

**Morgan State University**

Maryland's Public Urban  
Research University

# Legislative Testimony

## FY 2018 Operating Budget

Presented to:

House Subcommittee on Education  
& Economic Development

and

Senate Subcommittee on Education,  
Business & Administration

February 2017

Dr. David Wilson, President



**A NATIONAL  
TREASURE**



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## Testimony

### Fiscal Year 2018 Operating Budget Morgan State University

David Wilson, President

February 2017

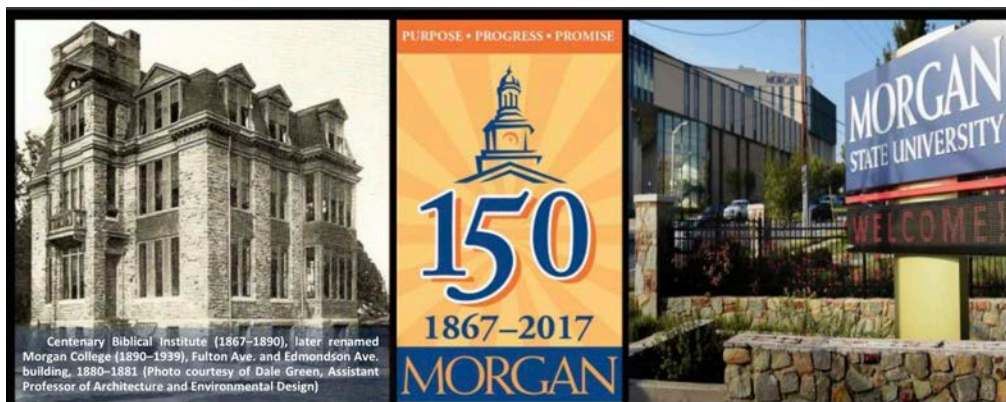


*Chair and members of the Committee, I thank you for the opportunity to testify on the Governor's fiscal year 2018 budget allowance for Morgan State University and to provide you with an update on the University since last session.*

First, I thank Governor Hogan for his support of higher education. I also extend my thanks to the members of the General Assembly, particularly this Committee, for your strong and continued support of Morgan State University. Our analyst, Ms. Sara Baker, has done an excellent job of analyzing our budget, and, as part of my testimony, I will address the comments and recommendations she has identified.

### **MORGAN AT 150: PURPOSE • PROGRESS • PROMISE**

It was African-American freedmen and former slaves who were ministers in the Methodist Episcopal Church who envisioned and planted the seeds for the founding of what is now Morgan State University. The Sharp Street Church, founded in 1802, was in the forefront of the efforts to provide schooling for slaves and former slaves. Many of those who envisioned formal training for African-Americans remain unnamed and unsung; however, after the founding of the Washington Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church (African-American), October 27–31, 1864, one day before Maryland signed the Emancipation Proclamation, at least five African-American pastors, four of whom were the founding members of the Conference – led by Rev. Benjamin Brown, pastor of Sharp Street Church – developed a vision for, and the resolve to establish, an institution devoted to the “moral and intellectual elevation” of Maryland’s African-American citizens. They successfully petitioned the Baltimore Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church (white), which had the resources and the authority, and, particularly, one of its leaders, Bishop Levi Scott (who had presided at their founding meeting) to assist them in their efforts. The result of this seminal vision and moral commitment was two years



of discussion and collaborative planning between the African-American pastors and their white friends of the Baltimore Conference. Their efforts resulted in the December 25, 1866 meeting of 13 white community leaders, under Bishop Scott's guidance, to found the Centenary Biblical Institute (so named for the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Methodism), appoint its all-white Board of Trustees and commit a budget of \$5,000 to begin their work. The Institute held its first class in the lecture hall at Sharp Street Church on April 30, 1867, and was officially incorporated on November 27, 1867.

The institution was to evolve over the years to meet the changing needs and the changing aspirations of the African-American community and the nation. Its focus was to shift and broaden from its initially narrow commitment to training men for the ministry to an expanded mission that included educating men and women and training graduates for teaching and for other professions, and early in its development it committed itself to offering an education that is equal to that offered by the finest white schools. The institution was to evolve in five major phases:

- The Vision and The Commitment (1864 – 1867)
- Centenary Biblical Institute (1867 – 1890)
- Morgan College (1890 – 1939)
- Morgan State College (1939 – 1975)
- Morgan State University (1975 – Present)

## VISION STATEMENT

By statute, Morgan State University is the state's designated public, urban university, known for its excellence in teaching, intensive research, effective public service and community engagement. Morgan prepares diverse and competitive graduates for success in a global, interdependent society.





