



MPower Day in Annapolis showcases University of Maryland Strategic Partnership initiatives for members of the legislature such as Del. Keith Haynes of Baltimore.

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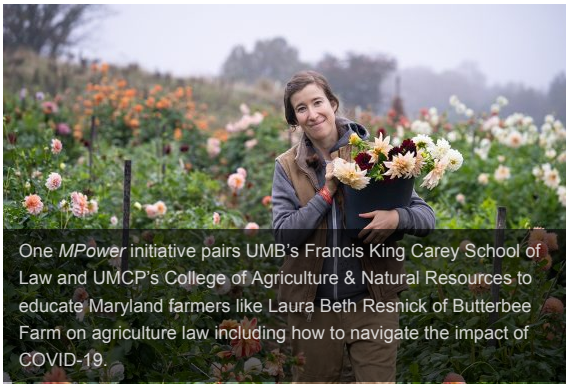
The Power of Partnership: Collaboration, Innovation, and Impact

Adrienne Arthur April 8, 2021 3 min read

The University of Maryland Strategic Partnership: *MPowering the State* (*MPower*) has fostered hundreds of collaborations that are growing Maryland's innovation economy, advancing interdisciplinary research, creating opportunities for students, and addressing the state's most critical issues while launching the combined research enterprise into the upper echelon of national rankings.

The partnership combines the extraordinary resources of the state's largest public research engines — the University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB) and the University of Maryland, College Park (UMCP) — to strengthen and serve the state of Maryland and its citizens. Created in 2012 and formalized by the University of Maryland Strategic Partnership Act of 2016, *MPower* exemplifies strength in collaboration. The partnership demonstrates what happens when you connect people, ideas, and a wealth of complementary strengths in education, research, and technology.

In January 2021, the University of Maryland achieved its highest ranking ever in the National Science Foundation's Higher Education Research and Development (HERD) survey, **placing 14th overall nationally and eighth among all public universities** in research and development spending for Fiscal Year 2019. For the first time, UMB and



One MPower initiative pairs UMB's Francis King Carey School of Law and UMCP's College of Agriculture & Natural Resources to educate Maryland farmers like Laura Beth Resnick of Butterbee Farm on agriculture law including how to navigate the impact of COVID-19.

UMCP were linked together as one research enterprise in the ranking, with combined research expenditures of \$1.1 billion.

The 2016 law paved the way for UMB and UMCP to combine research offices, aligning not only research initiatives, but also infrastructure and leadership under one vice president for research, Laurie E. Locascio, PhD,

MSc, who was appointed to the position in 2018.

“Our University of Maryland research enterprise provides the opportunity for us to engage in exciting new areas of research that combine the strengths of experts in Baltimore and College Park to take on the world’s greatest challenges,” Locascio says. “This HERD ranking reflects our status as a thriving and powerful research engine.”

More than a number, the ranking reflects Maryland’s standing as a world-class research enterprise. In turn, it attracts talented scientists and scholars to the state and draws the attention of business and industry, stimulating new partnerships, investments, and companies.

UMB and UMCP conduct advanced research jointly in a broad array of fields, including:

- Police-community relationships and expanding research and training
- Neuroscience, virtual and augmented reality, biomedical devices, and data analytics
- The opioid epidemic in Maryland and the United States

Recent cross-campus research initiatives also have responded to COVID-19 and the threat of future pandemics. The teams address the pandemic from multidisciplinary angles including medicine, engineering, pharmacy, and social and behavioral science, and they are working to improve acceptance of vaccines among minority communities, develop new rapid testing methods, and better understand the SARS-CoV-2 spike protein.



Bioengineering students from College Park team with faculty physicians from Baltimore to see the direct application of medical devices in a hospital setting.

The strategic partnership has created more than 20 academic collaborations; a successful joint tech transfer and commercialization office; and 25 programs and centers including the [Institute for Bioscience and Biotechnology Research](#), the [Maryland Blended Reality Center](#), the [Center for Brain Health and Human Performance](#), and the [Support, Advocacy, Freedom and Empowerment \(SAFE\) Center for Human Trafficking Survivors](#).

Recent achievements are summarized in the [2021 MPower brochure](#).

For more information, visit mpower.maryland.edu.

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Adrienne Arthur

Adrienne Arthur is the executive director of the University of Maryland Strategic Partnership and assistant vice provost for MPower initiatives.

