STATE of the UNIVERSITY ADDRESS by JAY A. PERMAN, MD PRESIDENT, UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND, BALTIMORE

How We Lead

WEDNESDAY | MAY 10, 2017
SCHOOL OF NURSING AUDITORIUM
Thank you again to the Green Street Academy 6th-Grade Chorus. What a wonderful way to start my talk.

And thanks to everyone here for taking part in this tradition, for coming together to look back at where the last year has brought us and to look ahead at where we still might go. We have some special guests with us today whom I’m honored to acknowledge: From the University System of Maryland, our Chancellor Robert Caret and Senior Vice Chancellor Joann Boughman. Maryland Secretary of Higher Education James Fielder. We have Maryland delegate Nick Mosby with us and Baltimore City Councilmen John Bullock, Eric Costello, and Isaac Schleifer. UMB Foundation Trustees Bill Wood, Hal Chappellear, Patricia Florestano, and the Hon. Devy Russell. From the Greater Baltimore Committee, we have President Don Fry; from the Downtown Partnership, President Kirby Fowler, and from the University of Maryland BioPark Board, Dr. David Dalton. From the University of Maryland Medical Center, we have President and CEO Mohan Suntha and Executive Vice President Keith Persinger. Thank you all for coming.

This year, I chose the theme “How We Lead” because I think we’ve seen a deficit of leadership in some quarters. And I think, in this vacuum, people crave what they’re too often missing: ethical, enlightened, courageous, and compassionate leadership. I believe that’s exactly the kind of leadership UMB provides.

You’ll note the theme isn’t “Why We Lead.” We know why we lead. We lead because we must.

But as to the “how,” I’ll start by proposing how we do not. We don’t lead by words, by promises, by being the loudest or brashest voice in the room. We don’t lead through arrogance or hubris.

We lead though action. We lead by doing, not by saying. We lead by a consuming conviction that our work matters. That knowledge matters. That science matters. That service matters. That justice matters. That truth matters.

People have put their faith in us. They’ve put their lives — and their livelihoods — in our hands. They’ve come to us to learn and to be served because we are Maryland’s public health, law, and human services university. And in that capacity, we have vital responsibilities to the state’s 6 million people, its 23 counties, and the city we call home.

A not insignificant number of those 6 million people are what we call “post-traditional learners.” The learner who’s of working age, who has a full-time job and maybe some college — but not a degree. The learner who’s juggling family and bills, long hours and little time, but who still wants to learn and will sacrifice to do it.

Eighty-five percent of America’s college-going population today is between 25 and 64 years old. Their needs are very different than the students we think of as typical
— the ones, it turns out, who aren’t so typical after all. Post-traditional learners need instruction that’s easy to access. They need a blend of academic and occupational curricula, and policies that support the delicate balance they’re trying to strike. They need stackable credentials, so they don’t have to start from scratch if they step out of a program. It’s a penalty we levy that almost always means the end of the line for these students.

As a professional and graduate university, we’ve been largely insulated from these learners. Our programs are highly regulated; many have to be. But the thing is, there are many students in this generation who’ve had these experiences of flexibility — online courses, recorded lectures, flipped classrooms. And because they’ve had flexibility, they want more of it when they come to us.

And in some instances, we can be flexible. Our Graduate School is a natural locus for a good deal of this activity. But others are dipping their toes in as well: Carey Law has just launched its online Master of Science in Law for professionals working in (or adjacent to) cybersecurity and homeland security. Nursing, Pharmacy, and Social Work are engaging instructional designers to build highly accessible online courses. We need to give these designers the chance to collaborate and share resources. We need to create common standards, without intruding on individual disciplines.

When I returned to UMB in 2010, not one of our students was enrolled in a program delivered entirely online. In three years’ time, we’ll have about 420 of these students. That’s not lightning speed, and we can do better. And for all those learners out there in front of a computer at midnight, with their families asleep in bed, I think we must.

There’s something else we have to do for our students — and that’s listen to them when they tell us they want to be meaningfully engaged in innovation and entrepreneurship. They haven’t been shy about it. The student-run Entrepreneurship and Innovation Network hosted its first Expo this year. The President’s Fellows wrote their white paper on how we might encourage and support the risk-takers among us, those who dare to try — and dare to fail — in pursuit of something better. We graduated our second cohort of Entrepreneurial Fellows, who work for a whole year on commercializing a faculty invention.

