

# REGENTS REPORT



## Greetings from the Board of Regents

We're in the thick of the 2024 legislative session, which means that our people across the System have been in Annapolis every day, meeting with lawmakers, advocating for our budget, testifying on bills that affect us and our students.

Our proposed FY25 budget includes \$2.2 billion in state support for the USM. It's a cut of \$45.3 million—or 2.2 percent—over last year's budget, though we do anticipate additional funding to cover pay increases for System employees.

We recognize that this budget could have been worse, given the deficit that Maryland is facing. At the same time, we know that every single dollar we get is vital to what we do for Maryland's students. And that's where our focus is: We are a student-centered System.

Therefore, if it's possible that any funds could come back to the USM, we've asked that they be directed to financial aid for students in need. We've come so far and dedicated so many dollars to our promise of access and affordability, and we're determined to keep this momentum going.

This legislative session has been busy, by any standard. More than 3,000 bills have been filed, and several have implications for the System. The testimony we've offered on these bills has been powerful, and that's a credit to the engagement and collaboration of countless people at all of our universities. We thank everyone who's so effectively advocating for us and for our students—in and out of Annapolis—every single day.

Without question, that advocacy pays off every time our elected officials use our universities as a backdrop to announce plans and policies important to Maryland and the country; every time our people are appointed to influential posts by state and national leaders; every time these same leaders meet with our presidents, tour our schools, learn about our programs, and, yes, fund them.

Maryland's leaders know we're essential to the strength and vibrancy of our state, and that's because our people—and their dedicated work—affirm that very fact.

Sincerely,



Linda R. Gooden  
Chair  
USM Board of Regents



Jay A. Perman  
Chancellor  
University System of Maryland

## Board Actions & Decisions | February 16, 2024

The USM Board of Regents met at the University of Baltimore on February 16, 2024, with public viewing available in-person and via [livestream](#). Highlights from the meeting include:

### **Approval of Proposals for a Graduate School and New Master's Program at Salisbury University.**

The Board approved two proposals to enhance and expand graduate education at Salisbury University (SU). The university will transition its existing Office of Graduate Studies and Research to a Graduate School and a separate Office of Research and Sponsored Programs. The [creation of a Graduate School](#) will support SU's efforts to grow its graduate enrollment, advance graduate research, and provide all graduate students with a strong sense of belonging.

The Board also approved SU's plan to offer a new [Master of Arts in Public Communication](#) starting in Fall 2024 (pending approval by the Maryland Higher Education Commission). The program emphasizes community-engaged, practical experiences and offers students four industry-focused academic pathways in athletic, health, corporate, or public affairs communication. Students will learn to analyze, design, and implement innovative communication solutions to contemporary challenges.

**Report on FAFSA Delays and the Decision Deadline Extension.** Dr. Alison Wrynn, senior vice chancellor for academic and student affairs, [updated the Board](#) on changes to the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and the related challenges affecting universities, students, and families. In 2020, the U.S. Congress passed the FAFSA Simplification Act to streamline the application process and expand access to Federal Pell Grants. The U.S. Department of Education launched the new FAFSA form in late December 2023, but due to the delayed release and unresolved technical issues, universities will not receive federal student aid data until mid-March. The delays have created a compressed timeline for universities to review the data and issue financial aid packages to students. Last week, the USM announced that our universities will [extend the decision deadline for undergraduate students to May 15](#) to give them more time to consider their financial aid options. Dr. Wrynn reported that our universities have been actively communicating to prospective and returning students about FAFSA and the financial aid timeline.

**Report on the Transfer Landscape in Maryland.** Dr. Candace Caraco, associate vice chancellor for academic programs, academic & enrollment services and articulation, [reported on national and statewide trends](#) in transfer student enrollment and degree completion and the USM's performance in ensuring transfer student success. She shared that 68% of students who transfer from a Maryland community college to a USM university complete their bachelor's degree within six years, which compares very favorably to the 42% six-year graduation rate for transfer students nationwide. The presentation highlighted statewide and USM initiatives designed to strengthen the transfer student pipeline, including expansion of dual enrollment programs and implementation of the Transfer with Success Act at USM universities.

**Update on the USM FY 2025 Operating Budget.** The Finance Committee provided an information item on the [status of the USM operating budget](#) as presented in the FY 2025 Governor’s Allowance. The USM budget includes revenues from state appropriations, tuition and fees, auxiliary services, federal and other contracts and grants, and other revenues—for a total budget of \$7.3 billion. The governor’s FY 2025 proposal of \$2.2 billion in state support to the System represents a 2.2% decrease in state funding.

**Update on the USM FY 2025 Capital Budget.** The Finance Committee also shared an update on the [status of the USM capital budget](#) as presented in the FY 2025 Governor’s Budget. The governor’s proposed five-year total is \$945 million. The Board also received a separate report summarizing the current capital building program. Across the System, there are 109 major ongoing projects either in design or construction or pending design (as of November 30, 2023).