## **MISSION STATEMENT**

Morgan State University serves the community, region, state, nation and world as an intellectual and creative resource by supporting, empowering and preparing high-quality, diverse graduates to lead the world. The University offers innovative, inclusive, and distinctive educational experiences to a broad cross section of the population in a comprehensive range of disciplines at the baccalaureate, master's, doctoral, and professional degree levels. Through collaborative pursuits, scholarly research, creative endeavors and dedicated public service, the University gives significant priority to addressing societal problems, particularly those prevalent in urban communities.

## **STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**

The University is operating under its strategic plan, focusing on enhancing student success, growing its standing as a research university, improving infrastructure and operations, increasing grants and contracts activity, expanding online programs and other courses, and establishing educational partnerships with prestigious institutions throughout the world. Our strategic priorities are in alignment with the state's goals for higher education.

Consistent with its strategic priorities, the University continues to develop its reputation as a premier institution. While we continue to experience stable enrollment, it should be noted that our undergraduate tuition is the second lowest in the state, which provides access to those students in the lower socioeconomic status group. Last fall, we experienced the highest total new student enrollment in five years. In spring 2016, we launched Morgan's *50 by 25 Campaign* as a university-wide effort to increase graduation rates to 50% by the year 2025, and we hope to improve student retention and significantly increase on-time and six-year completion rates on the road to this goal.

Similarly, faculty are aggressively involved in research activities and collaborations resulting in increased exposure and opportunities for our students and the state of Maryland. Collective efforts have resulted in Morgan-awarded sponsored grants and contracts of \$32M in FY 2016 from various federal and state agencies, including a combined total of \$1.2M in research grants for calendar year 2016 from the National Science Foundation (NSF). The funding supports a variety of cutting-edge research projects that advance the frontiers of innovation. Many of the projects funded by NSF will be led by Morgan faculty from the University's School of Computer, Mathematical and Natural Sciences, School of Engineering and School of Education and Urban Studies.



Our current relationship with the NSF results from an ongoing sponsor engagement strategy to ensure that federal agencies, including the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (including the National Institutes of Health), U.S. Department of Defense and U.S. Department of Education, are aware of the vast research capabilities of Morgan's faculty coupled with our unique mission toward producing a diverse workforce in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) disciplines.

## FISCAL STATUS

In compliance with an annual mandatory examination of its fiscal health, the University successfully underwent an independent financial statement audit, which revealed no material weaknesses, no non-compliance of debt covenants, fraud or abnormalities detracting from the issuance of an unmodified opinion. SB & Company, a certified public accounting and business advisory firm, conducted the independent audit and reported their comprehensive findings to me and to the University's Board of Regents. Copies of the audit report also were distributed to the state and federal governments, creditors and bond rating agencies. The University maintains bond ratings of A1 and A+, as ascribed by Moody's and Standard & Poor's, respectively.

## QUALITY INDICATORS: MORGAN'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO AFRICAN-AMERICAN EDUCATION

Although Morgan's contributions generally have been well-documented, it is worth reviewing some of them, because the University continues to make large contributions to state and national educational attainment.

**Statewide Rankings: Degrees Awarded to African Americans**

Bachelor's	Master's	Doctorate
1st – Architecture and Related Services	1st – Architecture and Related Services	1st – Total Doctorate
1st – Communication, Journalism and Related Programs	1st – Social Work	1st – Business, Management, Marketing and Related Support Services
1st – Engineering	2nd – Visual and Performing Arts	1st – Public Health
1st – Civil Engineering	3rd – Engineering	2nd – Engineering
1st – Electrical Engineering	4th – Total Master's	2nd – Education
1st – Industrial Engineering	4th – Public Health	
1st – Family and Consumer Sciences / Human Sciences	5th – Social Sciences	
1st – Hospitality Administration/Management		
1st – Marketing		
1st – Philosophy and Religious Studies		
2nd – Education		
2nd – Total Bachelor's		
2nd – Business, Management, Marketing and Related Support Services		
2nd – Accounting and Related Services		
2nd – Finance and Financial Management Services		

Source: IPEDS Degrees 2014–2015



### National Rankings: Degrees Awarded to African Americans

National Rankings: Degrees Awarded		
Bachelor's	Master's	Doctorate
2nd – Architecture and Related Services 4th – Engineering 6th – Communication, Journalism and Related Programs 7th – Marketing 9th – Hospitality Administration / Management 10th – Family and Consumer Sciences / Human Sciences 14th – Education 15th – Business, Management, Marketing and Related Services 15th – Philosophy and Religious Studies 18th – Finance and Financial Management Services 19th – All Disciplines Combined 22nd – Accounting and Related Services	5th – Engineering 6th – Architecture and Related Services	6th – Engineering 11th – All Disciplines Combined 21st – Business, Management, Marketing and Related Services 22nd – Education