And now we’ve got something really exciting in the pipeline: This fall, we’ll seek approval for a master’s program in social entrepreneurship. And once we’ve gotten that approval from the Maryland Higher Education Commission, groups of students will begin working over time on one social issue that can benefit from a market-based solution, like city food deserts that contribute to health disparities. It’s important that students continue the work of those who came before them, because while it would be terrific to solve the world’s problems within a couple of years, that’s seldom the way it happens.

The students will work with faculty from every school, with local companies, local communities, and fellow entrepreneurs. They’ll apply the principles of business and design thinking to find solutions that our civic leaders and neighborhood activists have struggled toward for years.
And these students will be elbow-to-elbow with our vibrant community of entrepreneurs and artists in the Lion Bros. Building. This is our growing hub for entrepreneurship, and home to phase I of our Center for Maryland Advanced Ventures, established last year through the University of Maryland Strategic Partnership, the legislation that formalized our alliance with our sister institution in College Park.

This is where we’ll offer services for startups across the University System. Our new Student Innovation Center will engage more of our students in commercializing technologies alongside our faculty. They’ll work with the Carey School of Law’s IP and Business Law Clinic.

They’ll work with the I-CORPS Program at College Park’s Clark School of Engineering and with the Clark School’s Fischell Institute for Biomedical Devices. They’ll work with College Park’s Smith School of Business, which already has space in the BioPark. You see what we’re doing, right? We’re crafty. We’ll draw all these students to Baltimore, where they see what our amazing people and our amazing city have to offer — and then we’ve got them. They’ll stay here and start their own companies, or help others launch theirs.

We’ve already got three startups in the Lion Bros. building. SurgiGyn, co-founded by Dr. Vadim Morozov in our School of Medicine, is developing a uterine electrosurgical device that solves the most challenging aspects of laparoscopic hysterectomy. Living Pharma, started by Dr. Eduardo Davila in our School of Medicine, develops personalized cell therapy that stimulates a patient’s immune system to fight cancer. Nanobertecnics was started by Camilo Vanegas and Elizabeth Weingartner, two of our PhD students. Their company is developing a more sensitive test for monitoring chronic myeloid leukemia. Together, Camilo and Elizabeth were one of just 10 winning teams in the NIH Nano Startup Challenge in Cancer last year.

Our Center for Maryland Advanced Ventures will manage the Maryland Momentum Fund, a new $10 million fund created by the Board of Regents to invest in startups launched by the System’s students, faculty, staff, and recent alums. The fund’s board is meeting later this month to choose its first round of picks.
But this Lion Bros. Building isn’t only about university startups. It’s about community, too. Our tenant mix in the building reflects our true intent: to enrich neighborhoods, not to displace neighbors. One of our tenants, Enterprise Homes, has helped create 14,000 affordable homes in Baltimore City. Another tenant, Baltimore Community Lending, provides loans for affordable housing in underserved city neighborhoods. A Small Business Development Center will support community-based companies. And studio space for UMBC’s Intermedia and Digital Arts program brings more students into the community, adding to the creative, collaborative mix in this already vibrant neighborhood.

And we’re thrilled that Scott Plank has seen the potential here as well. He’s investing heavily in the Hollins Market neighborhood. His War Horse real estate firm has done some incredible urban development work right here in Baltimore and across the country, and the Hollins Market community is his next priority project. We’re working closely with him to make sure his venture is a success — for him, for us, and most importantly, for the Southwest Baltimore community, which needs smart development and ethical investment.

Our leadership is showing in research as well. Our grant and contract proposal activity has spiked during the last several years. The blue bars below the “total proposals” line indicate March year-to-date proposals since 2012. You can see our growth since 2014, growth we’ve been able to sustain.

We’re seeing the fruits of this enormous productivity in proposals. Through March of this year, we’re exceeding 2016 awards by 20 percent over the same time last year. Most of this growth has been in federal awards. But we’ve also seen growth in smaller portfolio areas. Corporations and Foundations & Associations have each seen their dollars climb by more than 20 percent.
Obviously, we're keeping a close eye on NIH and other federal funding, but we're encouraged by the 2017 spending bill passed last week that greenlights a $2 billion increase for NIH and a 5 percent increase in the federal R&D budget overall.

Research is only part of the good news I want to share in terms of our budget. You should be assured that the fiscal state of this University is strong.

We were delighted to receive from the state nearly $6 million in our 2018 budget to help cover the Year 1 operating costs for HSF III, and $4 million to fund our Center for Maryland Advanced Ventures. We did take on a midyear budget cut in fiscal 2017 — $2.4 million, which won’t be coming back to UMB. But we absorbed the cut without layoffs and without a midyear tuition hike.

