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## The University of Maryland School of Nursing Offers Early-Exit Option to Students to Bolster Nursing Workforce During Pandemic

April 27, 2020

*In response to COVID-19, early exit offered to select entry-into-practice students.*

**Baltimore, Md.** - In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan's request, and UMSON's assessment of students' readiness, the University of Maryland School of Nursing (UMSON) has approved an early-exit option for students who want to begin working as nursing graduates in an effort to bolster the nursing workforce. The early-exit option is available to select students in the entry-into-practice Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program and Clinical Nurse Leader (CNL) master's option who are scheduled to graduate on May 14, 2020, from the University of Maryland, Baltimore.

Hogan's public health surge plan has called for the addition of up to 6,000 hospital beds across the state, including the reopening of Laurel Hospital as well as a field hospital and alternate care site at the Baltimore Convention Center. The School of Nursing has collaborated with the chief nursing officers of major hospital systems and ascertained their need for and interest in hiring nursing graduates and designed a protocol for linking UMSON's early-exit students to these institutions, which in addition to the University of Maryland Medical System and Johns Hopkins Medicine includes MedStar Health, Holy Cross Health, and

Shady Grove Adventist. UMSON has 98 BSN and 53 CNL students who are qualified to request an early exit.

“We are very pleased to partner with key Maryland health care systems to support them in meeting their needs for nursing personnel during this incredibly critical time,” said Dean Jane Kirschling, PhD, RN, FAAN. “The UMSON students opting into our early-exit option are well prepared and fully equipped to make a major contribution through their service as nursing graduates. I salute those students eligible and willing to serve under this unique initiative. And, I applaud *all* of our students for their dedication and resiliency during this tumultuous time, whether they are persevering in continuing their educational studies under difficult circumstances or are preparing to graduate and serve our larger community.”

To be eligible for the early-exit option, students need to meet specific GPA and academic program requirements. Once interested students notify the School of their desire to participate, UMSON will provide a letter to these students that they can provide to prospective employers stating that they have met all the program requirements and have qualified for and taken an early-exit option from UMSON.

# # #

*The University of Maryland School of Nursing, founded in 1889, is one of the oldest and largest nursing schools in the nation and is ranked among the top nursing schools nationwide. Enrolling nearly 2,000 students in its baccalaureate, master's, and doctoral programs, the School develops leaders who shape the profession of nursing and impact the health care environment.*

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