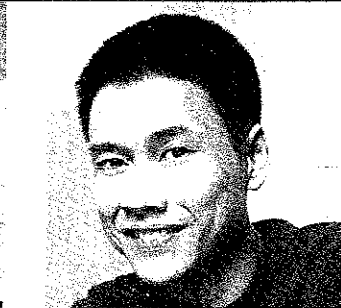




University of Maryland University College

# TESTIMONY

TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON BUDGET AND TAXATION  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND HUMAN RESOURCES  
OF THE MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

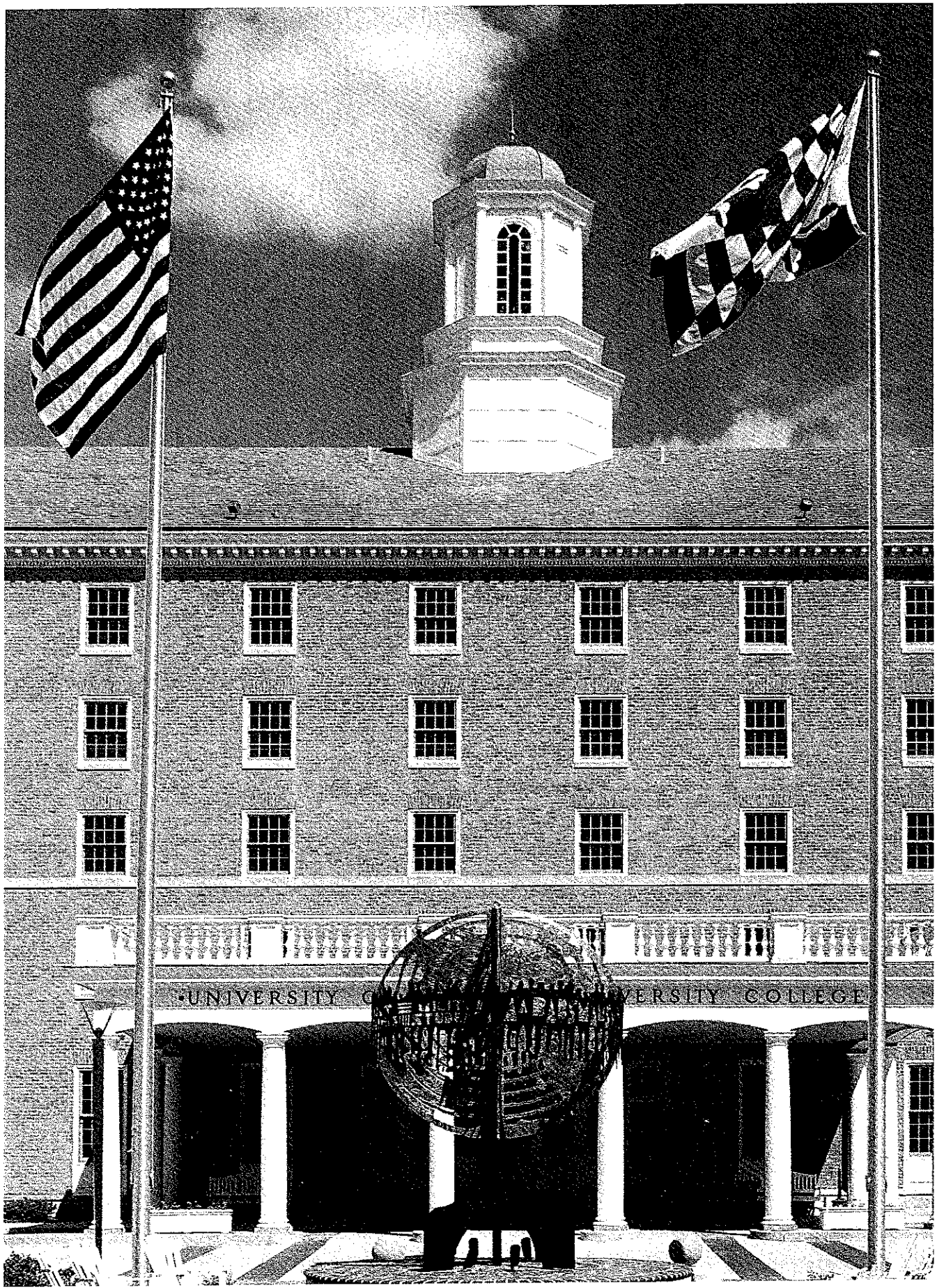


UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

Susan C. Aldridge, PhD

President

February 12, 2009



UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

Good afternoon, Chairman Kasemeyer, Vice-Chairman Madaleno, and members of the Senate Committee on Budget and Taxation Subcommittee on Health, Education, and Human Resources I appreciate this opportunity to tell you why, with your continued support, University of Maryland University College (UMUC) will remain a tremendous asset to our state and its 5.2 million lifelong learners.