We'll secure an additional $6 million next year in Indirect Cost Recovery because of our larger research enterprise and an increase in our rate. That money goes into our base budget, as does $8.4 million in new tuition and fee revenues, which we’ve generated by rebounding from an enrollment low in 2014, when we dipped under 6,300 students. Our enrollment this year is nearly 6,500, an uptick of more than 3 percent.

We’ve carved out money for several important initiatives this year, in addition to HSF III and the Ventures Center.

Two million dollars will go to the CTSA partnership with Johns Hopkins, which I’ll talk about in a minute. More than $400,000 will go to the Office of Philanthropy, so we can begin building a more robust fundraising enterprise. We’ve created a $1 million fund to disburse to the schools for initiatives that support key strategic areas, like student success, tuition affordability, community engagement, and Big Ideas ripe for our leadership.

We’re being aggressive in putting dollars into deferred maintenance. We’ve added $3 million to the operating budget for this maintenance, which is absolutely essential to our functioning. In a little bit, I’ll put a campus map up on the screen, and you’ll see purple sites dotting the grid where we urgently need to invest in our aging facilities. There’s quite a lot of purple on the map, and it represents a heavy investment.

This isn’t a “treading-water” budget. It isn’t a risk-averse budget. We’re letting people spend their money. We’ve been conservative in our research volume estimates, and even with potential cuts to NIH — to awards or overhead or a combination of the two — we’re confident we can soundly manage. We’re confident we can continue to thrive. In this budget, I detect the careful but enlightened fiscal management of Chief Business and Finance Officer Dawn Rhodes, who came to UMB last summer, and I thank her.

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**FY 2018 FUNDED INITIATIVES**
So let me talk about Health Sciences Facility III, which comes online next January and will stimulate exciting growth in our research enterprise. The building adds 136,000 square feet for wet and dry labs and core facilities, and at full occupancy, it should generate more than $100 million in research revenues and stimulate $212 million in economic activity in Maryland. The building will allow us to accelerate the pace and enlarge the scope of our discovery.

We have another opportunity to transform our research enterprise, and that opportunity resides in a partnership with Johns Hopkins University, as we join its application for a Clinical and Translational Science Award.

True to its name, CTSA awards focus on translating laboratory science into the drugs, devices, and treatments that extend and enrich people’s lives. This is what we mean when we say “bench-to-bedside” research. But that journey from the lab bench to the patient’s bedside is long and steep and strewn with obstacles. It’s called the Valley of Death for a reason.

And so more than a decade ago, NIH developed a grant program to bridge this Valley of Death, to improve the translational research process and get more treatments to more patients more quickly. The CTSA Program helps universities tackle systemwide problems that choke progress in scientific translation. It makes investigator teams smarter, better predictors of what will work and what will fail.

Across the country, 64 medical research institutions have won CTSA grants, Hopkins among them. We haven’t been as fortunate. But we are now. Because as Hopkins renews its grant application, we’re coming onboard. UMB enriches this project through our people and resources, through extensive training and degree programs that complement the CTSA, through our collection of schools — in health sciences, social work, and law — that Hopkins wants as collaborators because bringing our multidisciplinary expertise to bear increases the application’s competitiveness.

This collaboration is vitally important to the people of Maryland. Together, the University of Maryland Medical System and Johns Hopkins Medicine serve three-quarters of the state’s citizens. This means we can aggregate patient data from both hospital systems to ask research questions in a powerful way — questions about the people we serve and how we care for them. We can link

Indeed, the School of Medicine has begun recruiting an impressive roster of internationally known and well-funded investigators who will take a transdisciplinary approach to answering our “big science” research questions — questions in cancer biology, brain science, genome and microbiome sciences, infectious diseases, transplantation, heart and vascular science, and more.
our master’s programs so that our students gain broader and deeper expertise. We can combine aspects of our clinical research infrastructure to develop not only higher quality programs, but programs with a larger reach across the state.

It’s time that Baltimore’s two most powerful research institutions — its two most powerful anchor institutions — forge an alliance around science. It’s time we did this for our city, for our state, for our prominence as a world-class clinical research institution and our desire to attain even greater distinction in this regard. I look forward to updating you on our success.

I’ve been talking a great deal lately about this tight link between research and clinical care. But I want to focus for a moment just on our provision of care — what we’re doing to ensure that all of our best science and all of our best practice are deployed on behalf of those who need them the most.

