

Economic Alliance of Greater Baltimore

Nov. 20, 2019

University of Maryland BioPark

I'm thrilled EAGB is hosting its meeting at UMB's BioPark, Baltimore's biggest biotech cluster, with three dozen tenant companies, early-stage to multinationals, and 1,000+ employees.

Our BioPark is emblematic of what's best in America's research parks. When you co-locate premier research universities and tech companies, their interaction creates the ecosystem we need for growth, for better research, for better trials and testing, for industry-informed training and education, for workforce development and lifelong learning.

Industry wants to be in cities rich in higher education because that's how they take advantage of what we have to offer—our students, faculty, and staff, our programming, our facilities—and not just core facilities, but libraries, labs, and event space. We value this.

We look for opportunities to host workshops, seminars, lectures, pitch competitions, that get our affiliated companies and our UMB community in the same room with one another so they can find out where needs and strengths intersect. Universities are adept at bringing people together—across industries and disciplines—and companies want to leverage that.

Academia and industry need one another. And so when we're selling greater Baltimore, when we're selling Maryland, we have to sell higher education. We have to sell the mutual benefits. For instance, Pharmaron is one of the world's fastest growing biotech companies. With its tenancy in our BioPark, it's expanding collaboration w our Center for Vaccine Development—for four decades, a global leader in global vaccine development and testing, with \$300 million in annual G&C and 100 patents.

When Paul comes up here to talk about Illumina—and why it located in Baltimore—you'll hear him say this very thing. Sure, he'll admit Maryland has advantages by its very geography—its location on the I-95 corridor, its proximity to federal labs and agencies. But Illumina came here, too, because it wanted to be next to UMB's School of Medicine. It wanted to be near our Institute for Genome Sciences, and its director Dr. Claire Fraser.

Our research capacity is a natural selling point. UMB is doing nearly \$700 million a year in grants and contracts. We've got several hundred industry-sponsored projects and trials going at any one time. Maryland's three biggest research universities alone—Hopkins, UMB, College Park—are doing \$3.5 billion in research every year. Plus, we

have the extraordinary strengths of UMBC, and Morgan, and Towson—they're a central part of this ecosystem, too.

And it's not just selling what we can do in research—it's selling the people we can put into their companies. Maryland is consistently a top 3 state in educational attainment: #2 in advanced degree holders; #3 in bachelor's degree holders; perennially at the top of public K–12 rankings. This is a ready workforce—none better in the country.

But, of course, UMB has always been about more than G&C dollars and industry alliances. Our mission is to improve the human condition and serve the public good.

We opened The Grid—our newest BioPark space—two years ago to harness this collective energy to be a force for equity and opportunity. The Grid hosts companies and student and faculty startups focused on health and social innovation. There we co-locate degree programs, the Small Business Development Center, our Carey Law School's IP & Entrepreneurship Clinic. We bring in the Smith School of Business, which has space in this park. We bring in the community. And all of us come together on ventures intended to make real and lasting change in population health and well-being, and to move the needle on issues of social justice.

Academia hasn't cornered the market on wanting to change the world—we're not the only ones who want to make a difference. By co-locating with universities, socially conscious companies can get a foothold in communities that we've been working with for decades. They can borrow on the trust we've already earned to advance and accelerate our efforts.

When we talk about the beauty of this BioPark, we talk about the integration of three sectors, not two. It's not just academia and industry. It's the community, too. It's the Biotechnical Institute, educating city workers for entry-level biotech positions. It's the Life Sciences Institute providing hands-on training for Baltimore City Community College students. It's the UMB CURE Scholars program, creating a STEM pipeline—early on, in middle school—so that we know West Baltimore students aren't ever denied access to the innovation economy we're all here to promote.

This is an exciting time in greater Baltimore. I'm glad you're at UMB today. I'm glad you're in our BioPark. And I'm glad you're advocating for us, because I truly believe there's no better place to be than right here—right now.