Tracy Boyd, win competitive fellowships for emerging leaders in civic engagement. Both programs, the Transform Mid-Atlantic Civic Fellows and the Campus Compact Newman Civic Fellows, emphasize creating sustainable social change and applying lessons learned to campus-based engagement efforts. President Ginsberg, I know how deeply you care about these efforts; thank you.

And I should note here that a $2.3 million grant from the Election Trust Initiative will establish the Election Resilience Lab at College Park, building capacity in election offices so they can effectively administer contests crucial to our democracy.

INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION + SCHOLARSHIP

Salisbury University is proving its commitment to international scholarship and engagement. A record number of students and alumni from Salisbury's TRIO program are studying abroad this semester, a credit to SU's work in opening up competitive scholarships and fellowships to underserved students often excluded from international opportunities.

Consistently named among the nation's top producers of Fulbright students going abroad, Salisbury is—for the first time—welcoming one to its Eastern Shore campus. Erragab Eljanhaoui, a PhD student from Morocco, will continue his doctoral thesis, a study of Saharan Nomads in southern Morocco, drawing on archives housed at SU.

And, finally, a partnership with Sumy State University in Sumy, Ukraine, will enable more than academic and student exchanges; the MOU allows SU to provide educational support for Sumy State during and after Ukraine's years-long conflict with Russia. Sumy is just 20 miles from the Russian border and one of the war's first battleground regions. Thank you, President Lepre.

CAREER-CONNECTED TECH PATHWAYS

Bowie State is doubling down on tech pathways for career-connected, industry-aligned learning. Partnering with MHEC, the Maryland Department of Labor, and the national nonprofit CodePath, BSU will strengthen the state's technology workforce pipeline. CodePath will use its curriculum and industry connections to offer students advanced training in software engineering and cybersecurity, together with direct employer engagement.

That's not all. Bowie just won a three-year, $1 million NSF grant to launch a Computing Experiential Hub, combining classroom and real-world learning to prepare students for careers in AI and emerging technologies. The hub will facilitate new partnerships with leading tech companies, including IBM, as well as fast-growing startups. Congratulations, President Breaux.

REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Frostburg State is leaning into its role driving the regional economy. The university has won a three-year, $400,000 NSF grant supporting research that targets regional needs. It's one of the largest NSF investments in FSU's history, and the first of its kind in 20+ years. The grant will launch the Appalachian Innovation Institute, connecting applied, use-inspired research—in AI, advanced manufacturing, robotics, cybersecurity—with community-based entrepreneurship.

Frostburg's project is part of a collaborative five-university network, funded with $2 million from NSF and led by FSU faculty, who see their work as a national model for how rural universities can shape technological advancement and sustainable economic growth. Such important work; thank you, President Smith.

ALLIANCES OF STRENGTH

UMB and College Park are delivering on the promise of their MPower alliance. The two universities are co-leading a first-of-its-kind center to study resilience and aging, at a time when the American people are the oldest they've ever been. Funded with nearly $1 million from the National Institute on Aging, the project carries the potential for six years of support. Using computational innovation and clinical partnerships, the center aims to build aging resilience by transforming the systems that shape wellness and care, and reimagining the health and social infrastructure needed to support aging across the nation.

STUDENT-SERVING CAMPUSES

Coppin State is building a campus ready for growth and for next-generation leadership. The university dedicated *three* campus facilities this month: the Margaret Peters Tennis Complex, the Katherine Johnson Science & Technology Building, and the Henrietta Lacks Health & Human Services Building. The celebrations centered the legacies of three extraordinary Black women, whose excellence, discovery, and ethical care changed our nation.

President Jenkins said he hopes the buildings remind students of their responsibility "to translate knowledge into service, to never shrink in moments of challenge, and to always fight to advance equity across the communities they're privileged to serve." Well said, Dr. Jenkins.

HUMAN HEALTH RESEARCH

UMB is doubling down on its life-saving research, now threatened with federal disinvestment. Proposed cuts to the federal budget would slash funding for global health programs by 62%, nearly halving the dollars going to malaria research, zeroing out vaccine programs, and cutting global programs to fight HIV/AIDS.

To strengthen its defenses against these cuts, UMB's School of Medicine is linking departments, institutes, and centers whose faculty are focused on solving generational health challenges, leveraging assets and partnerships to connect, coordinate, and scale global impact. An important investment, President Jarrell; thank you.