UMUC is by no means a conventional institution, having first been established in 1947 as a truly visionary experiment in adult education. Yet today, as the nation's largest state university and fastest growing public virtual university, UMUC is undeniably one of academia's greatest success stories—having become an essential component of Maryland's academic outreach strategy and a model for other institutions entering the adult learning arena.

## ONE UNIQUE UNIVERSITY . . . MANY REMARKABLE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

From its outstanding faculty, world-class programs, and groundbreaking services to its broad student outreach, career-ready focus, and small carbon footprint, UMUC is closing the achievement gap, expanding the professional talent pool, and forging a sustainable future—both here in Maryland and around the world. In fact, last year alone, this extraordinary university

- Exceeded its summer and fall 2008 enrollment targets, growing to serve nearly 90,000 students, about 30,000 of whom are Maryland residents
- Became the first American higher education institution to offer classes on the ground to our soldiers in Iraq
- Provided nearly \$4 million in scholarship assistance.
- Was awarded a five-year, \$15 million contract to conduct courses on-site in Africa, Central Asia, and the Middle East.
- Increased its worldwide online course enrollments by nearly 12,000
- Awarded 6,635 degrees worldwide.
- Expanded the Master of International Management program to include three specializations and developed plans to add a specialization in criminal justice management to the Master of Science in management program in fall 2009.
- Enrolled more African American undergraduates than any other Maryland institution.
- Acquired a new academic facility in Largo that will expand the university's presence in central Prince George's County
- Completed the largest PeopleSoft deployment of any university in the world, connecting 92,000 students, faculty, and staff worldwide, under one information management system

# PUTTING STUDENTS FIRST

## Unprecedented Access

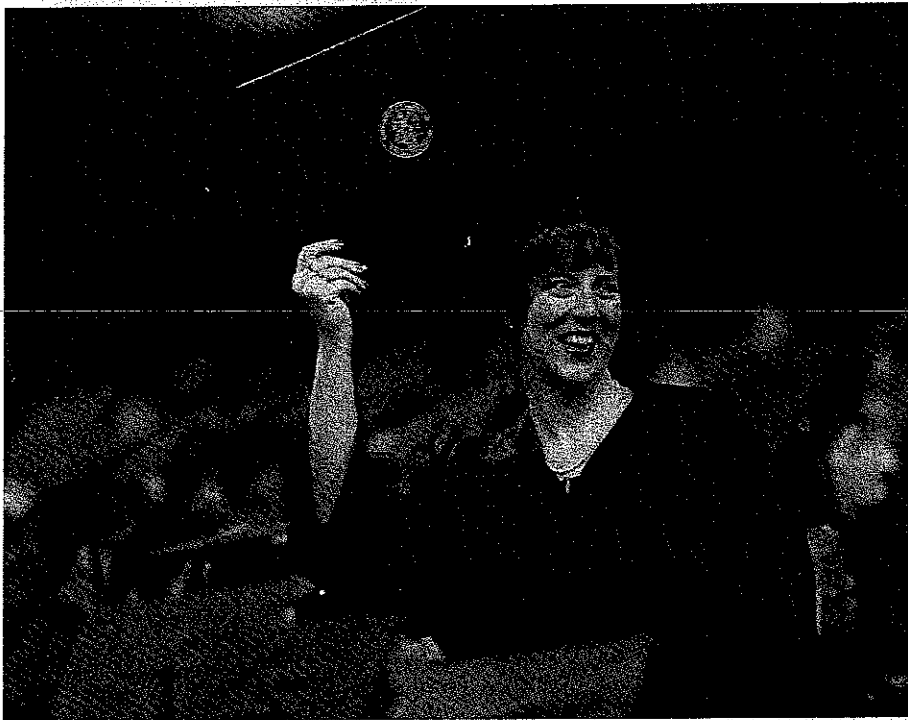
At UMUC, students are always our first priority, driving the very heart of our mission and inspiring us to even greater heights of academic service and success. So in putting their needs front and center, UMUC offers its 87,000 students unprecedented access to a wide range of high-quality undergraduate and graduate degree and certificate programs—online and on-site, at times and in locations that are flexible and convenient. Indeed, by harnessing the power of teamwork with the promise of technology, UMUC is now the nation's largest state university



- Operating divisions on four continents
- Serving students in 23 countries around the world, in all 50 states, and in all 24 counties of Maryland.
- Offering classes and/or services on-site in some 157 locations, including 21 community-based sites throughout Maryland and the metropolitan Washington, D.C., area.
- Boasting more than 182,000 online enrollments.
- Providing students with an opportunity to upgrade their skills in a competitive job market while remaining in their community.

