It is my nature to be an optimist—seeing the glass as half-full. However, I am also a pragmatist. I share this with you because I believe that the new calendar year brings us many opportunities while we also must be cognizant of the challenges ahead—especially the economic issues that face our city, state, and nation.

What makes me so optimistic about the year ahead? It begins with the many talented people affiliated with our University. Our faculty, staff, and students are simply outstanding. I am a firm believer that our greatest asset is our people. (See our kudos beginning on Page 2.) All of you are the reason we are a national leader in education and research and in addressing the many health, social, and legal problems around the globe. Being the state’s only public academic health, law, and human services University brings us pride, but also responsibility. So we can’t just rest on our laurels in the year ahead.

You have heard me speak of the many initiatives under way, including the implementation of the Interprofessional Education Task Force as well as our strategic planning process. I have no doubt these initiatives will prove successful because of the high-quality people involved in their development.

Despite this optimism, I’m also very aware of the tests that loom ahead for our University. The most formidable will be financial. We know that the budget forecast for the state is challenging. I assure you that by working with the chancellor and our colleagues within the University System of Maryland (USM), as well as with the governor and the members of the General Assembly, we will make every effort to minimize the effects of any budgetary constraints. Our track record has clearly proven we are an economic engine that remains essential to the growth of the city, region, and the state.

As we look ahead to 2011, the options are clear. We must be proactive and control those things within our domain and take the steps necessary to better position ourselves for when the economy improves. I hope you join me in accepting the challenges ahead because with challenge comes opportunity to spread our message of real-world thinking and worldwide reach.

We can discuss this and other topics at our next Q&A session, Tuesday, Jan. 11 from noon to 12:45 at the Lussier Lecture Hall in the Dental School. Some questions from our Dec. 15 Town Hall at the School of Medicine are on Page 5. You also can keep sending questions to www.umaryland.edu/president/feedback/. Anonymous questions are fine, but if you want a direct response, remember to include contact information. We also encourage schools to keep us apprised of the accomplishments of your faculty, staff, and students at kudos4permanent@umaryland.edu.

All The Best,

[Signature]
Laurels

DENTAL SCHOOL

Suzanne Grey, the Dental School’s first DDS-MPH student, successfully presented and defended her capstone presentation for her MPH project on Dec. 9. The presentation was on Jamaica’s public dental health services. Grey also is the recent recipient of an American Dental Association Foundation scholarship.

On Jan. 1, Gregory Zeller, DDS, MS, associate professor, began serving a two-year term on the Certification Commission for Health Information Technology’s board of commissioners. Zeller is the only dentist appointed to serve on the 19-member board.

HEALTH SCIENCES AND HUMAN SERVICES LIBRARY

Yunting Fu, MLS, liaison to the School of Pharmacy, has been named chair-elect of the Libraries/Educational Resources Section of the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy.

SCHOOL OF LAW


Barbara Bezdek, JD, LLM, professor, co-authored the fourth edition of the book Housing and Community Development: Cases and Materials.


“Barriers to Effective Risk Management” by Michelle Harner, JD, associate professor and co-director of the Business Law Program, was published in the Seton Hall Law Review.

Diane Hoffmann, JD, MS, professor, associate dean for academic programs, and director of the Law and Health Care Program, wrote about death as a public health issue in the book Reconsidering Law and Policy Debates: A Public Health Perspective.

Lawrence Sung, JD, PhD, professor, recently published the 2010-2011 edition of the Patent Law Handbook.

Ellen Weber, JD, professor, received a $350,000 grant from the Open Society Institute-Baltimore to support research, education, and advocacy regarding expanded access to addiction treatment services in Maryland under health care reform.
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

Cynthia Bearer, MD, PhD, professor, received a one-year, $1 million grant from the Gerber Foundation for her work “Mercury in Donor Blood—A Possible Hazard for Preterm Infants.” Bearer also received a three-year, $411,000 grant from the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene to be used for the School of Medicine’s Center for Infant and Child Loss.

Angela Brodie, PhD, professor, received the 2010 Jacob Heskel Gabbay Award in Biotechnology and Medicine. The prestigious award, administered by the Rosenstiel Basic Medical Sciences Research Center at Brandeis University, recognizes outstanding strides in basic and applied biomedical sciences. Brodie was honored for her groundbreaking research in the development of aromatase inhibitors.

Frank Calia, MD, MACP, professor emeritus and vice dean for clinical affairs, was elected vice president of the American Clinical and Climatological Association during its annual conference in San Antonio.

Shannan DeLany Dixon, MS, CGC, assistant professor and director of the Master’s in Genetic Counseling Program, was elected to the board of directors of the National Society of Genetic Counselors, effective in January.

