

**Friday, September 9, 2016**

**Report to the USM Board of Regents**

**Chancellor Robert Caret**

Thank you Chairman Brady . . . And let me congratulate you on your first meeting as chair of the University System of Maryland (USM) Board of Regents. I add my words of welcome to everyone for the first USM Board meeting of the new academic year.

I also want to welcome our newest regents—Ellen Fish, Louis Pope, James Holzapfel, and student-regent Brandon Enriquez—to their first official board meeting. On behalf of the presidents and the entire USM family, let me express our appreciation to you for your willingness to serve.

And, of course, let me once again thank and congratulate the winners of the Regents Staff Awards. These men and women represent the excellence, professionalism, and commitment that can be found throughout the USM.

The summer months used to be thought of as a “down time” for higher education, but that is simply not the case anywhere within the USM. Since we last met in June, there has been an incredible amount of activity. So much so, that I am going to have to move through my report very quickly just to hit the highlights.

I will begin with our “host” institution, Towson University (TU) and President Kim Schatzel. These are certainly exciting times here at Towson:

* This past month saw the opening of two new state-of-the-art residence halls— Marshall Hall and Carroll Hall—both featuring sustainable design and construction in line with LEED Silver certification.
* And next Friday—September 16th—I will be back here at Towson once again as Kim Schatzel is formally inaugurated as the university’s 14th president.
  + You have already made a significant impression on Towson and I know your leadership and insight will continue to be impactful after your inauguration.
  + I look forward to taking part next week.

This past summer has brought some impressive rankings news for USM institutions:

*Forbes Magazine's* "America's Top Colleges"—with rankings based on tuition costs, school quality, graduation success, and post-grad earnings—included four USM institutions:

* Towson
* Salisbury University (SU)
* University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC)
* University of Maryland, College Park (UMCP)

*Forbes* also ranked University of Maryland University College (UMUC) one of the top schools for adults returning to school. In addition, UMUC received the 2016 Higher Education Excellence in Diversity Award from *INSIGHT Into Diversity* magazine, recognizing commitment to diversity and inclusion.

*MONEY* Magazine’s inaugural list of "Best Value Colleges"—based on 24 factors in the categories of educational quality, affordability, and alumni success—recognized five USM campuses:

* UMBC
* Towson
* Salisbury
* Frostburg State University (FSU)
* And leading the way at 10th among public universities and 19th overall was UMCP.

*The Princeton Review* once again selected UMBC as one of the nation’s top universities for undergraduate education. And the 2017 *Fiske Guide to Colleges* recognized UMBC for its top academics and supportive community.

* Let me also acknowledge that UMBC will commemorate its 50th anniversary on Sept. 19, 2016 with a community celebration that will also underscore UMBC’s remarkable impact over the past 50 years.

The University of Baltimore (UB) was ranked 23rd nationally in the 2016 *Washington Monthly* college rankings, in the first-time category of Best 4-Year Colleges for Adult Learners. In addition, UB's Online Master of Public Administration Program ranked among the national top 10 by the web-based publication *Value Colleges*.

A new study published in *Research in Higher Education* lists Bowie State University (BSU) among the top 20 most cost-efficient public master’s institutions. In fact, all four assessment models used in the study ranked Bowie in the top 20. BSU was also recognized by *U.S. News & World Report* as one of the top Historically Black Institutions increasing support for LGBTQ students.

UMCP received similar recognition as one of only **thirty** institutions nationwide recognized in *Campus Pride’s* 2016 Best of the Best LGBTQ-friendly Colleges and Universities.

Beyond the institutional rankings, there were some impressive individual accolades:

* Coppin State University’s (CSU) Director of Instructional Technology & Training, Dionne Curbeam, was acknowledged by *The Daily Record* on its list of “Very Important Professionals - Successful by 40” released this past summer.
* University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science (UMCES) Professor Walt Boynton has been chosen to receive the Mathias Medal in recognition of his outstanding scientific career and lifelong contributions to environmental policy in the Chesapeake Bay region.
* Christine Hunter, a senior health systems management student at UB, was awarded the prestigious Douglas Sheppard Memorial Scholarship, sponsored by the Maryland Association of Health Care Executives.
* Here at TU, Fisher College Professor Nathan McNew was honored with a 2016 Project NExT (New Experiences in Teaching) fellowship over the summer from the Mathematics Association of America.
* And 10 athletes with USM connections competed in the 2016 Summer Olympic Games in Brazil.