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UMB's new Community Engagement Center on South Poppleton Street is nearly seven times larger than the original center that opened in 2015.

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Building a Legacy of Community Engagement

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In August 2020, the renovation of the historic 20,000-square-foot building on South Poppleton Street was completed, bringing the property back to life as the University of Maryland, Baltimore's (UMB) new Community Engagement Center (CEC).

Although the CEC — in compliance with the state of Maryland's COVID-19 precautions — has been operating virtually since the pandemic began, its continued operation demonstrates the value the CEC team brings to the community. During a recent focus group aimed at identifying the most pressing community needs, a respondent said that when they thought of the CEC, they said it was a “pillar of our community providing strength.” Another respondent said they were filled with hopefulness when they thought of the CEC.

To solidify the CEC as a safe space that will have long-term dedication to the community, the UMB Office of Philanthropy is launching a fundraising campaign to create an endowment that would sustain the center in perpetuity. Securing funds to ensure continued operations will allow the CEC to meet residents' most pressing and immediate needs while also planning long-term initiatives and partnerships with neighbors that will strengthen community development.

This campaign aims to envelop friends of the CEC at all levels. We are grateful for the donors recognized on our Welcome Way and for our “Foundation Pillars” who donated significant support to the CEC prior to opening. These donors include Amerigroup Charitable

Foundation; Pete Buzy; Marco and Debbie Chacón; the Dubin family; the France-Merrick Foundation; the Gibbons Family Foundation; Joseph R. Hardiman; the Hearst Foundation; the Linehan family; M&T Bank; Jay A. Perman, MD; the Shelter Foundation; the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development; Under Armour; Whiting-Turner; and Ellen H. Yankellow, PharmD.

Donors to the CEC endowment will be recognized as “Community Investors” and given the opportunity to name classrooms, workspaces, labs, wellness rooms, a workout studio, and spaces for family engagement for permanent legacy in the community. The family of UMB Foundation Board of Trustees chair Harry Knipp, MD, FACR, generously donated a lead gift and will be recognized in the CEC’s Healthcare Hub.

To learn more about ways you can support the CEC, visit the [Community Campus website](#) or contact Meredith Upton, director of corporate and foundation relations, at mupton@umaryland.edu.

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Kate Ostrowski, MPP, is the associate director, foundation operations and compliance, and board relations, in the Office of Philanthropy at the University of Maryland, Baltimore.

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Dolores' Story

"Dolores," a 60-year-old permanent resident and veteran of the U.S. military, emigrated from Jamaica as a child. She joined the military in 1979 when she was 19 and served for seven years, earning numerous decorations, medals, and campaign ribbons. During that time, she was sexually assaulted and then ignored when she reported it. She left the military, traumatized and depressed. In the late 1980s, Dolores was arrested on drug use charges. She took full responsibility, pleaded guilty to the charges and completed her probation without incident. The conviction was a wake-up call for her, and she turned her life around, but nonetheless ended up in deportation proceedings. Dolores would spend the next 14 years wrapped up in legal proceedings to overturn her deportation and seek citizenship.

Dolores's greatest wish was to become a citizen of the country she had so proudly served. After her second naturalization application was denied, she came to the Immigration Clinic at the University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law. The clinic has represented her for seven years, filing motions to reopen her criminal case, petitions to expose the unconstitutionality of her plea, and letters to the State's Attorney to negotiate a favorable outcome in her case, as well as engaging in law reform work in the General Assembly to change laws that complicated her claims. Recently, the clinic filed a thorough naturalization application with detailed evidence, and there is hope that Dolores is finally on the cusp of becoming a citizen.



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A transformational gift to Maryland Carey Law promises to improve the lives of immigrants in Maryland and beyond.

” *“When we come together, we find a way to make the world a little bit better.”*

This sentiment from Marco Chacón echoes the mission of the University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB), its six professional schools and interdisciplinary Graduate School, and the many programs and initiatives run by its faculty, staff, and students. Marco and his wife Debbie know this firsthand through decades of partnership with UMB.

It also is the message they wish to share about the immigrant community and is the reason they've made a transformational \$5 million gift to the University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law's Immigration Clinic, which has been fighting to meet the legal needs of immigrants for more than 20 years.

Thanks to this investment from the Chacóns, the clinic has a lasting and bright future, and in recognition of this outstanding level of support, the law school is creating the

Chacón Center for Immigrant Justice. The center will work toward a future where all Maryland families and residents are stable and secure regardless of immigration status, race or economics, and where the color



of people's skin or place of birth does not limit their opportunities to build a good life for themselves and their families. With secured funding, the center can increase the number of immigrants who obtain representation and relief, the impact of those cases, and the number of graduates it prepares to enter the workforce to continue this critical work.