This spring we won a state grant of $1.2 million to expand access to primary and preventative care in Prince George’s County, to provide team-based care to patients without a primary care provider and those hardest hit by health disparities — the patients most likely to be admitted (or readmitted) to the local hospital. We’ll expand our hours at the Cheverly Health and Wellness Clinic, operated by our School of Pharmacy. We’ll lay in the services of our Wellmobile, operated by the School of Nursing. Our Telehealth Center will support and follow patients throughout the care process. We’ll surround them with a patient-centered team and match them to PCPs so they can get the primary care they need.

Now I don’t believe that $1 million in new funding is going to transform health care in Prince George’s County. I don’t. But this is a model that — if replicated often and well — can make a legitimate difference in individual and community health. This can be a model for meeting patients where they are and caring for vulnerable populations.

The School of Dentistry knows something about meeting patients where they are. In the same round of grant funding that expanded our care in Prince George’s County, the state awarded a grant to expand a dental program in Cecil County. The money allows West Cecil Health Center to take over operations of the dental school’s clinic in Perryville, and allows us to maintain the clinic’s status as a teaching site, hosting predoctoral students and dental hygiene students.

The School of Dentistry has found a model that works, and they’re making it work in communities across the state. Our value — UMB’s value — is in our people and in the exceptional care they offer. So if we can partner with functioning health care providers who can keep their lights turned on and their buildings maintained, we’ll be there with our people to make sure patients get the high-quality care they deserve.
I think most of you here know how deeply I’ve been touched by the leadership we’ve shown in community engagement. But we know, of course, that our work in the community can be better, more responsive, more targeted. We’ve surveyed residents in Southwest Baltimore. We asked for their frank opinions about what we do well, and how we can do better. We asked if they’ve been to the Community Engagement Center and what programs and services would entice them to it.

And then we did one better than a survey. We showed up. With our colleagues at the University of Maryland Medical Center, we held a community town hall just last week on our Partnership for West Baltimore. That’s our joint effort to improve health, education, and economic development in our shared community, and to open up better, two-way communication with our neighbors. There are a couple of very practical reasons to partner with the medical center. First, it enlarges our capabilities and expands our reach. The medical center touches so many people in the community. And the second reason for our partnership is that, frankly, our neighbors seldom differentiate between the University and the hospital. To them, we are one entity, and so we thought — in this regard anyway — why not start acting like it?

We had about 100 people join us at Carter Memorial Church last week. They told us about themselves and their families. About the barriers they face and what we could do to help remove them. For their children, our neighbors want after-school activities, mentoring, and youth development. They want our CURE Scholars Program, but with cohorts in the hundreds, rather than the dozens. And I’d want the same.

Let me take a quick detour into the CURE Scholars Program. We had the scholars’ end-of-year ceremony last weekend, and the students were showing me the posters they presented in D.C. last month at the annual meeting of the American Association of Cancer Research — alongside their more seasoned colleagues. They presented on different kinds of cancer and on the health disparities that can make them and their families and neighbors so much sicker than other people. And if you want to see a bunch of 11- and 12-year-olds who can tell you so confidently about liver cancer, bone cancer, thyroid cancer, then I know
exactly where to send you. Who wouldn’t want that kind of confidence and pride for their children?

In addition to educating their children, what our neighbors want for themselves is simple: Jobs. About 180 people have come to the Community Engagement Center for workforce initiatives. So far, we’ve helped about 25 into jobs, either at UMB or at one of our partners in the community. That’s not a great ratio — not yet. But we’re working on it. We issued a guarantee that anyone who works with us through the Community Engagement Center and is qualified for a UMB job will at least get an interview. We’re persuading neighbors to stick with the job search, which can be long and frustrating. We’re looking at how we can prioritize local hiring, when almost all of our jobs require a high school degree or equivalency, when almost all require computer skills, when a glut of applications for most positions means that any deficit in experience or capabilities can easily relegate an application to the “no” pile. This is part of our learning curve.

But you know what else we’ve learned about community engagement? That it has to be fun, too. This spring, we marked 10,000 visits to the Community Engagement Center since it opened. It’s packed every day. And the activities that prove most popular are those that are just undeniably fun. The exercise class disguised as line dancing or Zumba. The community lunches that bring everyone together with no agenda, just conversation and fellowship. And that’s important. Spending time with one another is important. Building a community that feels safer, more connected, and more understood is important. Is it hard to measure the efficacy of this kind of programming? Yes. But is it hard to feel the benefit? Not even a little bit.