There are also important scholarship gifts to highlight.

* Ellen Yankellow, an alumna of the School of Pharmacy at the University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB) has committed a $500,000 scholarship gift in celebration of the school's 175th anniversary.
* To give back to the institution that shaped their lives, Judge Gary and Barbara Leasure, members of FSU classes of 1968 and ’69, respectively, have created the Judge Gary and Barbara Leasure Presidential Merit Scholarship, which supports full-time students from Allegany County with at least a 3.5 GPA.

USM institutions were tremendously successful in attracting grant funding over the past few months as well:

* The Institute of Human Virology (IHV) at the UMB School of Medicine received a $14.4 million grant from the U.S. National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases to tackle a significant scientific challenge in HIV vaccine research – the inability to produce long-lasting antibodies to protect against HIV infection.
  + Also, the UMB School of Medicine is one of three study sites participating in a human safety trial of an investigational Zika vaccine.
* A team of researchers at UMCP’s Energy Research Center was awarded a $1.25 million grant from the Department of Energy for research to develop better, safer Lithium-ion battery technology.
* Delmarva Power pledged $1 million to the University of Maryland Eastern Shore (UMES) which will be used to launch the Green Collar Initiative, a series of energy conservation projects that include crafting a “sustainable curriculum” using research, development and training assistance targeting rural businesspeople, especially those in agribusiness.
  + UMES also has received formal notice that the Middle States Commission on Higher Education has reaffirmed the university’s institution-wide accreditation for the next decade.
* And UMES’s Hospitality and Tourism Management program has received a $300,000 grant from the Marriott Foundation that will be used at the Universities at Shady Grove (USG) to install customized teaching technology, upgrade the program’s commercial kitchen, and provide support for internships and student participation in conferences.
* USG received a $50,000 grant from the Meyer Foundation to help build a diverse, highly skilled workforce, support the local business community, and enable deserving youth to realize their potential and achieve financial stability.

The summer also saw some impressive growth at USM institutions, both physical and academic.

* Salisbury held **two** ribbon-cutting ceremonies recently:
  + One to celebrate additions and improvements to Sea Gull Stadium, one of the best facilities in all of Division III.
  + And one to dedicate the Patricia R. Guerrieri Academic Commons, a new space for academic and cultural life at SU.
* The University System of Maryland at Hagerstown (USMH) has proposed the addition of three new academic programs during the next three years:
  + A bachelor’s in Hospitality and Tourism Management offered by UMES.
  + A graduate nurse-practitioner degree offered by FSU.
  + A physician-assistant graduate degree through a FSU/UMB partnership.
* In addition, USMH—in partnership with the City of Hagerstown and local developers—is expanding to accommodate this growth, with renovation projects underway and additional downtown buildings identified.
* UMES is also expanding academic offerings, adding a master’s degree in cybersecurity.

All these accomplishments, and many others, underscore the fact that the USM really is working year-round to meet the needs of the state, our communities, and the students we serve.

A few final initiatives I want to quickly brief you on.

Earlier this summer, the USM joined the University of Texas System as one of the only two state university systems in the nation to enter into a partnership with EdX, the nonprofit online learning destination founded by Harvard and MIT. Through this agreement, which was supported by $2 million from UMUC, we will be able to leverage UMUC’s leadership in online education and EdX’s innovative platform and data analytics capabilities to expand offerings and improve learning outcomes for students across the USM. Not only will we be able to offer our students free massive online courses, providing a high-quality USM education at a much lower cost, but we will also be extending our reach internationally, as well as collaborating with the EdX membership on research into improving learning outcomes and enhancing the quality of our online offerings. What’s best, this is an opportunity that we can extend to all of our institutions as a result of our system-wide membership and the inter-institutional partnerships we are forming to develop courses and programs. As we accelerate our efforts to utilize academic innovation as a way to maintain quality and decrease costs, this partnership will help advance us toward that goal.