Renee Fox, MD, associate professor, received a three-year, $3 million grant from the Baltimore City Health Department, CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield, and the Family League of Baltimore City for her work “Baltimore for Healthy Babies.”

Steven Kittner, MD, MPH, professor and director of the University of Maryland Stroke Center, and Braxton Mitchell, PhD, MPH, professor, were chosen to coordinate an international team of scientists under a $3.6 million National Institutes of Health grant to identify genes or gene variants that may make a person more likely to have an ischemic stroke.

Dean Mann, MD, professor, received a five-year, $7,256,744 National Cancer Institute grant for his work “Resource for the Collection and Evaluation of Human Tissues and Cells From Donors With an Epidemiology Profile.”

Andrew Pollak, MD, professor, was presented with the U.S. Army Medical Research and Materiel Command Research Program Award in recognition of his work with Congress and the Defense Department to develop the Peer Reviewed Orthopaedic Research Program and the Orthopaedic Extremity Trauma Research Program.

Sanford Stass, MD, professor, chair of the Department of Pathology, and interim chair of the Department of Medical and Research Technology, received a five-year, $2,004,696 National Cancer Institute U24 award for his project “University of Maryland, Baltimore Biomarker Reference Laboratory.”
SCHOOL OF NURSING

Deborah McGuire, PhD, RN, FAAN, professor, was recently appointed to the National Institute of Nursing Research’s End-of-Life and Palliative Care Needs Assessment Evaluation Advisory Committee, as part of the National Institutes of Health’s evaluation project on funding, grants, and priorities regarding end-of-life and palliative care research.

The following faculty made presentations during the Council for the Advancement of Nursing Science’s 2010 State of the Science Congress on Nursing Research, held recently in Washington, D.C.

Barbara Resnick, PhD, RN, CRNP, FAAN, FAANP, professor, and Barbara Smith, PhD, RN, FAAN, professor and associate dean for research, presented “Working With a DSMB: How It Can Help You.”

Recruitment of Patient/Caregiver DYADS” was presented by Eun-Shim Nahm, PhD, MS, RN, associate professor; Barbara Resnick; and R. Barker Bausell, PhD, professor and biostatistician.

“Optimizing Safety in Exercise Intervention” was presented by Kathleen Michael, PhD, RN, CCRN, assistant professor, and Marianne Shaughnessy, PhD, RN, CRNP, associate professor.

Erika Friedmann, PhD, professor, and Valerie Sabol, PhD, RN, ACNP, assistant professor, presented “Longitudinal Research With Older Adults.”

SCHOOL OF PHARMACY

Natalie D. Eddington, PhD, FAAPS, dean and professor, has been named the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy’s Council of Deans representative to the administrative board.

“Hazardous Drugs: Maintaining Standards of Safe Pharmacy Practice” by Tuan Huynh, a fourth-year PharmD student, was published in the December 2010 issue of Pharmacy Practice News.

Lauren Hynicka, PharmD, assistant professor, has obtained board certification in pharmacotherapy.

Fourth-year PharmD students Lindsay McCann and Tom Smoot placed second at the 2010 American Society of Health-System Pharmacists National Clinical Skills Competition, held in Anaheim, Calif., in December. The placement was the highest ever for a team from the School of Pharmacy.

Fadia Shaya, PhD, MPH, associate professor, has been invited to serve as a member of the Pharmaceutical Science and Clinical Pharmacology Advisory Committee of the Food and Drug Administration. The committee provides advice on scientific and technical issues concerning the safety and effectiveness of drugs and other products.

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

Richard P. Barth, PhD, MSW, dean of the School, and alumna Joan Levy Zlotnik, PhD ’98, ACSW, director of the Social Work Policy Institute at the National Association of Social Workers Foundation, were part of a panel of experts recently invited to Capitol Hill to discuss a social work reinvestment act with members of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.
OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT (ORD)/ CENTER FOR INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES (CITS)

Coeus, the comprehensive pre- and post-award data management software system that ORD and CITS implemented in early 2007, reached a milestone in December with the processing of the 10,000th University proposal using the system.

RESPONSE:
One of my major initiatives is the operation of a weekly President’s Clinic. Each week we are having students from all schools seeing patients. It is an organized approach to socializing our students professionally. We also have an interdisciplinary task force made up of representatives from each of the schools to identify what we are doing and to identify new ways of collaboration. I am looking for funding for this venture. I have made some inroads, but I need to find more sources.