And I take the fact that we need a bigger, better Community Engagement Center less than two years into our effort there as a pretty good indicator that we’re doing something right.

Before I leave the topic of community engagement, I just want to mention that as part of our partnership with the medical center, we’ve launched a website: UMPartnershipForWestBaltimore.org. On the site you’ll be able to access a database that links volunteers to service opportunities. You can plug in the days and times you’re available, how many hours you can give, what you’re interested in doing. And then when we need people for a service opportunity, we can make a match based on your criteria. Now, we’re still building the site, so if you’re planning to race out of here today to sign up, and it’s not as robust as you’d like, please just give us a little time.
I do believe that each of us has a critical responsibility in addition to the work we undertake every day, and it is to be an advocate for that work — to be champions for all the people who need the knowledge we create, the care and service we provide, but who don’t have a platform to persuade the powerful that this work is urgently important, that it matters.

Last month, UMB gathered together a group of research deans and vice presidents from College Park, Johns Hopkins, UMBC, and Morgan State. For the first time ever, we went to D.C. as a group to lobby our congressional delegation. Together, we stated the case for Maryland’s research universities, how they serve the state’s people and strengthen our economy.

We supported a full spending bill for 2017. As I mentioned earlier, the omnibus contains a $2 billion increase to the NIH budget, for which we’re grateful. We advocated a rejection of the 2018 budget proposal put forth by President Trump, which would decimate our research dollars and jeopardize financial aid for our very neediest students. We advocated a higher education exemption from President Trump’s proposed cap on H1B visas. We know our universities are strengthened by the contributions of our international scholars and faculty, and visa caps would dramatically inhibit our ability to compete for the world’s very best talent.

We stated plainly what the Trump administration’s proposed budget would mean to a state like Maryland, to our federal workforce and to our students trying to find a place within it — what it would mean to our tax base, to our research capacity, and our ability to grow Maryland’s innovation economy.

At the state level, this year’s General Assembly session was a busy one for UMB’s faculty and students who testified on dozens of bills that impinge on our work: food security, cybersecurity, pretrial release and bail reform, overdose prevention, over-the-counter contraception, school suspensions and expulsions for the state’s youngest learners. In our first-ever Interprofessional Education Day in Annapolis, more than 20 students shared with lawmakers how IPE makes them better, more effective practitioners and why students across the University System need more opportunities to learn interprofessionally.

I thank everyone who contributed their voices to important issues this year and led the way in advocacy for those who could not.

So what do we need to lead? People are the answer, of course. They always are. Our faculty, our staff, our students.
And I firmly believe that to keep getting the great students we want, we have to get tuition under control. I talked about tuition affordability in last year’s State of the University Address, and since then we’ve begun working to drill down into the cost of attendance, financial aid awards, work and family contributions, and student debt loads. We’ll analyze this data by race, ethnicity, and income. We’ll benchmark our data against a peer group. And within a year, we’ll have affordability metrics that we must work toward with all the resources we have.

Of course, students don’t pick their college on cost alone. Reputation, location, and program fit are critical. But I maintain that the student experience will start taking on much more significance, if it hasn’t already. Students don’t stop valuing an enriching and engaging experience when they turn 22. It’s not an “undergraduate thing,” though it’s been branded that way.

When I arrived back at UMB in 2010, our Southern Management Corporation Campus Center had opened. It was the very first building at UMB that was a truly Universitywide building, striking one small blow to a tradition of silos. I asked my colleagues to program the center with events and activities that would draw students from all of the schools. We didn’t know if it would work. We’d never tried it before. And from the moment we began offering collaborative programs, every one was fully subscribed. Every leadership program, every cultural program, every service program.

And now it’s time to bring these “co-curricular” activities fully into the curriculum. Our students are asking for a student-run interprofessional clinic. They’re asking for programs in health, poverty, and justice taught on-site at the Community Engagement Center. They came to us with the idea for our social entrepreneurship program, and they championed the Student Innovation Center from the start. We need to meet our students where they already are. And, believe me, they have no qualms about leading us into the future.

I imagine this applies not only to students. I imagine there are junior faculty who want to be more interdisciplinary, who want to be more civically engaged, who want to be more entrepreneurial. So we need to value these things more in the P&T process. Of course, we recognize the challenge in taking faculty away from their more traditional work. But we must distance ourselves from this notion in American academia that anything “extra” comes at a faculty member’s own peril. This isn’t the future, and UMB is perfectly positioned to blaze a new path.
Engaging and retaining great people was the point of the campus climate survey we conducted last year. We wanted to assess employees’ perceptions of UMB’s inclusiveness, diversity, and safety. We wanted to gauge your confidence in UMB and the extent to which you feel you have input into decision-making. We wanted your take on our institutional values.