This steadfast commitment to students is rooted in UMUC's founding belief, as an open access university, that higher education should be available to all qualified students, wherever they live and whenever they choose to learn. And in the face of dire economic conditions nationwide, UMUC remains a highly affordable option for higher education, offering the second-lowest tuition and fee schedule among all of Maryland's four-year institutions. UMUC is also committed to providing financial aid whenever possible, having awarded nearly \$4 million in scholarship assistance last year alone, including the newly created Orkand Family Military Scholarship, which covers textbook costs for military servicemembers and tuition assistance for their spouses





## Unparalleled Service



Nearly all of UMUC's students are busy working adults, for whom the school day begins once the evening rush hour is over. And because they live all over the world, our students do not report for class on a single campus, or even in a single time zone. With that in mind, UMUC provides unparalleled service support, ensuring that every service the university offers *on-site* may also be accessed *online*. Using digital technology and 24-hour system support, we furnish everything from class registration, tuition payment, and financial aid to library resources, tutoring assistance, and academic advising.

UMUC has even automated its enrollment management system—a significant enhancement for the university's many transfer students, especially those who come from community college or while serving in the military. By drastically reducing the time it takes to evaluate transfer credits from months to within days, UMUC is saving these students untold dollars—not to mention countless hours—as well as eliminating redundancy and promoting accountability. This innovative system has proven so effective, in fact, that former U.S. Education Secretary Margaret Spellings invited UMUC personnel to showcase its many advantages at a special national summit on higher education held last year in Chicago.



# MAKING THE GRADE ACADEMICALLY

## A New Breed of Faculty

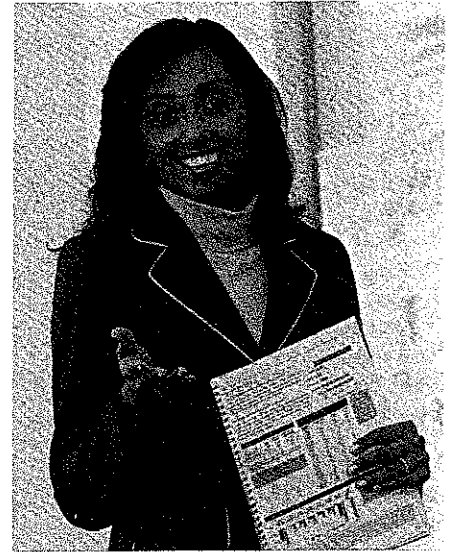
Digital technology has also made it possible for UMUC to attract and retain a new breed of faculty. These scholar-practitioners, who are renowned academics, superb teachers, and recognized experts in their fields, have taught and worked literally all over the world. Aside from their qualifications, they are far from typical faculty members. They often work well into the night conferencing online with students from several time zones away, and volunteer to relocate halfway around the globe so that our active-duty military students may receive a first-rate college education.

## An Ever-Expanding Repertoire of Programs

As a university devoted to learning as a lifelong pursuit, UMUC offers some 130 undergraduate and graduate degree and certificate programs—more than 100 of which may be completed entirely online—along with a variety of executive training opportunities and one of the few Doctor of Management programs in the country. Yet as extensive as our academic portfolio may be, we are constantly expanding it to meet our students' evolving professional development needs. Just this past year alone, we added

- Three areas of concentration within the Master of International Management program: international enterprise management, international financial management, and international marketing management
- Upper-division undergraduate certificates in applied social and behavioral sciences, criminal justice leadership, and game development.

In fall 2009, UMUC will begin offering a specialization in criminal justice management within the Master of Science in management. We are also collaborating with University of Maryland, Baltimore County to provide a joint graduate certificate, available online, in e-learning instructional design. And UMUC was one of only six institutions out of 100 applicants to receive a 2008 Fund for the Improvement of Post-Secondary Education (FIPSE) grant from the U.S. Department of Education. This grant will create an industry-guided, Web-based professional development plan for students enrolled in the Master of Science in biotechnology program (designated a "Professional Science Masters" by the Council of Graduate Schools in 2007).