At UMB's School of Dentistry, faculty are investigating oral health as a gateway to whole-body wellness. One pair of NIH grants, totaling $4.3 million, explores the intricate connections between our immune, intestinal, and skeletal systems, and how gum disease may drive chronic conditions.

Another grant, worth $3.7 million, explores the neural mechanisms behind an emerging nonpharmacological treatment called "green light therapy." The project will be the first to map how the entire brain changes as chronic pain develops, and as green light therapy is applied, opening new treatments for millions of people living every day with chronic pain and anxiety.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

UMD knows what we lose when we lose our historic sites. College Park and Preservation Maryland will repurpose one of Ellicott City's most significant historic buildings, the Ellicott City Jail, which once held people seeking freedom from slavery. The renovation will create research and training spaces for faculty and students, together with exhibit and contemplation spaces for community members.

EMPLOYEE WELL-BEING

UMBC and Towson are proving their commitment to their employees. Both were named to ModernThink's Great Colleges to Work For, a distinction earned by just 54 four-year colleges nationwide. Employees weighed in on things like mission and pride, faculty and staff well-being, leadership effectiveness, shared governance, and inclusion and belonging. While UMBC has some experience with the honor—it's their 16th year of recognition and 14th on the Honor Roll—Towson is marking its first year on the list.

And as I talk about a commitment to our employees, I want to mention a special commencement ceremony hosted at UMB last month. Antonio Pennix Jr., a custodial manager at the university, was the first graduate of a pilot program allowing employees without a high school diploma to work part-time while they go to school—for as long as it takes. Partnering with the Goodwill Excel Center, an adult-serving, tuition-free high school, UMB is removing barriers to career advancement, one employee at a time.

COMMUNITY CARE

The USM at Southern Maryland is leaning into community care. Last month, the center hosted the Southern Maryland Suicide Prevention Summit, opening up the conversation about suicide risk and self-harm, and gathering together prevention and intervention agencies, strategies, and resources that, every day, save lives. Thank you, Dr. Nesbary.

Coppin State, too, is proving its commitment to community health and safety. The National Domestic Violence Hotline is piloting a program using student ambassadors at Coppin State and Florida's Bethune-Cookman University to educate young people about healthy relationships, preventing dating abuse, and supporting those who experience it—which national statistics show is at least one in three U.S. teens.

WHAT WE CELEBRATE

Frostburg State is celebrating continued accreditation of its Physician Assistant program, hosted at USMH, and continuing accreditation of its graduate Athletic Training Program.

UBalt is celebrating 10 of its alumni making *The Daily Record*'s Family Law Power List, the state's best attorneys working on some of the thorniest issues in law: divorce, visitation, child support and custody.

Towson is celebrating a University-Earned Credit designation for its actuarial science program, joining an elite group of 24 universities worldwide authorized to grant academic credit that contributes directly to an actuarial credential—meaning TU students can opt out of time-consuming and stressful exams.

UMCES is celebrating Prof. Thomas Miller, whom Gov. Moore named the 111th Admiral of the Chesapeake Bay. The lifetime achievement award is given to Marylanders who've made extraordinary contributions to Bay conservation and restoration. Over three decades of work at UMCES's Chesapeake Biological Lab, Dr. Miller has shaped our modern scientific understanding and management of the state's recreational and commercial fisheries.

College Park is celebrating excellence on international rankings of research productivity and impact, coming in at No. 11 among public universities *worldwide* on both the Shanghai Academic ranking and the Center for World Universities ranking. These accolades were followed by an equally important metric: *The Chronicle of Higher Education* puts UMD at No. 10 among all U.S. public universities for its graduation rate, and at No. 3 among Big Ten schools.

And, finally, the System is proving its commitment to incarcerated Marylanders and those returning home. The people responsible for the achievement will give the details, but I do want to share that the System has been awarded a $4 million grant to develop a statewide plan for prison education and reentry programming.

This is an incredibly important milestone, and I need to thank Regent Wood and my team in Academic and Student Affairs—Dr. Wrynn, Dr. Lee. But I also need to thank my colleagues at

UBalt, Bowie State, and Maryland Public Safety and Correctional Services for the foundational work they've done in this space for *years* and for the guidance that secured our grant. You'll hear more from Regent Wood shortly.

Madame Chair, this concludes my report.

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