Source: Top 100 Producers of Minority Degrees 2016 (2014–2015 data used), Diverse: Issues in Higher Education

## INVESTMENT RETURNS

### Technology Transfer

One of Morgan's strategic priorities is growing its research capacity, and the University has made tremendous progress in this area. As you will read further in this testimony, both our students and faculty are involved in thoughtful and exciting research activities that will have a long-term impact on the communities of the City of Baltimore, the State of Maryland and the nation. Morgan is appreciative of the \$1.1 million earmarked for the development of the Office of Technology Transfer (OTT) on our campus. To date, the University has had one U.S. patent issued with three more patent applications now filed and one pending. Moreover, three additional provisional patent applications have been filed by the OTT. Morgan has launched a new website to serve as the main portal for technology transfer information for faculty, staff and the external community. To further augment the communication channels, OTT has developed the framework for a new tech transfer newsletter to provide the campus community and industry with a source of information on MSU innovations, activities and programs.

To date, OTT has worked to support a number of capacity-building programs in the following areas:

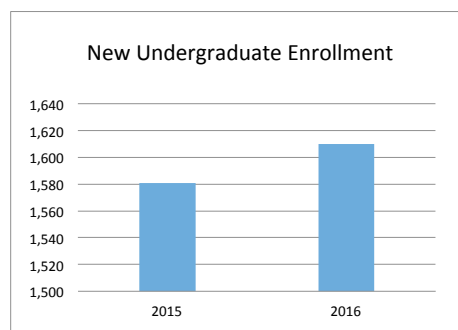


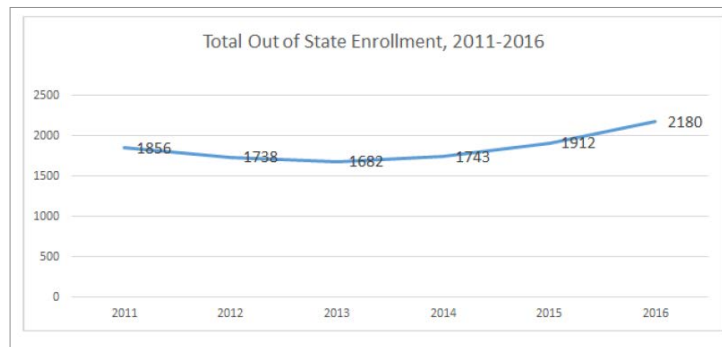
- Patuxent Environmental & Aquatic Research Laboratory (PEARL)
  - Identified and documented new MSU aquaculture innovations resulting in intellectual property (IP) disclosures
  - Supported relationships/tech transfer opportunities with new and small Maryland aquaculture businesses
  - Developed PEARL IP and technology transfer strategy (e.g., a disease-tolerant oyster spat)
  - Assisted with the development of plans for a PEARL aquaculture incubator facility to benefit the state aquaculture industry (with the Maryland Department of Natural Resources)
- Maryland Innovation Initiative (MII), a TEDCO Program
  - Worked with faculty to familiarize them with developing successful MII proposals (one proposal submitted in January 2017 and two to three planned for March 2017)
  - Helped secure MII funding and a private foundation grant (Abell Foundation) for post MII CycloBurn technology commercialization; identified a Baltimore City manufacturer and potential equity investor, and interested start-up company entrepreneurs, which could lead to manufacturing jobs for the City of Baltimore
- Innovation Works I-Gap Program
  - Developed online application forms and funding criteria for pre-MII invention and business development

Morgan remains committed to looking for ways to advance local, state and national priorities through research. The state's return on its investment in this area is developing areas of research leading to Morgan's overall research strategy of urban sustainability, innovation and resilience, and transferring our knowledge and technology for economic development to help revitalize Baltimore and make economic impacts in southern Maryland.