For more information about the February Board of Regents meeting, you may view the [meeting agenda](#), [video archive](#), and [full report](#) by Chancellor Jay Perman.

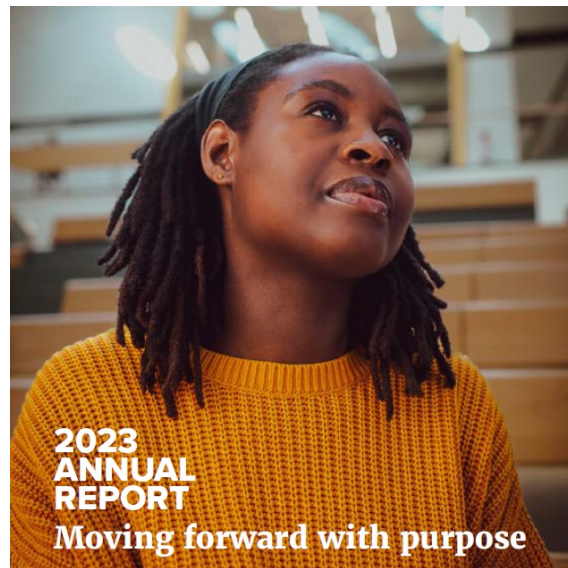
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## Other News from the System



### **DR. FERNANDO MIRALLES-WILHELM NAMED PRESIDENT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE**

The USM Board of Regents has appointed [Dr. Fernando Miralles-Wilhelm](#) the next president of the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science. Since 2020, he has served as dean of the College of Science at George Mason University, where he is responsible for 12 academic departments and 20 research centers. A renowned ecosystem hydrologist, he is also a professor in the college’s Department of Atmospheric, Oceanic and Earth Sciences. Prior to joining Mason, he was professor and chair of the Department of



### **THE 2023 ANNUAL REPORT SHINES THE SPOTLIGHT ON A YEAR OF PROGRESS**

Last month, the USM proudly released our [2023 Annual Report](#) detailing continued progress toward the priorities identified in our [Vision 2030 Strategic Plan](#). The report shares good news about our rebounding Fall 2023 enrollment following the disruptions of the pandemic; our rising graduation rates that exceed the national average for public, four-year institutions; and our work to make higher education affordable through cost containment and increases in need-based financial aid. In this Annual Report, we also celebrate the diversity of our 12 universities, their growing research

Atmospheric and Oceanic Science at the University of Maryland, College Park. Welcome back to Maryland, Dr. Miralles-Wilhelm!

proceed, their powerful economic impact on the state, and their commitment to serve the people of Maryland.

### **DR. NANCY O'NEILL TAKES LEADERSHIP OF THE WILLIAM E. KIRWAN CENTER FOR ACADEMIC INNOVATION**

The USM congratulates Dr. Nancy O'Neill on her appointment as the [executive director of the William E. Kirwan Center for Academic Innovation](#) following a nationwide search. Dr. O'Neill joined the Kirwan Center in February 2016 and has served as acting director since May 2022. She leads Systemwide projects related to student success and capacity-building initiatives for faculty development leaders. She also supports the center's efforts to scale and sustain the use of open educational resources and to promote the scholarship of teaching and learning. Prior to joining the Kirwan Center, she served as the Director of the Center for Excellence in Learning, Teaching, and Technology at the University of Baltimore.

### **USM UNIVERSITIES RECOGNIZED AS TOP PRODUCERS OF FULBRIGHT U.S STUDENTS AND SCHOLARS**

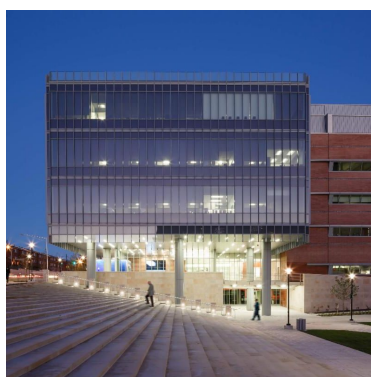
The U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs recently announced the nation's [top producers of Fulbright U.S. Students and Scholars](#) for 2023-2024. Towson University, UMBC, and the University of Maryland, College Park (UMCP) were top producers of Fulbright U.S. Students, and the University of Maryland, Baltimore and UMCP were top producers of Fulbright U.S. Scholars (faculty, researchers, and administrators). UMCP was one of only 12 institutions named a top producer in both categories. In total, 28 students and 13 faculty members from these universities plus Salisbury University will engage in global scholarship, research, and teaching supported by 2023-2024 Fulbright awards.

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## **News from USM Institutions**



**BOWIE STATE UNIVERSITY**  
BSU welcomed [U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona](#), who met with with President Aminta Breau, faculty, and students to learn about the university's work to diversify the school counseling and mental health professions.