# CLOSING THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP

## Our Diverse Student Body

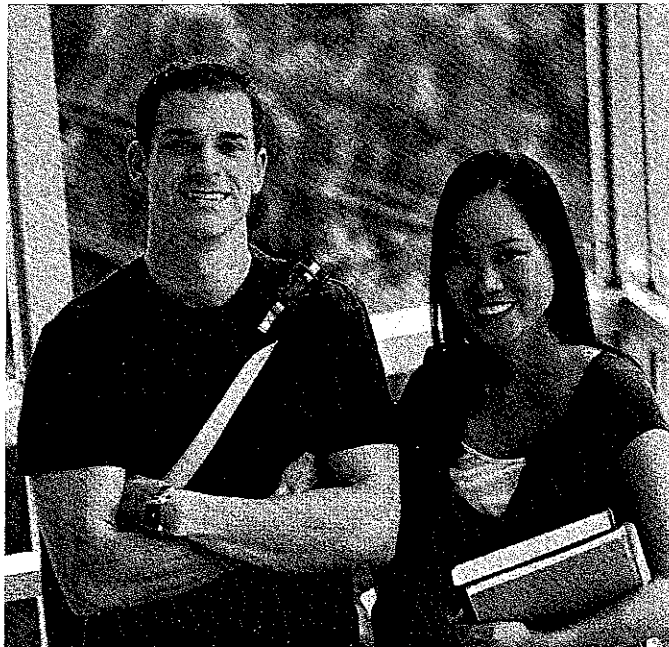


As a university dedicated to meeting the needs of all qualified students, UMUC plans its world-class academic programs and services with diversity in mind—from age, ability, and individual learning preference to native language, cultural tradition, and socioeconomic status. Consequently, UMUC has built a longstanding and admirable track record when it comes to closing the higher education achievement gap for adult learners here in Maryland—one of the state’s highest economic development priorities.

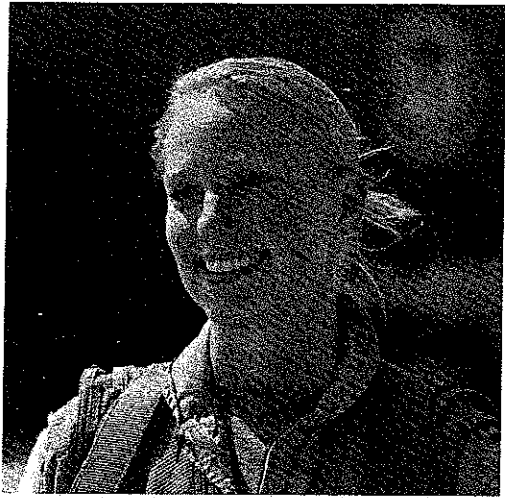
This is particularly true among those students considered low-income or underserved, for whom prior academic experience, family obligations, and financial hardship have precluded enrolling in college right out of high school. Last year’s statistics speak for themselves.

## STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS AS OF FALL 2008

First generation	37%
All minority group members	43%
Female	56%
Married with children	40%
Single parents	9%





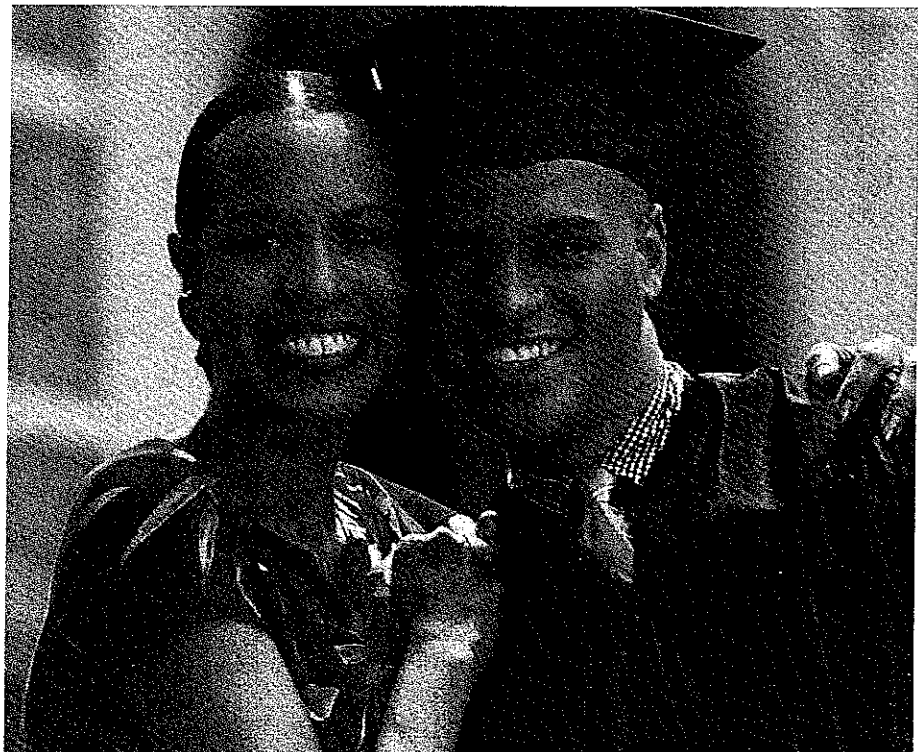


UMUC has also become the “university of choice” among Maryland’s African American college students, enrolling more African American undergraduates than any of the state’s historically black institutions.

#### FALL 2008 UNDUPLICATED HEADCOUNT AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENTS

Bowie State University	4,835
Coppin State College	3,473
Morgan State University	6,291
University of Maryland Eastern Shore	3,314
<b>UMUC</b>	<b>10,875</b>

Vast numbers of these students continue on with UMUC through graduation. In fact, last year 26 percent of all UMUC stateside undergraduate degrees and 30 percent of its stateside graduate degrees were awarded to African American students—statistics that closely reflect the university’s demographic breakdown.