The survey isn’t a scorecard; it’s not pass/fail. It’s a means of establishing a baseline, so that we can gauge our direction over time: Are we doing better or worse? It’s to shape our interventions and drive an improvement process that enhances our daily work experience.

I’ve asked the Diversity Advisory Council to look specifically at the diversity and inclusion indicators and recommend ways that we can improve campus climate in these domains. We’re going to discuss these results and recommendations at my Quarterly Q&A on June 19, and I hope you’ll join us.

I don’t believe that the experience I’ve been talking about — the student experience, the faculty experience, the staff experience — can be entirely divorced from our physical environment.

We finalized our Facilities Master Plan this year, a plan for the next 10 years or more. It’s a plan now before the Board of Regents that seeks to enhance our connections to one another, to our campus, and to the city beyond it. We have a chance to make our campus and the neighborhoods around us a vibrant community, a close community, an invested community. And that’s what we aim to do.

I want to show you just a few slides of our plans.

Here’s UMB. The sites in red are mostly UMB-owned, and they show just how much revitalization is possible on the north end of our campus. That’s where our land bank is; that’s where we need to grow. And with several large development sites available, there’s great opportunity to do just that.
But we’re not neglecting our existing facilities. This is the slide I mentioned earlier, where you can see in purple just how much of our campus needs renewal. This is a priority for us — and for our budget.

An improved bicycle infrastructure also is important to us. We need more bike-share locations and dedicated bike lanes, largely north-south, that improve mobility and protect safety.

The plan provides spaces where students and faculty from all of our schools can interact more easily, more frequently, and more effectively. For a University that prides itself on interprofessionalism, I consider this essential.

UMB is transit rich, but we need better connectivity to and among various modes of transportation: the Light Rail, the Metro, and the bus routes that serve our campus. The MTA BaltimoreLink, which replaces the now-defunct Red Line, will run east-west on several campus streets.

We need sidewalk bump-outs at intersections; painted crosswalks; treed sidewalks and streets that are cool and inviting; open, green spaces where you can relax. This is a dense, urban campus. You can’t race through it — and you shouldn’t want to.

What we know for certain about UMB is that when you influence the campus, you influence the city. Our boundaries are not firm — our borders are porous — and everything we do has implications somewhere else.
And so this plan looks to embrace the communities surrounding us: The BioPark to our west and downtown to our east. Downtown is now the fastest growing residential neighborhood in Baltimore City. But there’s a physical gap in development between the heart of downtown and our campus. We need to knit these two communities together by teaming with the city, with private developers and nonprofits.

On the right-hand side of the slide (the third arrow down) that’s Baltimore Street, threading all the way through to the BioPark. Baltimore Street is envisioned as a main gateway to campus, a beautiful, identifiable entrance.

We need stronger, safer connections to Lexington Market, to the Bromo Arts District, to MetroWest on our north side, to the Market Center on our east, and to communities west of MLK.

I’ve never been as confident as I am right now about the potential of our Westside neighborhood. I believe that, together, we can make good on this promise of revitalization, that we can invite in — and sustain — housing, retail, art, culture, entertainment; that we really can make this a place where students, faculty, staff, and friends want to be. Because it’s hard to build community on a 9-to-5 schedule. Community comes from living, learning, and working together — having fun together.

And that’s why I say it’s not only this campus that can be transformed. It’s the community.

Look at this corner of Lexington and Greene. We own most of these properties.

Now look at what we envision.
Look at this corner of Baltimore Street and MLK, with the blank and somewhat foreboding MSTF façade to the left. It was constructed at a time in UMB’s past when the prevailing philosophy was to have all buildings connected by pedestrian bridges, meaning there would have been no one from the UMB community on the sidewalks. Think about that. Think about how this building and others turn their back (in a way) on our neighbors.

This is how it could look. You can see the beautiful HSF III plaza in the lower right-hand corner. This intersection can be a powerful statement for us — that exciting things are happening at UMB, and that we invite our community to be a part of them.

Look at our campus today.