"This extraordinary gift will guarantee that the voice of Maryland's immigrants will be heard and protected far into the future and allow us to focus on building a just society by training future generations of advocates," said Maryland Carey Law professor Maureen Sweeney, JD, director of the Chacón Center.

From Immigrant to Entrepreneur

The issue of immigration hits home for Marco, who came to the United States as an exchange student from Costa Rica and was embraced by a community of people and offered the opportunity to discover, understand, and experience a new way of life. He returned to the United States in the 1970s and married Debbie. The couple had two children and moved to Baltimore while Marco pursued his PhD in Nutritional Sciences from the University of Maryland, College Park.

He jokes that he entered a lab at 18 and never left, but through those decades of hard work, his unique perspective, and the support of his family and mentors, Marco became a successful biotechnology entrepreneur. In 2009, the Chacóns moved the company they founded, Paragon, to the University of Maryland [BioPark](#), and it quickly grew to become the largest company there, employing hundreds and collaborating extensively with UMB. By 2019, Paragon had become a leading viral vector development and manufacturing partner for gene therapies and was acquired by [Catalent](#), a diversified global provider of advanced delivery technologies and development solutions for drugs, biologics, and consumer health products.

While Marco's success story is extraordinary, he wants people to know that it is not unique. Immigrants from all over the world come to the United States seeking opportunities and bring diverse expertise, unique insights, and a dedication to excellence that has become the backbone of the United States. Immigrants work in the labs of the biotech industry, toil from dawn to dusk in fields and food processing plants, heal our sick, educate the next generation of thinkers, invent and investigate tools for our future, are loyal companions to our elders, and protect our children. However, there are many immigrants who still struggle to access basic rights, especially in a complex and often-unfriendly legal system.

Immigrant communities are subjected to a harsh double standard in court, often not receiving competent legal representation or the same benefits afforded to white citizens. The Maryland Carey Law clinic's student-attorneys provide compassionate and competent representation to their clients, winning asylum cases, allowing permanent residents to remain in the United States with their families, and helping noncitizens entangled in the criminal justice system avoid deportation. Clinic clients come from every continent, though in recent years an increasing number of people have been fleeing violence and instability in Central America.

In recent years, the needs and contributions of the immigrant members in our community have awakened an interest in the next generation of legal warriors. As demand for the clinic's services increased, funding remained stagnant and the future of the clinic's operations fell into jeopardy, but the Chacóns' investment has changed its course.

'Your Gift Brought Me to Tears'

Led by Sweeney and Gabriela Kahrl, JD '08, the Immigration Clinic provides more than 7,000 hours of free legal services every year through a combination of direct representation and impact litigation focusing on asylum and the intersection of criminal and immigration law, with special attention to the legally, ethically, and psychologically complex situations that straddle these disciplines. It is a highly sought-after experience for students, many of whom have gone on to work in immigration law in all its facets.



Professor Maureen Sweeney (left) and staff attorney Gabriela Kahrl lead Maryland Carey Law's Immigration Clinic, which is part of the new Chacón Center for Immigrant Justice.

"Your gift brought me to tears because it was a tremendous affirmation of the humanity, dignity, and inherent value of our clients," Kahrl said in response to the Chacóns' generosity. "You honor their struggle. You honor their strength and courage. And this affirmation of their inherent value is, in my experience, very rarely bestowed.

"I cannot tell you how many times I have been sneered at, rebuked, and mocked when fighting for my clients' dignity. I bore it because, as bad as I had it sometimes, my clients had it far, far worse, and I was determined to use the privilege I had to make a difference. Because of you, Maureen and I will be able to do more than I ever imagined or hoped for to fight for our clients, their families, and immigrants nationwide. I thank you for your faith in us, in our work, but most importantly, for the faith you show in the people we serve."

This philanthropic support will build a model of legal education and advocacy that will serve as an example for other law schools to create similar centers addressing the injustices that immigrants face around the country. It will allow the law school to create a federal appellate clinic to impact legislation and change the legal landscape in the Fourth Circuit and beyond. It will fund student trips to remote immigrant detention centers so students can help some of the most vulnerable and forgotten immigrants. It will ensure that Maryland Carey Law's immigration program attracts the best and brightest students, recruits and retains top-notch faculty and instructors, and provides an expanded experiential learning curriculum, all of which will have a transformational and lasting effect on justice for immigrants in Maryland and beyond.