## Our Laser Focus on Success



In closing the achievement gap, we are careful to ensure that all UMUC students have the tools they need to succeed academically. So in addition to providing learning environments that are inclusive and supportive and cultivating a culture of continuous assessment and accountability, we have developed a variety of innovative courses and services, designed to help all of our students hit the ground running. These include

- An elective course for returning and first-in-family students to familiarize them with higher education in general and UMUC in particular
- Mandatory courses—for both graduate and undergraduate students—in the use of digital information and library resources
- Placement exams in writing and math for new undergraduate students
- Around-the-clock access to UMUC librarians via e-mail, chat, or toll-free telephone
- An online writing center that includes access to customized tutoring services
- A Virtual Academic Integrity Lab (VAIL) to assist students in practicing proper citation and academic integrity



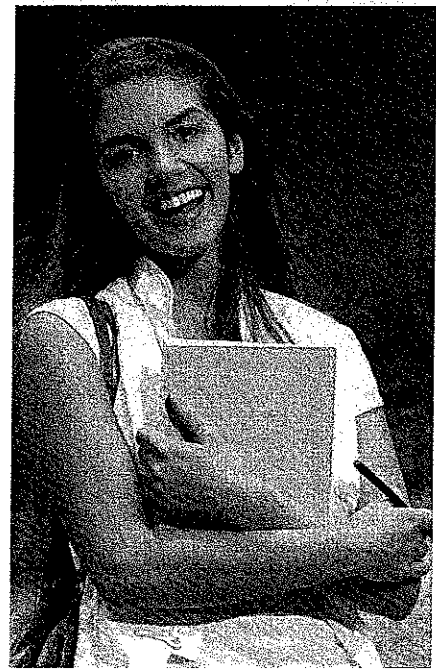
# BUILDING A LONGER AND STRONGER ACADEMIC PIPELINE

## Community College Partnerships

While community college is often considered a stepping-stone to a four-year institution—particularly among minority and other underserved students—there has traditionally been little or no coordination between the two. Recognizing the enormous, yet relatively untapped, potential for building a longer and stronger academic pipeline here in Maryland, UMUC developed its Community College Alliance Program.

Today the alliance includes all 16 of the state's community colleges and yields hundreds of articulated degree programs. In addition, by the end of the spring 2009 semester, UMUC will have awarded more than \$1 million of its own funds in community college transfer scholarships, bringing the total, to date, to nearly \$4 million.

This program provides enormous benefits for everyone concerned. On the one hand, students in every local jurisdiction across the state can now move seamlessly from an associate's to a bachelor's degree without losing credits or ever leaving home. On the other hand, UMUC attracts a steady stream of qualified applicants—around 40 percent of the total enrollment—with a proven record of achievement—thereby boosting graduation rates. In fact, these community college students are among our most talented students and successful graduates, serving as exceptional role models for their peers, their families, and their communities.



## Other Alliances

Calling upon its extensive online delivery system, UMUC has also forged alliances with 19 community colleges across the country and has agreements with seven universities and colleges abroad. At the very least, these relationships greatly enrich UMUC's academic programs, expand enrollments, and strengthen faculty research efforts. However, they also provide Maryland students with a unique opportunity to reach beyond their local communities and expand their global horizons—intellectually, professionally, and socially.

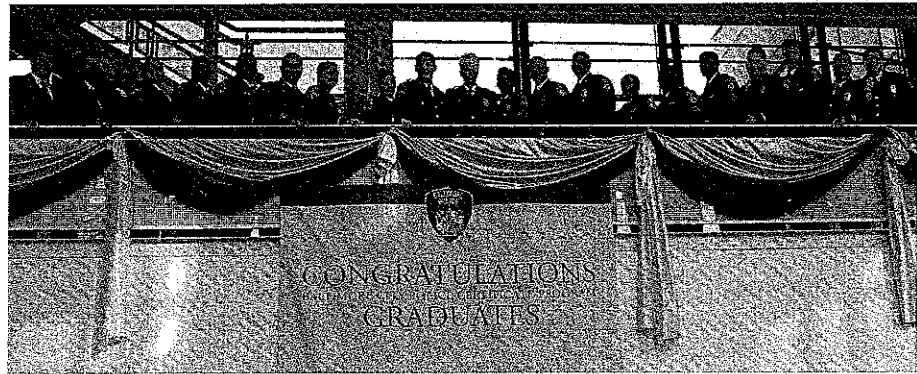
# PROMOTING ECONOMIC VITALITY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

## Workforce Relevant Programs



UMUC has consistently proven both its willingness and its ability to quickly and effectively meet critical workforce development needs here in Maryland. And because these needs sometimes vary from one part of the state to another, we work closely with our students, faculty members, and institutional partners to identify opportunities as and where they emerge.