Questions and Answers

FROM DEC. 15 TOWN HALL TAYLOR LECTURE HALL, SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

QUESTION:
My e-mail just broke again. Are there plans to be revamping the system?

RESPONSE:
We are actively working on our strategic plan and within the strategic plan task force there is a work group dedicated to the information technology needs of the campus going forward in the next five to 10 years.

QUESTION:
One of UMB’s greatest appeals to the students is that we have the opportunity to interact with other professional schools on campus and enhance our education through interdisciplinary collaboration. However, I believe that there are many different things that can be done to strengthen our ties between schools. What kind of projects are you supporting to promote interdisciplinary activities and improve interschool student alliances?

RESPONSE:
As a student at the Dental School, I walk across Martin Luther King (MLK) Boulevard everyday and cross West Baltimore Street several times a day. The crosswalks are very poorly marked and my classmates and I are constantly dodging cars. I feel that it is crucial to our safety to have the crosswalks highly visible and repainted. On MLK perhaps we need more signs making it clear that pedestrians have the right of way. Last year my classmate was hit by a car when she had the right of way crossing the street.

Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard does pose problems for pedestrians that need to be addressed. The Facilities Master Plan calls for “humanizing” the boulevard to make it pedestrian-friendly and safe. Modifications being considered include: four-way traffic stops to allow pedestrian crossing without traffic conflict; additional red light cameras to discourage running red lights; and elimination of right turns at red lights. Of course, any changes will take some time to implement since they involve the city and state transportation planners. In the shorter term, the University has received a federal grant to address the intersection at Baltimore Street and Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard. Traffic traveling from the south will no longer be able to turn onto Baltimore Street from MLK. Instead, traffic will turn at a new intersection at Fremont Avenue. It is hoped this will improve the pedestrian crossing at Baltimore Street.
**QUESTION:**
This campus has a lot of women who are faculty, staff, and students. Do you have any plans to help this group to meet their unique needs, especially addressing the need for child-care?

**RESPONSE:**
Given my pediatric bent, I am very aware of and am constantly looking at child-care issues. We’ve revised the breast-feeding policy to assist those who need it. Employers should try to make it easier for a new mother to return to work and then allow that employee to have privacy in the workplace. We’ve developed a policy regarding this and have circulated it to the department heads. In regard to child-care—I consider child-care on this campus to be totally inadequate. We have a majority of women on our work force. We need to be more family-friendly. We are working on what we already have in place and how we can improve or add to it. Understand, though, that I am NOT proposing child-care as a benefit offered to employees, per se; it just needs to be more readily available and affordable.

**QUESTION:**
We are sending a global medical brigade to Haiti, but it has been a difficult task to pull together. We have great potential and great interest from our students, but I run into opposition and resistance fairly often. How can we better facilitate study abroad programs?

**RESPONSE:**
That is a good question! On Monday we presented our University mission statement to the Board of Regents. Global health is a major endeavor—it is a calling card for our campus. We have great strengths in that regard, but we could create an infrastructure to support those interested in these global health opportunities. We are organizing a task force toward that end.

**QUESTION:**
I read about VSP (Voluntary Separation Program) on the state website and was wondering how this will affect University employees in 2011?

**RESPONSE:**
The governor’s announced Voluntary Separation Program (also known as early retirement) specifically exempted the institutions of the University System of Maryland from participation. The order does allow the system to develop its own program.

**QUESTION:**
I work in a lab that has not had to take furlough days because we are more than 90 percent federally funded. Why is this policy also not in effect for salary increases or merit pay increases? These increases are budgeted into our federal grants that we have been awarded. Our grant money from the federal government pays our salary, and they place in the grant a budget for salary increases, yet the state government won’t give us that increase. … The lab worked hard to win billions of dollars for not only our lab, but the University of Maryland at Baltimore, and you reward us with no salary increase when the money is there in labs budget?

**RESPONSE:**
The University of Maryland, Baltimore is mandated by the Maryland Budget Reconciliation and Financing Act of 2010 (SB141), Section 38, which reads as follows:

“And be it further enacted, that, notwithstanding any other provision of law, State employees employed by any entity, including the University System of Maryland, Morgan State University, and St. Mary’s College of Maryland, may not receive bonuses, merit increases, or cost-of-living adjustments in fiscal year 2011. This provision does not affect salaries for constitutional officers or members of the General Assembly or
increases necessary for the retention of faculty in the University System of Maryland, Morgan State University, or St. Mary's College of Maryland.”

The chancellor’s FY11 salary directives require UMB to follow the state mandate above, regardless of funding source. The directives state that increases can only be given for promotional or re-evaluations during FY11 for staff. Unfortunately, the ability to allow increases beyond merit and cost of living is not predicated on funding source.