### Enrollment Strides

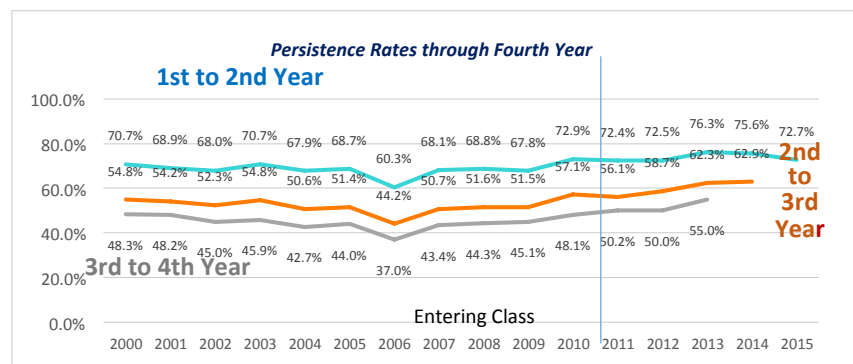
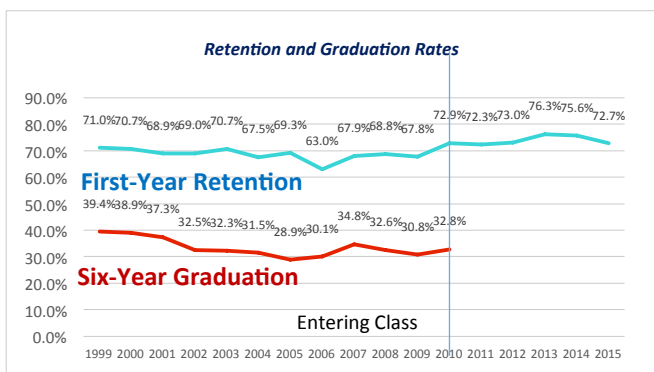
The start of the fall semester was quite impressive, with an overall enrollment of 7,689, which consisted of a 2% increase in new undergraduate students as well as a 14% increase in out-of-state enrollment since last year.





### Retention, Graduation and Persistence Rates

For the fifth consecutive year, the University's first-to-second-year retention rate has been above 70%. Between 2001 and 2009, Morgan had only one year with a retention rate greater than 69%. Beginning in 2010, Morgan's retention rates began to improve, and they have remained above 70% since. The current rate is 73%. Equally encouraging is the fact that persistence beyond the second year of study also has been increasing. It should be noted that graduation rate improvements are not instantaneous but, rather, occur over time. Based on our persistence rates through fourth year, as demonstrated on the chart below, Morgan is moving in the right direction to realize a substantial increase in graduation rates over the next several years and beyond.



To that end, the University is pleased to announce the award of a three-year, \$716,700 grant from the Lumina Foundation to support Morgan's implementation of the Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) Student Success Project, a proactive effort to implement strategies that evidence suggests can increase completion rates, while improving outcomes for historically underserved students. The project, which was designed to extend positive steps already taken by the institution, will utilize data drawn from a comprehensive student



analytic system to improve academic, financial and social supports. It also includes technical assistance and evaluation support.

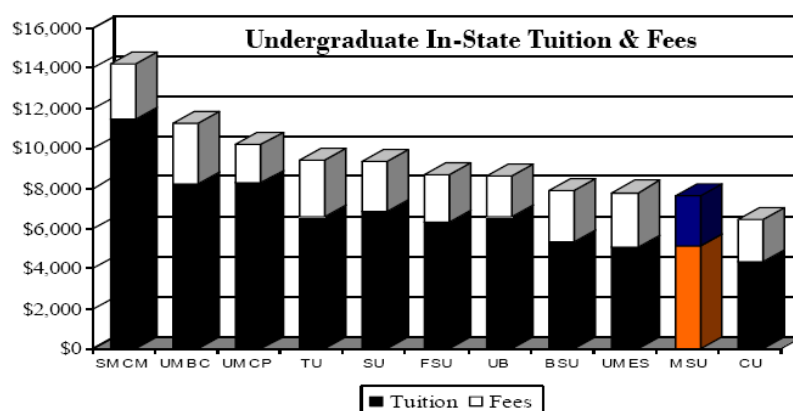
Morgan is one of three HBCUs and the only public university among those selected by the Lumina Foundation to be awarded grants totaling more than \$1.5 million.

The HBCU Student Success Project supports targeted work to close attainment gaps between various student groups on campus, specifically to increase the academic success of those who are Pell-eligible. Morgan will implement a predictive analytics solution that will identify at-risk students. Once those students have been identified, Morgan will use interventions such as proactive academic advising and experiential learning opportunities to ensure each student remains on a positive track toward success. Predictive analytics will enable the University to respond more rapidly and in a more pointed and sophisticated way when students experience difficulties. Another strategic component involves the implementation of a second-year experience program.

Ultimately, our vision for the initiative is for students to attain academic success, complete degrees on time with the requisite knowledge, skills and abilities, and be prepared to join the workforce of a global and competitive economy.

### Access and Affordability

While we continue to experience enrollment growth, it should be noted that our undergraduate tuition is the second lowest in the state to provide access to those students in the lower socioeconomic status group.