For example, last year UMUC inaugurated its Entrepreneur Development Center—a unique professional development partnership with three of the region’s most enterprising business leaders—and piloted an eight-month Criminal Justice Leadership certificate program in conjunction with the Baltimore Police Department. At the request of Maryland’s Department of Education, UMUC is promoting its Master of Arts in Teaching program to help relieve critical state teacher shortages in science, math, and technology. The program, available fall 2009, is targeted toward career changers and retiring military personnel. UMUC also provides reading courses in elementary and secondary education to help teachers meet Maryland certification and recertification requirements.

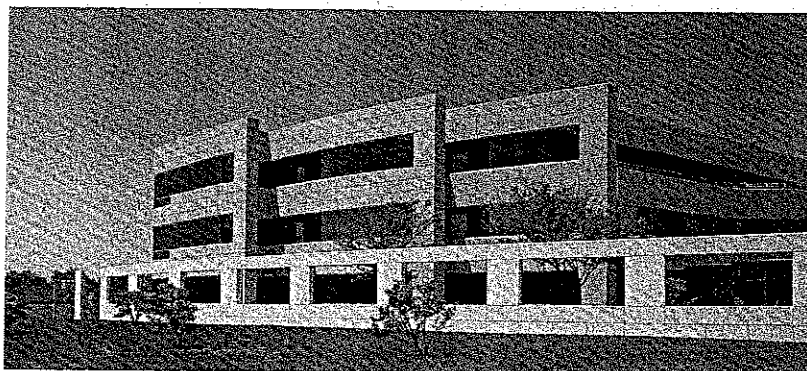


UMUC is designated as a Center for Academic Excellence by the National Security Agency and offers a remote-access Security Studies Laboratory to support instruction in such locally high-need career fields as homeland security and information assurance. In fact, this lab represents the ultimate “win-win” situation. Students gain real-world experience with cutting-edge technologies and applications, while the workforce benefits from hiring graduates who bring this experience with them.

## "Green" Campus Development

Over the years, UMUC has consistently proven itself a leader in environmentally sustainable and responsible development and design. With only a few buildings to heat and cool, UMUC uses much less energy than its sister institutions. And because the vast majority of our students learn online, UMUC also produces far fewer carbon emissions. For example, thousands of Montgomery County residents—more than 3,000 of them in the Shady Grove area alone—take UMUC courses online. Just imagine the electricity that would be consumed in keeping hundreds of classrooms open for these students, as well as the accumulated air pollution from all of those cars heading out to class in the evening.

By the same token, UMUC is fully committed to supporting the state's "green" building initiatives, by creating clean and healthy spaces with minimal impact to the environment. UMUC built the very first LEED-certified hotel and conference center in North America and is currently retrofitting its new 238,000-square-foot academic facility with recyclable materials and energy-saving systems to make it certified LEED-Silver. A variety of "green" features have also been incorporated in our Merritt Art Center, which is now under construction.