Now look at what it could be.
Of course, buildings alone do not make a great university. And so we’d be wise to invest in the ideas that reside within them, the bold and daring ideas, the ideas that accumulate to breakthrough science and life-changing service. This past January, the deans at UMB and at College Park came together for a day to discuss the Big Ideas that, together, we could bring to life. We wanted to find those intersections of expertise and resources, where the fires of creativity and collaboration really spark.

This year’s deans retreat was modeled on the one we convened in 2014, when the partnership between our two universities was a little newer. It was there that we first hatched a plan to collaborate in sports science. That proposal became the Center for Sports Medicine, Health, and Human Performance, now taking shape in the College Park Cole Field House. The center is deploying our expertise in traumatic brain injury: how to prevent it and how to speed recovery.

It was at the 2014 deans retreat that we talked about human trafficking, sadly prevalent in Prince George’s County. That conversation turned into the SAFE Center for Human Trafficking Survivors, which blends survivor services with research and advocacy aimed at ending this horrific crime.

And so, as we look at the proposals coming in now from our January retreat, we know that whatever the top picks turn out to be, they stand a good chance of becoming operative:

- A novel approach to neuro-degenerative research
- A center to prevent and treat opioid abuse
- A cybersecurity institute for health informatics
- A program to explore and replicate effective policing practices
- New approaches to infectious disease detection and prevention
- A program applying computational analysis to problems of clinical significance
- The provision of support services to children and families in under-resourced schools.

This exercise actually mirrors one we’ve undertaken right here at UMB, bringing our schools together around our own Big Ideas that play to our strengths but that need collaboration and commitment and money: Addiction research, education, and treatment to deal with an overwhelming epidemic locally and nationally; pain management; improving transitions in care; solving problems endemic in our cities; drug design, development, and manufacturing; preventative health and lifestyle modifications; cures and therapeutics for the areas in which we have deep expertise.

It’s still very early in the process. We don’t know which of these ideas — or maybe some others entirely — will rise to the top. But if we can come together as a University around two, three, four of these initiatives? If we can entice our alumni, friends, and partners to support them, to give their money to something they care about deeply — maybe something that affects them personally? Then I guarantee we’ll be able to lead here.
Without doubt, we’re at a critical juncture right now. Philanthropy will be a significant priority going forward. You know as well as I that we’re not likely to see a spike in state or federal money. The one elastic, accessible, cost-effective form of revenue-building is philanthropy, and this is where we’ll focus. I thank our Chief Philanthropy Officer Tom Sullivan, who came on board last summer, for leading this effort. And I thank all of the chief development officers in the schools and their staffs.

The fact is we haven’t told the story of this University often enough or broadly enough. We haven’t told people how powerful we are, how effective, how innovative, how compassionate, how vital. Maybe that’s part of the “quiet leadership” approach we take to our work — the fact that we lead through action, not through words. But we need to be a little louder now. A lot louder. We need to tell the story of UMB to our 74,000 living alumni; to our friends; to the centers of wealth, power, and influence in Maryland and the nation; and, of course, within the communities we’re a part of.

We’re gearing up right now for a major, multi-hundred-million-dollar campaign. Earlier, I mentioned a $425,000 line item in our budget for philanthropy. This will help our Office of Philanthropy refine its processes and procedures, and reorganize and expand staff so that we’re ready for a successful campaign.

As you know, we wrapped up a Scholarship Matching Program last year. The program created or enlarged 265 endowments and generated nearly $15 million in new money for our students, which is wonderful. But the campaign we’ll announce soon will far eclipse that number. We’ll also add a significant number of new endowed professorships and endowed laboratories. The campaign will support those special, multidisciplinary projects I just mentioned, the Big Ideas that consolidate our existing expertise and assets.

This is what our endowment looked like at the beginning of this calendar year. You can see that student aid is a huge priority for our donors. That’s not unusual, especially given that many of our alumni understand exactly what kind of debt our students are graduating with today. All of these areas are crucial to our success, and they’ll all get attention.

I’ll be frank: This endowment figure isn’t good enough. If you look at our peer institutions — UVA, UNC, Pitt, UCSF — they tower over us. Now the size of their philanthropy offices also towers over ours. But the point is that we need to demonstrate to our alumni and friends why giving to UMB is the smartest thing they can do if they want a meaningful return on their investment. We have to show our value.
And here’s why. Here are some examples of what philanthropy has enabled at UMB.

William and Joanne Conway and their Bedford Falls Foundation have given two transformative gifts to the School of Nursing. The first gift of $5.2 million is the largest in the school’s history, providing full scholarship support over five years for 157 students pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Nursing. As Maryland faces a crippling shortage of nurses — and as many nurses find they can’t get a job without a BSN — this gift is absolutely vital. The couple’s second gift of $2 million will support students pursuing advanced degrees, those committed to careers in training the next generation of nurses and to providing primary care in areas of need.