"We are thrilled to support your quixotic spirit that now — armed with a louder voice — will continue to influence new generations of jurists to join the battle against the windmills of injustice and prejudice," the Chacóns wrote in a letter to the new center's leaders. "We have no doubt that your success will be a reaffirmation of the importance of immigration in the history of the republic and give credence to Woody Guthrie's hymn for the ages that 'This land was made for you and me.' "

[Learn more about the Chacón Center for Immigrant Justice and how you can support the future of immigrant justice in Maryland and beyond.](#)

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Kate Ostrowski

Kate Ostrowski, MPP, is the associate director, foundation operations and compliance, and board relations, in the Office of Philanthropy at the University of Maryland, Baltimore.

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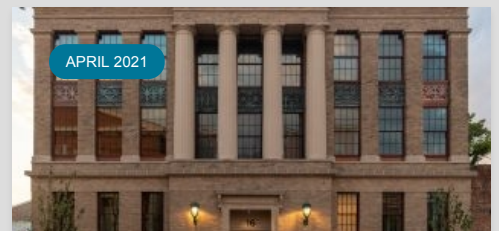
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Paul Corcoran, DDS '75 (left), and Jean Corcoran

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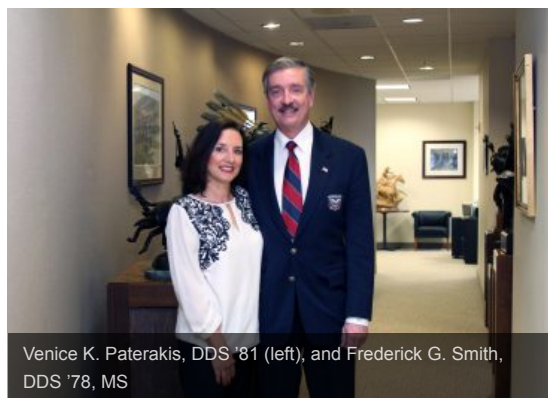
The University of Maryland School of Dentistry (UMSOD) has established its first three endowed professorships over the past five years, demonstrating a strong commitment to excellence in research and teaching.

This comes on the heels of a substantial 30 percent increase in research funding since the last fiscal year. UMSOD already ranked among the top 10 schools in National Institutes of Health funding according to the Blue Ridge Institute for Medical Research, and this increase further solidifies its position as a hub of dental research.

The inaugural endowed professorship, given in the field of oral and maxillofacial surgery, was announced in July 2020 and funded by the generosity of alumni Frederick G. Smith, DDS '78, MS, and Venice K. Paterakis, DDS '81.

Awarded to Tao L. Lowe, PhD, previously of the University of Tennessee Health Science Center, the professorship provides a joint appointment in the Fischell Department

of Bioengineering at the University of Maryland, College Park. Created to attract an outstanding translational research scientist in the field of drug delivery and tissue engineering



Venice K. Paterakis, DDS '81 (left), and Frederick G. Smith, DDS '78, MS

who has a history of working on multidisciplinary teams and a strong commitment to graduate and undergraduate education, the role will allow Lowe to lead translational research in addition to providing leadership in education, outreach, and service.



Edgar Sweren, DDS '54 (left), and Betty Sweren

Further emphasizing the school's strong alumni support, the Alumni and Friends Professorship in Orthodontics was announced in September 2020. Awarded to Jose A. Bosio, BDS, MS, clinical associate professor, division chief, and postgraduate program director, Division of Orthodontics, the fund was established under the stewardship of Edgar Sweren, DDS '54, together with other dedicated alumni donors and friends, to support an outstanding educator with national leadership and distinction in orthodontics.

In October 2020, Robert K. Ernst, PhD, was announced as the inaugural Dr. Paul and Mrs. Jean Corcoran Endowed

Professor. Created to recognize and support a well-established research team that will provide a positive economic impact on Maryland commerce, the endowment was funded through the generosity of Paul Corcoran, DDS '75, and Jean Corcoran in partnership with the Maryland E-Novation Initiative Fund. Ernst, professor and vice chair, Department of Microbial Pathogenesis, has received more than \$14 million in research funding since arriving at UMSOD in 2018 and is co-founder of the startup Pataigin LLC.