## SERVING OUR MEN AND WOMEN IN UNIFORM

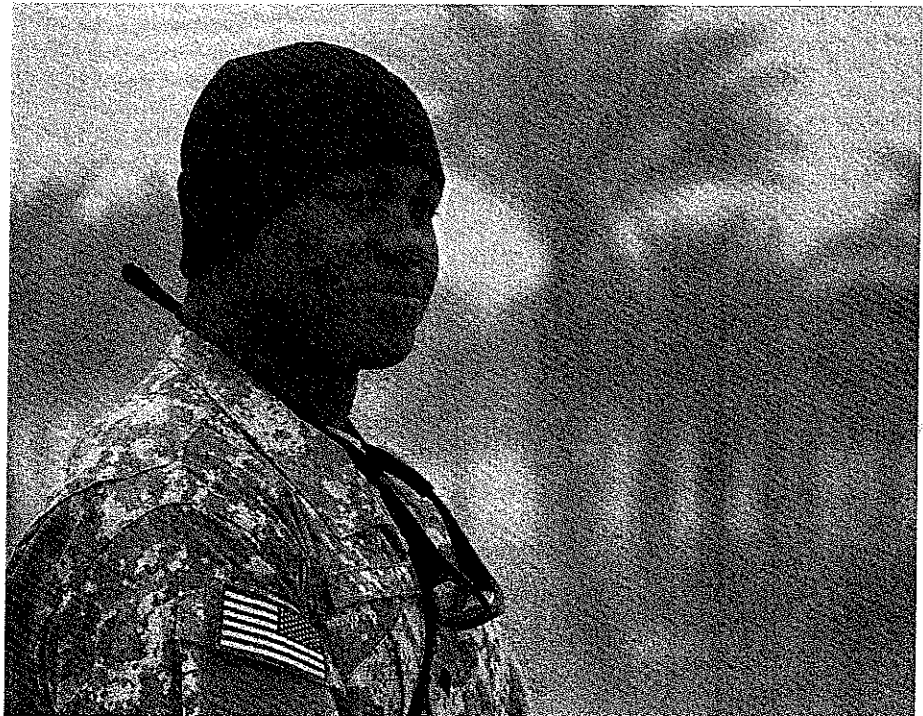
### On Base and Online



Having first opened its doors to meet the academic needs of returning World War II veterans, UMUC enjoys a proud tradition of service to our armed forces. As one of the nation's leading providers of postsecondary education for military servicemembers and their families, UMUC offers classes or advising services (or both) at every U.S. military base in Maryland, as well as at numerous bases worldwide. This global presence gives the university yet another competitive advantage over other institutions, and benefits the state of Maryland when base realignment and closure (BRAC) decisions are made. UMUC has also received tremendous accolades for serving students in such dangerous war zones as Vietnam, the Balkans, Kuwait, Afghanistan, and now Iraq.

### On the Ground in Iraq and Afghanistan

UMUC recently became the first American university to deploy faculty and staff in Iraq. After numerous clearances and approvals, seven UMUC faculty members and four staff members are now living with and teaching some 300 soldiers on two American bases there—offering coursework in everything from American government and cultural anthropology to psychology and macroeconomics.

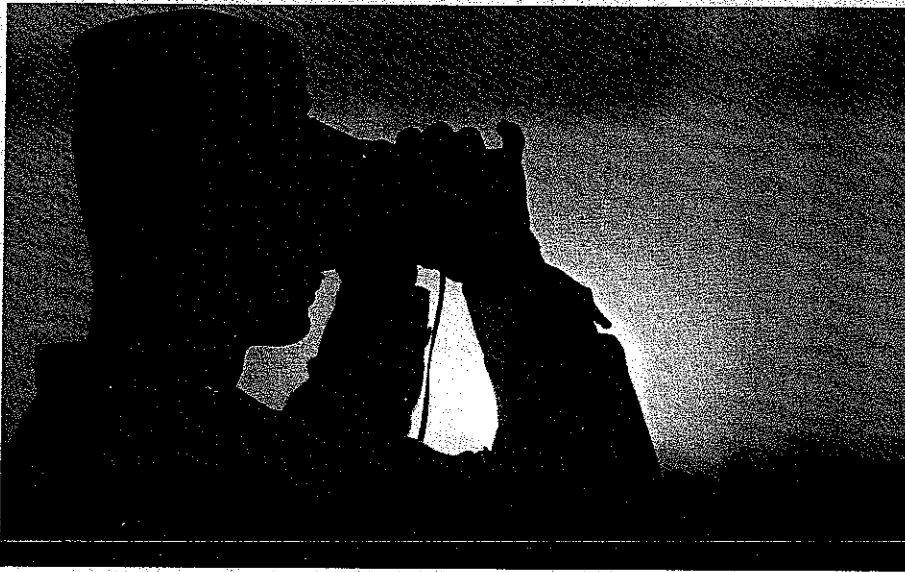




# LEADING AHEAD OF THE FUTURE

## The Current Challenge

From its unconventional roots as a “college within a university” to its now solid reputation as a worldwide award-winning leader in adult and distance education, UMUC continues to set the bar for other public universities moving into these arenas. Its impact on Maryland has also been profound and enduring—having provided extraordinary access to quality degree programs for all qualified students, closed the achievement gap for minority and other underserved students, and successfully met critical workforce development needs.



Yet for UMUC to remain on top of the market in the face of mounting competition—particularly from “for-profit” counterparts—we must continue to lead ahead of the future, by developing and delivering the next generation of higher education. That will mean

- Substantially growing our enrollments and improving our undergraduate retention rates
- Greatly strengthening and upgrading our learning technologies to meet student demands, both now and in the future.
- Continuously developing innovative academic programs in response to emerging state workforce needs in particular and the higher education market in general.
- Aggressively diversifying our revenue streams through increased philanthropy and new entrepreneurial ventures