**QUESTION:**
After three years of furlough/salary reduction schedules, why not simply reduce state retirement contributions for everyone making over six figures or more than $90,000? Everybody else in these economical bad times needs the money now.

**RESPONSE:**
The retirement contribution rates are set by law, and the campus cannot change them.

As long as we’re talking salaries, everyone needs to understand that we do not know what is in the governor’s budget, or what the General Assembly will do with the budget once it is presented. I am optimistic that the decisions made at the legislative level will allow us some increased flexibility so the leadership can recognize the efforts of their staff.

**QUESTION:**
In regard to the question you just read—about the salaries being controlled by state law—is that something that the University can request an exemption from?

**RESPONSE:**
Yes, it is and we filed for an exemption last year, which obviously was denied. I’m sure we’ll consider filing a request for an exemption once again.

**QUESTION:**
Will it ever be possible to change the current policy regarding donating leave? Some University of Maryland campuses permit employees to donate leave to a specific person. However, at UMB, we can donate to the central leave bank only. It is a great morale booster to be able to help a close worker who is going through a lengthy illness.

**RESPONSE:**
The University has reviewed the leave structure during the past several years. With the amount of leave that employees can earn and other leave resources such as advanced and extended sick leave, we believe that the Leave Reserve Fund, the centrally administered leave fund from the University System of Maryland, provides the additional coverage to assist employees during lengthy qualifying absences. Employees earn 15 days of sick leave each year and accumulation is unlimited.

The USM policy for the Leave Reserve Fund does not provide authority to the campus to develop an additional leave donation program. Personally, I find it heartening that employees want to reach out and help other employees. I commend those employees for their generosity and I would urge you to support your co-workers in other ways as they recover.

**QUESTION:**
Regarding working on global health, when we were coordinating the trip to Haiti, we discovered that no medical students would be able to come with us because the academic schedules in every school at UMB are so different. Can we coordinate schedules between the schools so we can do more of these functions together?

**RESPONSE:**
That sure does hinder the interdisciplinary efforts. These are things we need to find a way around if we’re going to maximize these opportunities. However, there’s so much that goes into all the scheduling, I really do not see getting a uniform calendar.
**QUESTION:**
I have always felt that it would benefit the University if experienced retirees were able to come back and work in the same unit as part-time employees. Is that possible and if so, under what capacity?

**RESPONSE:**
Experienced retirees can and do come back to work throughout the campus and, depending upon their eligibility, typically return as part-time Contingent 1 employees or, in some limited cases, as regular employees. There must first be a business need and funding for the position, and the retiree must meet the minimum qualifications of the job.

In addition, there are other limitations and restrictions that apply as to the rehiring of retirees. The IRS and the Maryland State Retirement Agency require all retirements to be bona fide—that means that all retirees must be off state payroll for a minimum of 45 days prior to being rehired. There is an earnings limitation that applies to any retiree who receives a benefit from the Maryland State Retirement Agency and returns to work within nine years of their retirement. There is no earnings limitation for the Optional Retirement Plan.

Employees who are considering retirement should contact a benefits specialist, who will explain more about the limitations and restrictions if they are planning to come back to work at UMB after they retire.

**QUESTION:**
Can a department suspend Casual Friday? We had one employee told on Friday that she should have been sent home because she wore a denim suit yet there were four others wearing jeans who were not even warned.

**RESPONSE:**
Casual Friday is not a University or campus policy. It is instituted by each operational unit with standards established to meet its business needs. Casual Friday, as with other policies and practices, should be applied consistently for all employees in similar operational situations. The operational unit guidelines may be modified for an individual or individuals on specific occasions for operational or business reasons. If, for example, an employee represents the employing unit or University in a formal business meeting or other business function that is scheduled on a Casual Friday, the employee may be expected to dress in regular business attire and not casual attire.

**QUESTION:**
Has there been any thought to having a centralized clearinghouse to show all the various outreach efforts from all across campus? We have many willing people, but then folks don’t know the opportunities are there.

**RESPONSE:**
First, let me mention that we have a really great President’s Outreach Council, which is focused on endeavors with the local community. Then the individual schools have their opportunities regarding service learning and research. But what frustrates me is that we step on each other and can’t maximize our efforts while we are still so fragmented.

I’m spending time talking about how to accomplish this. We need to make it all seamless.

I am very interested in our pipeline programs. We should be concerned here about the children who are in our community. These children need opportunity and exposure to what we do so they can aspire to be like the people here and want to acquire the same education and then have the chance to get the higher paying jobs. We have to reach out and inspire those children, especially in the elementary schools.