

JANUARY 2023

CHANCELLOR'S MESSAGE

FROM JAY A. PERMAN



THE STORY OF OUR SUCCESS

As many of us were winding down our work over the winter holidays, my colleagues at the University System of Maryland were putting the finishing touches on our [2022 Annual Report](#). And while the new year compels us to look ahead with purpose, the report gives us a chance to look back at what's brought us to our place of strength.

The annual report breaks down progress on our [five strategic priorities](#): Innovate the education we provide our students. Make that education accessible to all. Prepare students for jobs that will write Maryland's future. Conduct and commercialize research that changes the world. Center equity and justice in everything we do.

Academic Excellence and Innovation

USM universities perennially rank among the best—the best in the world, the nation, the region. Last year, our schools were recognized not only for the quality of their education, but for what that education advances: social mobility, democratic engagement, fulfilling careers, student-led startups and tech innovation.

And we were praised in those same publications for our value, for our affordability, for the return on our degrees: high-paying, high-demand jobs.



LAST YEAR, 33 USM STUDENTS AND FACULTY WON FULBRIGHT GRANTS TO PURSUE SCHOLARSHIP, TEACHING, AND RESEARCH AROUND THE WORLD.

Access, Affordability, and Achievement

While the pandemic has taken a toll on enrollment nationwide, our first-time, full-time students actually climbed last fall, for the second year in a row. In all, 14,428 students enrolled as USM freshmen with no prior college experience.

Still, getting students into our universities is only one part of our story; helping them stay there until graduation is every bit as important. The share of full-time USM freshmen who returned for their sophomore year is 84 percent, above the national retention rate for four-year public colleges.



The number of USM students who graduate within six years of starting college is 71 percent, eclipsing the national average of 64 percent. And the number graduating within *four* years is 53 percent, an all-time USM high. That means more students are spending less time and money in pursuit of their degree.

The number of bachelor's degrees we award has climbed 25 percent over the last decade, and last year reached an all-time high of 28,400.

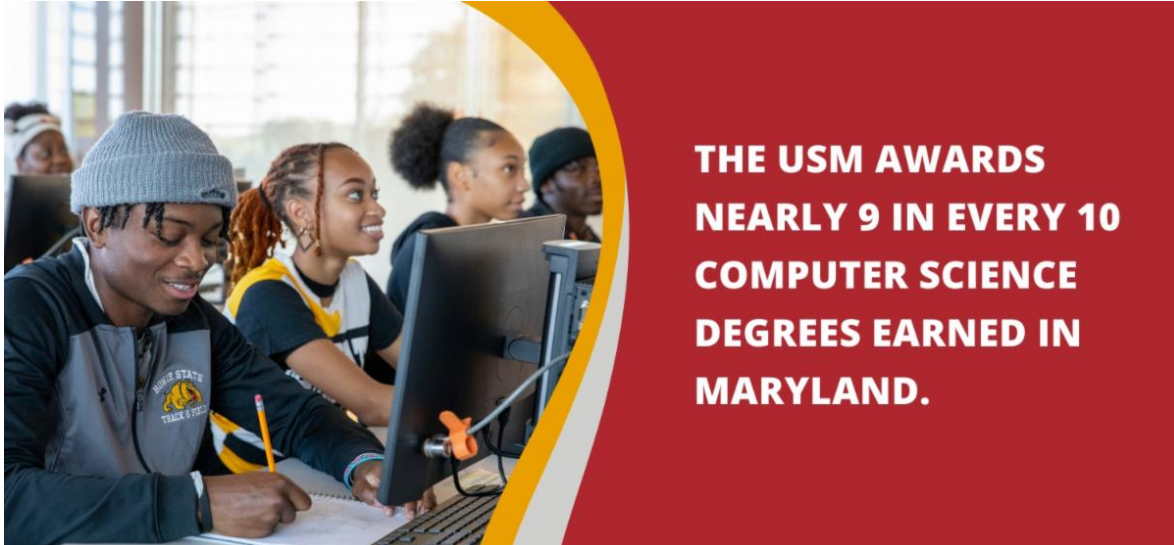
Our universities supported students in financial need last year with \$64 million in aid, up 50 percent over a decade ago. In all, our schools distributed \$190 million in scholarships and aid—just one of the reasons half of our undergraduates earn their diploma without accruing any tuition debt.



Workforce and Economic Development

Maryland leads all other states in education attainment among its working-age population. That's right: We're No. 1.