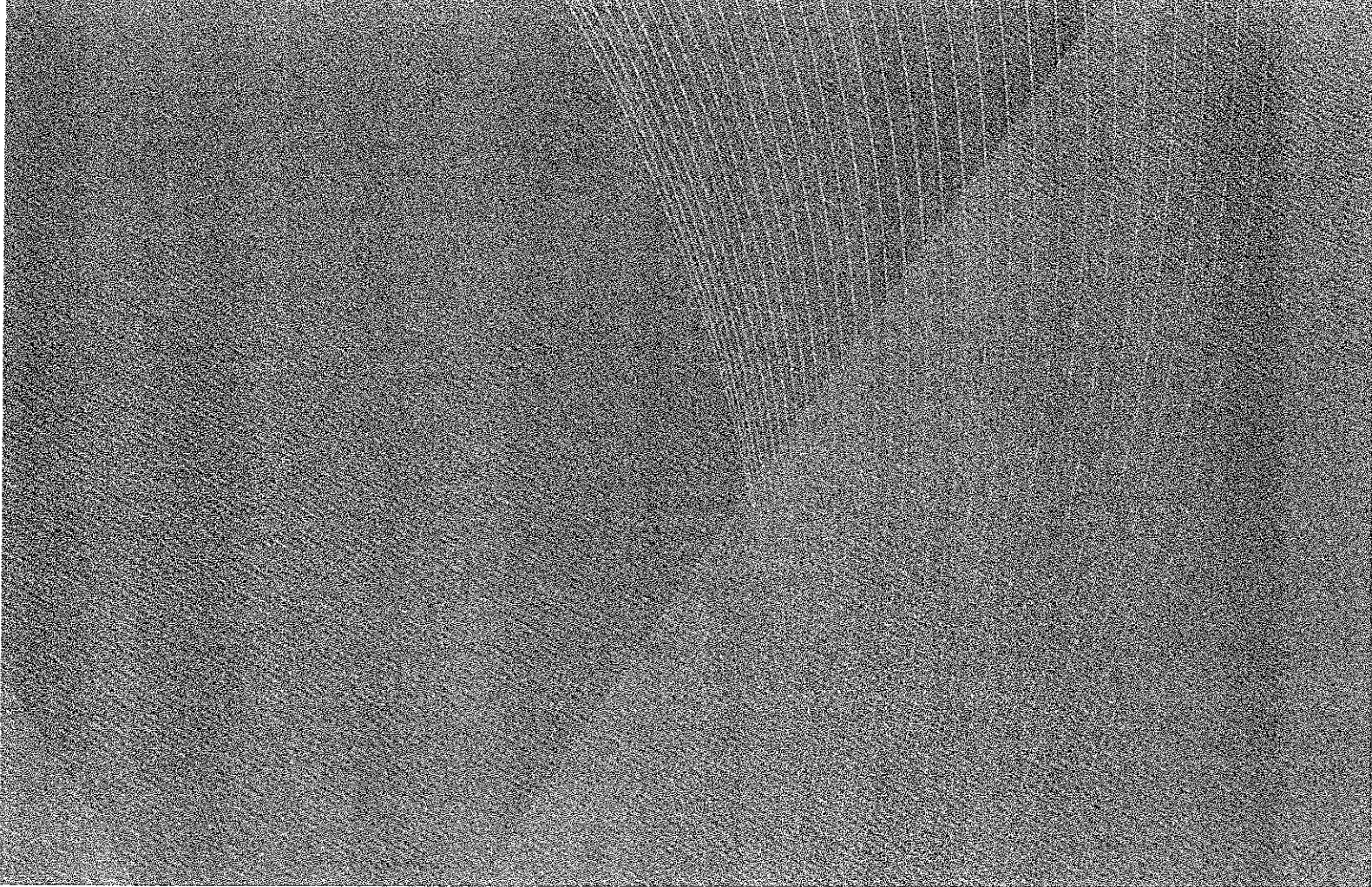
## The Future Need

There is no doubt that the need for what we offer at UMUC will become even more acute in a world where lifelong learning is absolutely essential to economic growth, national security, and quality of life. More than half of all college students in Maryland today are busy working adults; that percentage will most certainly continue to increase. Additionally, given mounting disparities between tuition costs and family income, as well as the allure of online learning, UMUC serves as an attractive option for younger students. In fact, UMUC continues to experience a steady increase in enrollments among the state's so-called "traditional" students, that is, those between the ages of 18 and 25.

Our communities across the state are also becoming increasingly diverse, both ethnically and economically. Indeed, the Maryland Department of Planning predicts that in only two short years, close to 40 percent of its residents will be nonwhite, with African Americans already constituting about one-third of the total population and the Spanish-speaking community having grown 39 percent over the last seven years. And given the bleak economic picture nationwide, unemployment will undoubtedly remain on the rise here at home.

Needless to say, these realities demand innovative approaches to higher education, which, with sufficient resources, UMUC is uniquely positioned to pioneer and evaluate. However, in achieving this objective, UMUC will need solid and substantial public support so that it may continue leveraging and optimizing revenues, not only from increased student enrollment and retention but also from private and nonprofit funding sources.

Therefore, in the spirit of collaboration, we respectfully request that you approve in its entirety our fiscal year 2010 budget request for \$31.5 million. In return, UMUC promises to deliver an exceptional return on that investment—one that will greatly benefit our state now and in the years to come.



**University of Maryland University College**

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