I am especially pleased that Bowie, Coppin, and UMES will be the first historically black institutions to become EdX partner universities. UMUC and UMB will initiate the first offering under the new agreement on September 20th. It will be a free global health course, for health-care workers in developing countries, focused on lessons learned from Ebola. EdX is anticipating 1,000 people will be signed up for this class by the time it is available.

The Maryland Open Source Textbook (MOST) initiative, which creates opportunities for faculty to use available open source instructional materials in place of textbooks, continues to expand its impact. Updated estimates indicate that some 38 faculty members across the USM are now involved in MOST, reaching well over 2,000 students, resulting in more than $330,000 in textbook savings. Estimated direct savings for students over the 3 years of the project to date are approaching $1 million.

In a broader effort to help advance the twin goals of access and completion—especially for low-income and under-represented populations—the USM has signed on to the American Association of State Colleges and Universities’ (AASCU) “Opportunities for All” initiative. Opportunities for All aims to help more students and their families recognize the tremendous value offered by public higher education while also impressing upon political, business, and community leaders the critical contribution state colleges and universities make toward successful economic and workforce development in their region and state. This is a collaborative, nationwide initiative and I encourage the eight USM institutions that have AACSU membership to actively take part.

Along these same lines, earlier this week I issued an update on USM’s leadership on the issues of diversity and inclusion. As most of you know, the short-term Workgroup on Diversity and Inclusion solicited input from every USM institution and every constituency in the shared-governance matrix. It is also important to note that while the workgroup facilitated these conversations, the panel presentations and discussions with students, provosts, and vice presidents for student affairs all took place before the **full** USM Board of Regents. These efforts led directly to the establishment of a new USM Diversity and Inclusion Council. This new council, with all USM institutions and constituencies represented, will carry this important work forward and I will keep you updated on their progress.

Of course, one of the most important efforts we are undertaking to fulfill the USM’s mission will be our new Baltimore Power—or B-Power—initiative. Through this initiative the USM will work with Baltimore City-serving organizations to increase education and career opportunities for the city's students.

USM already has a significant number of ongoing efforts in the city.

* Coppin’s Urban Education Corridor provides an educational continuum for students at Rosemont Elementary/Middle and Coppin Academy High School.
* The HEROES Academy at UB has introduced more than 1,000 Baltimore City high school students to college-level academic offerings and classroom culture.
* UMB’s Promise Heights initiative has raised more than $1.7 million in grants to target the high-needs communities of Upton/Druid Heights.
* And Way2GoMaryland—USM’s statewide information campaign designed to educate more middle students on how to prepare for college—has reached hundreds in the city.

But, just as M-Power leverages the research prowess of UMCP and UMB to exceed the sum of their parts, B-Power can also leverage USM resources to better serve the city, its citizens and, in particular, its students.

The nucleus of B-Power will be leadership from our two urban campuses, Coppin and UB. But this partnership is intended to forge a much wider alliance with other USM institutions, non-profits, businesses, schools, elected officials, and education advocacy organizations working together. The CollegeBound Foundation—established when UB President Kurt Schmoke was mayor of Baltimore—is poised to bring more than a quarter-century of expertise in helping the city’s students realize their dreams of a college education and will be working with all USM institutions to more effectively track their progress and promote their success. And Junior Achievement—which has embarked on an initiative to bring a 50,000 square-foot flagship facility to Baltimore City focused on experiential learning—will help develop postsecondary and career readiness pathways.

As the elements of B-Power come together, I will be providing regular updates.

Finally, I want to note that a thread that runs through each of these efforts is the importance of our work **as a system**. From EdX to B-Power, it is our “systemness”—working together, leveraging our resources—that strengthens our ability to have a broad-based, positive impact. I thank all of you for your commitment to this approach.

Mr. Chairman . . . this concludes my report. I would be happy to respond to any questions the Regents may have.