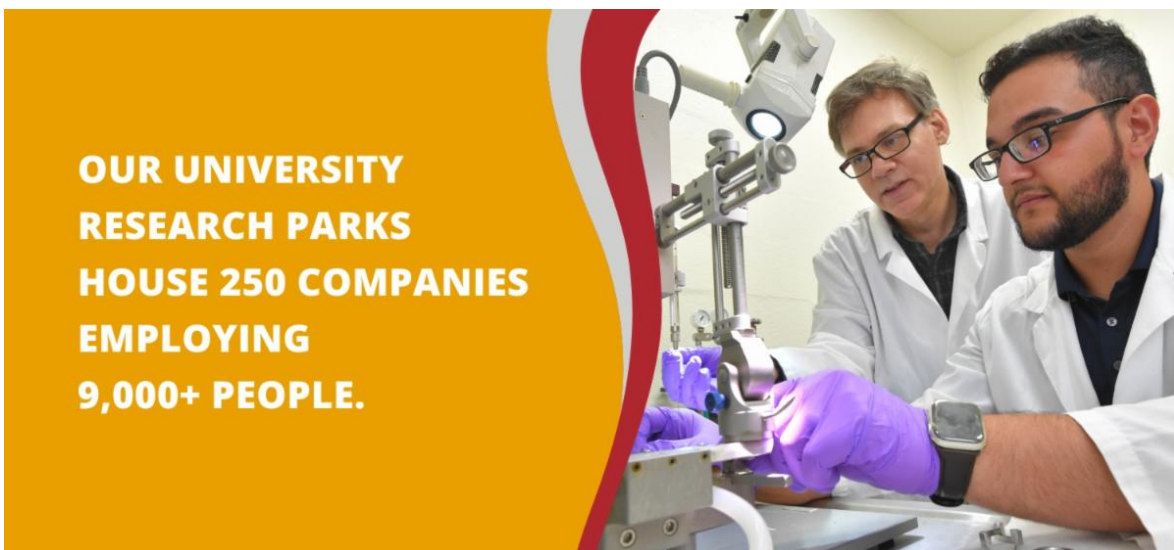
We parlay that education strength into economic power by constantly adapting and expanding our programs to meet the state's workforce needs. For instance, last year we awarded 4,007 health care degrees, up 77 percent from a decade ago.



We produced more than 1,500 teachers last year. Supporting this effort is \$11 million won by our universities in federal grants aimed at recruiting and educating teachers—and *keeping* them in Maryland classrooms. We're focused on priorities like diversifying the teaching profession, and filling vacancies in high-need disciplines, high-need regions, and high-need schools.

Research

The USM won \$1.6 billion last year for research and other activities, and R&D dollars grew from all funding sources but one. The number of grants and contracts we secured climbed by nearly 500.



That research is far from static. Every day, it's translated into innovations that make us healthier and happier; that make our world safer and more sustainable. The USM is among the world's top 20 institutions for patents issued—134 in 2021 alone. Our universities have licensed or optioned 337 technologies to industry partners over the last five years.

In 2022, our universities supported 175 startups, including 61 led by their students. Over five years, 93 startups have been launched based on the intellectual property coming out of our schools.

Our R&D makes a difference—to the prosperity of our state and the welfare of our world.



Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

At the USM, we believe in inclusive excellence—the proposition that success means little unless *everyone* shares in it.

In the last decade, the number of underrepresented minority students we enroll has grown by 20 percent, and underrepresented faculty has climbed 30 percent. This is particularly important as we redress a fundamental problem in U.S. higher education—a professoriate that’s overwhelmingly white. We must do a better job of building a faculty that reflects the full diversity of the students they teach.

Last year, *U.S. News & World Report* ranked Maryland first among all states for gender equality, thanks in large part to a perfect score in education. Half of that score came from gender parity in graduation rates at our four-year public colleges. At the USM, 73 percent of women graduate within six years of starting their degree, compared with 68 percent of men.



With our elected leaders now gathered in Annapolis for the legislative session, we're eager to build on this success—to strengthen the state we share and serve its people.

It's gratifying to know that the USM is in the DNA of our General Assembly; that we've played such a pivotal role in developing Maryland's public leaders and public servants. Nearly 40 percent of Maryland's lawmakers graduated from or attended a USM school.

And I think it's fair to say that the education they received did more than deepen their disciplinary knowledge and skills. I believe it helped them think critically and work collaboratively. I believe it made them comfortable seeking out new ideas and forging connections with others even when those ideas diverge. I think it helped shape our leaders' character and their sense of civic and democratic duty.



Our leaders—all of them—know what a USM education makes possible. And they want more Marylanders to be able to take advantage of it. So do we. Even though we've kept college costs down with modest tuition hikes and increased aid, even though most of our students graduate with no or little loan debt, we know many students still have significant unmet financial need.

And so we will work with the General Assembly to make a USM education more affordable and put it within reach of more Maryland students and families. Because that's how we'll build a state audacious enough to take its unparalleled success in public higher education and leverage it for even more—a more equitable, more inclusive, more innovative, and more prosperous Maryland.

Sincerely,

Jay A. Perman
Chancellor, University System of Maryland