**COPPIN STATE UNIVERSITY**  
CSU announced its \$25 million ["Be More" capital campaign](#), the largest in school history, to support new scholarships, improve the library, and boost research efforts.



**FROSTBURG STATE UNIVERSITY**  
FSU and [local firefighters are collaborating](#) on a new project with the goal of improving firefighter performance, decreasing injury, and increasing public safety.





### **SALISBURY UNIVERSITY**

The university announced that the [Museum of Eastern Shore Culture at Salisbury University](#) is scheduled to open this summer next to SU Downtown.



### **TOWSON UNIVERSITY**

Bruno, [TU's first-ever campus comfort dog](#), will work to reinforce the wellbeing of the campus community and is already a celebrity with the students and the media.



### **UNIVERSITY OF BALTIMORE**

A partnership with the City of Baltimore, UBalt's [Urban Conflict Manager Program](#) provides the City's Safe Streets leaders with opportunities to develop conflict management and violence prevention skills.



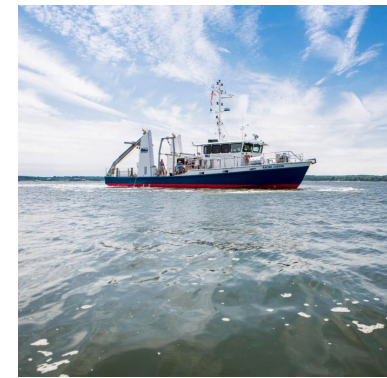
### **UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND, BALTIMORE**

The university recently celebrated the official opening of a new space for the [Embrace Resource Center](#), a partnership between UMB, local nonprofits, city agencies, and private-sector businesses aimed at reducing violence and building opportunity along the Eutaw Street Corridor.



### **UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND, BALTIMORE COUNTY**

UMBC has joined the [Action Collaborative on Transforming Trajectories for Women of Color in Tech](#), a national effort to improve the recruitment, retention, and advancement of women of color in tech fields.



### **UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE**

Graduate student Imani Black, an oyster farmer currently pursuing a master's degree and conducting research at the Horn Point Laboratory, was [featured on WYPR's On the Record](#) to discuss the region's oyster population.



### **UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND, COLLEGE PARK**

The university continued its tradition of having Testudo, a marching band, and others [surprise a few Early Action](#)



### **UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND EASTERN SHORE**

UMES pharmacy graduates have achieved the [highest NAPLEX first-time pass rate](#)



### **UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND GLOBAL CAMPUS**

The International Council of E-Commerce Consultants, the world's largest cybersecurity

[applicants](#) by arriving at their doorstep to literally trumpet the fact that they have been accepted.

[among all HBCU pharmacy schools](#) for the third consecutive year.

technical certification body, recognized UMGC with its [2023 Academic Partner of the Year Award](#).

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## News from USM Regional Centers



### UNIVERSITIES AT SHADY GROVE

USG has launched the [Joann Boughman Innovation Fellows](#) program to support the work of four individuals leading innovation in academia, industry, government, and the nonprofit sector.



### UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF MARYLAND HAGERSTOWN

The USMH Hospitality Center hosted the [Washington County Chamber of Commerce's monthly networking event](#) last month. Executive Director Jacob Ashby welcomed nearly 100 local business professionals to the event.



### UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF MARYLAND AT SOUTHERN MARYLAND

Gov. Wes Moore, Lt. Gov. Aruna Miller, and U.S. Rep. Steny Hoyer met with faculty and students while [touring the USMSM's SMART Building](#) as part of the Moore administration's ongoing cabinet road tour.

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## Dates to Remember

Meetings below will be virtual unless a location is listed. For the complete meeting schedule, visit:

[www.usmd.edu/regents/meetings/](http://www.usmd.edu/regents/meetings/)

### MARCH 29, 2024

#### Committee on Economic Development and Technology Commercialization

1:00 p.m.

### APRIL 1, 2024

#### Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics and Student-Athlete Health and Welfare

3:00 p.m.

### APRIL 3, 2024

#### Committee on Finance

10:30 a.m.

### APRIL 4, 2024

#### Committee on Advancement

11:00 a.m.

### APRIL 9, 2024

#### Committee on Governance and Compensation

9:00 a.m.

## Useful Resources and Contacts

Regents Meeting Video Archive: [View](#)

### Board of Regents

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### Chancellor's Office

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### Office of Government Relations

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### Office of Research & Economic Development

**APRIL 12, 2024**

**Committee on Education Policy and Student  
Life and Safety**

10:00 a.m.

**APRIL 19, 2024**

**Board of Regents Meeting**

Bowie State University

9:00 a.m.

Vice Chancellor: Michele Masucci

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**Office of Advancement**

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