Ellen Yankellow has recently contributed $200,000 to the School of Pharmacy. Her gift was matched by an anonymous donor and by the UMB Foundation, bringing the total gift to $500,000. The money supports a scholar in the Health Outcomes Fellowship, which Dr. Yankellow established to improve comprehensive pharmacy care, and underwrites a full year of tuition for a student in the school’s Regulatory Science program or its Pharmacometrics program. These disciplines are central to assuring drug safety and efficacy, and to influencing key drug development decisions.

Meg Woodside and the Woodside Foundation have given and committed more than $200,000 to the School of Social Work to establish and grow the school’s Financial Social Work Initiative. The initiative encompasses education, research, and outreach in areas like credit counseling, gambling addiction, and reducing homelessness. Seeded with Ms. Woodside’s gift, the program has grown into one of national significance. The school is now a key leader in one of the profession’s 12 Grand Challenges of Social Work, which is “Building Financial Capacity for All.”

Fred Smith and Venice Paterakis have given $1.5 million to the School of Dentistry, establishing the school’s very first endowed professorship. The gift will help the Department of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery burnish an international reputation in groundbreaking surgical techniques and clinical research, and adopt new training methods for the next generation of oral surgeons. The couple’s generosity has inspired their fellow School of Dentistry alumni and friends to establish a second endowed professorship.

Over the years, Peter Angelos has contributed nearly $10 million to the School of Medicine. He’s established endowed professorships in Surgery and in Entrepreneurial Sciences, the latter of which enables a biomedical engineer to be embedded in the Department of Surgery and rapidly commercialize innovative ideas for treatments and devices. Mr. Angelos also has pledged leadership funding to launch a multidisciplinary center for patients the world over with advanced lung disease and cancer. The center will offer patients immediate and effortless access to all the specialists needed for treatment and will provide support for patients and their families as they travel to and from Baltimore for care.

When we think of the law school’s transformational gifts, it’s rather hard not to think of the Carey family, whose $30 million gift named the school and has underwritten student and faculty recruitment, research, and program
development. But here’s how philanthropy catalyzes a culture of giving. With his landmark gift, William Carey established the Carey Challenge to stimulate additional philanthropy for the law school. The first principal gift toward that challenge was $1 million, given by Elizabeth Moser to establish an ethics initiative at the law school, to train lawyers who can confront and solve ethical problems encountered in the legal profession. And Mrs. Moser included a matching component in her own gift, which keeps the cycle of philanthropy going.

I want to show you what all of our effort and expertise — all of the generosity of our friends — has wrought. You know, I say that people put too much stock in rankings, particularly the rankings of a well-known, for-profit magazine. I often say that the methodology is flawed. And that’s all true — until you get some results like these. Look: I’m a hypocrite — but I’ll live with it.

In the just-released U.S.News & World Report rankings of the nation’s graduate schools, our School of Pharmacy is No. 9. Our School of Social Work is No. 17. Our School of Medicine is No. 16 among public medical schools. Our Carey School of Law has two specialties in the top 10: the No. 2 Health Law program and the No. 7 Clinical Training program. Environmental Law is No. 14, and the Carey School’s evening program is No. 4.

Our School of Nursing has two degrees in the top 10: the master’s and the DNP. Six of its specialties landed in the top 10, including the No. 1 Clinical Nurse Leader program and the No. 1 Informatics program. And while Dentistry doesn’t get ranked by U.S.News & World Report, our School of Dentistry is No. 7 among public dental schools in NIH funding.

Ladies and gentlemen, this is how we lead. This is how you lead: In educating the next generation of professionals and scholars who will expand what we know, reframe what we expect, and revolutionize what we believe is possible. You lead in research — at the bench and in the field. With high courage and deep compassion, you lead in service to patients and clients. You lead by modeling partnership with one another, with our sister institutions of higher education, and with partners in care and service. You lead by embracing our neighbors who confront grave challenges — challenges that we must, and do, take on as our own.

I’m privileged every day to hear from the people of this city and state — from those in positions of great power to those in positions of great need — and they tell me that UMB is making change, that UMB is doing good, that UMB is leading in the ways that matter. I regret only that you don’t hear those words as often as I do. But I am again this year privileged to tell the story of your work — of your leadership. And for that privilege, I thank you.