"Endowed professorships empower the school to recruit and retain outstanding faculty members as well as support in perpetuity their work as educators, scholars, researchers, and clinicians," said Mark A. Reynolds, DDS '86, PhD, MA, dean of UMSOD. "The philanthropic establishment of endowments by alumni and friends helps foster enduring academic excellence."

Formal investiture ceremonies for all three professorships will be held later in 2021.

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Joel Kabot

Joel Kabot is a writer and editor in the Office of Institutional Advancement at the University of Maryland School of Dentistry.

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Patricia Florestano, PhD, MA, is a lifelong educator committed to improving higher education in Maryland for all. She received her PhD in Public Administration and American Government from the University of Maryland, College Park (UMCP) in 1974. She taught political science at the UMCP Institute for Urban Studies from 1974-79 and later became a professor of public affairs and senior research fellow in the Schaefer Center for Public Policy at the University of Baltimore.

Outside of the classroom, she served as director of the University of Maryland Institute for Governmental Service from 1979-84, leading a team that worked to bridge the gap between education and government. In 1985, she was appointed vice chancellor of the University System of Maryland (USM).

During her doctoral work, Florestano received mentorship from Parris Glendening. When he was elected governor of Maryland in 1994, Glendening asked Florestano if she would serve as the Secretary of Higher Education. Her husband had just retired as the president of Anne Arundel Community College and she was looking

forward to retiring with him in Florida. Knowing that she could do a lot of good in the role, her husband persuaded her to take the job. Reflecting on her time as secretary, she said the legislature was full of good, hardworking people. She could talk about higher education with everyone because it was a priority for both Republicans and Democrats.

After her term as secretary, Florestano was appointed to the USM Board of Regents in 2001, where she served for 15 years. She has lent her expertise to the University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB) as a trustee of the UMB Foundation since 2015.

What are you most proud of accomplishing during your term as Maryland Secretary of Higher Education?

Since Gov. Glendening had been a college professor, he understood the needs in higher education, which allowed us to accomplish a lot of good. We built new merit-based scholarships and removed barriers for students transferring from community colleges to four-year institutions. We examined obstacles that prevented students from graduating in four years and worked to remove them. After five years as secretary, I stepped down and was added to the USM Board of Regents. The university faculty appreciated having their voice represented on the board by a former university professor, and I was able to advocate for ideas that mattered to them.



Patricia Florestano is a former Maryland Secretary of Higher Education, former vice chancellor of the University System of Maryland (USM), and served on the USM Board of Regents for 15 years.

How did you first get involved with UMB?

While on the Board of Regents, I built a relationship with then-president Dr. Jay Perman, and he asked if I would join the UMB Foundation Board of Trustees. I always thought UMB was such a wonderful campus. I loved the interdisciplinary strengths and how the variety of its mission made major contributions to Baltimore City. When the plan to merge UMB and UMCP was put forth, I argued that what UMB offers Baltimore City is crucial and can't be lost in a merger. Ultimately, they ended up with a wonderful compromise that allowed students to enroll in joint programs and experience the benefits of both campuses while preserving UMB's footprint in Baltimore City.

What are the biggest challenges facing students today?

COVID-19 has been a scene-changer. There is a lot to rethink in higher education, which doesn't change easily. We have to figure out how to offer hybrid learning environments. We have to educate our professors on online or hybrid instruction. We have to ensure that our students have virtual connections to resources like the library and faculty. We have to be prepared to figure out the economics. Ultimately, we have to figure out what our new normal will be.

What is your hope for the future of higher education?

We have to make higher education available and affordable, but we also have to recognize that not every student needs a four-year degree. Whether that means access to local trades, specialized academies, commercial training in high school, or higher education, people need access to something that will give them a valuable life.

“UMB is such an active part of Baltimore City. There are things we've been doing for years — like the Maryland Poison Center at the School of Pharmacy and the School of Dentistry's clinical services — that help so many people. I've always admired the way research and teaching are intertwined and the disciplines are brought together in clinical settings to solve problems. I don't know what Baltimore City would do without it.”

— Patricia Florestano

The UMB Foundation serves as the fiscal agent for the University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB), Maryland's only public health, law, and human services university. UMB is composed of six professional schools (dentistry, law, medicine, nursing, pharmacy, social work) and the interdisciplinary Graduate School. Its mission is to improve the human condition and serve the public good of Maryland and society at-large through education, research, clinical care, and service.

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