I can assure you that Morgan is maximizing and leveraging current resources received to augment important advancements to include, but not limited to:



- Increasing student financial aid to assist students in bridging the gap between the cost of education and their ability to pay
- Improving student retention and graduation rates
- Increasing degree production significantly
- Obtaining operating equipment for new facilities

In spite of the aforementioned progress, however, Morgan, as well as other higher education institutions across the nation, continue to navigate through changing demographics, declining numbers of high school graduates, and fiscal constraints. This will require many institutions to become even more innovative while, at the same time, providing quality instruction and support services to their diverse student bodies. As Maryland's public urban university, serving many students from low-income and minority backgrounds, particularly African Americans, we continue to maintain tuition rates as low as possible, while also providing significant financial aid support. With substantially less net tuition revenue available per student, Morgan is much more dependent on state support for its continued growth and development than most other Maryland institutions.

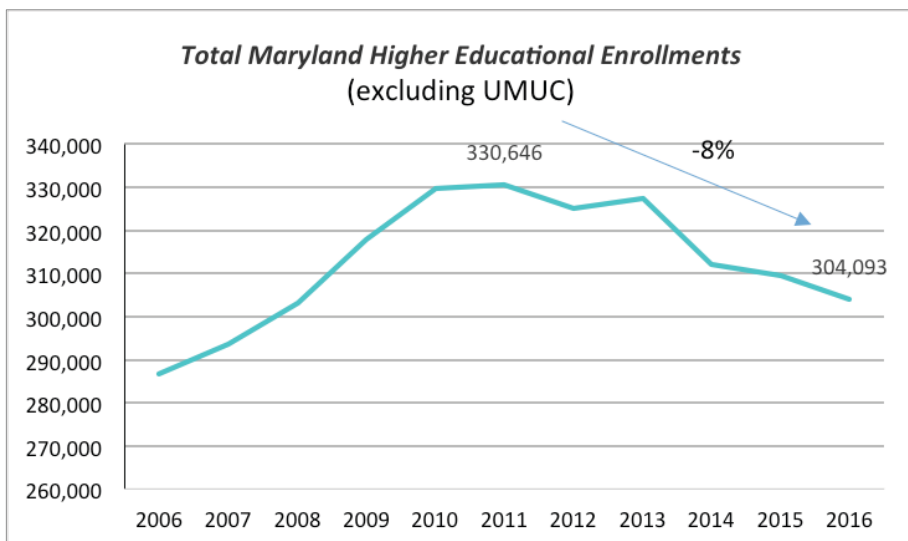
## K-12 DEMOGRAPHICS AND THE CORRELATION TO COLLEGE ENROLLMENT

Maryland higher education enrollments have declined steadily since reaching their peak in 2011. There are now about 27,000 (8%) fewer students enrolled than in 2011. Full-time undergraduates, which make up nearly half of all higher education enrollments, have declined more sharply. These students tend to be recent high school graduates.

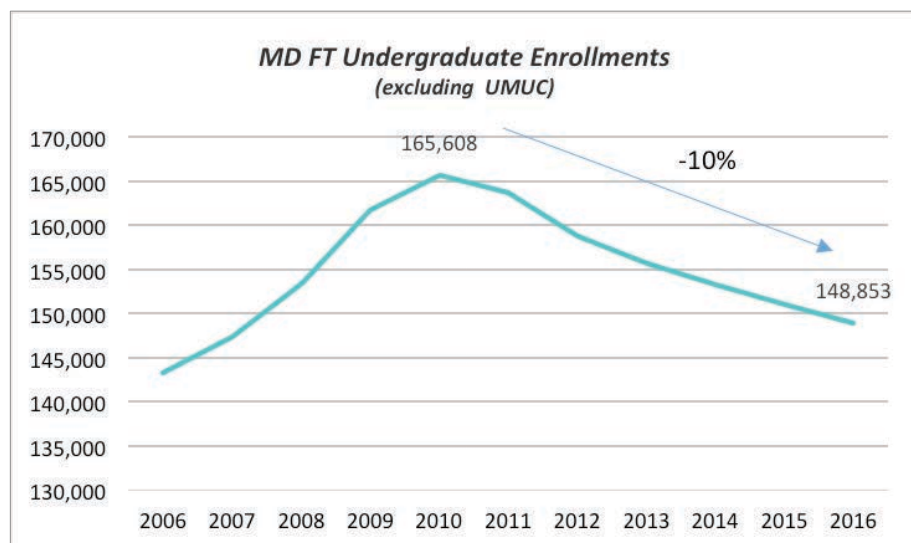
There are about 17,000 (10%) fewer full-time undergraduates enrolled

than in the peak year of 2010.

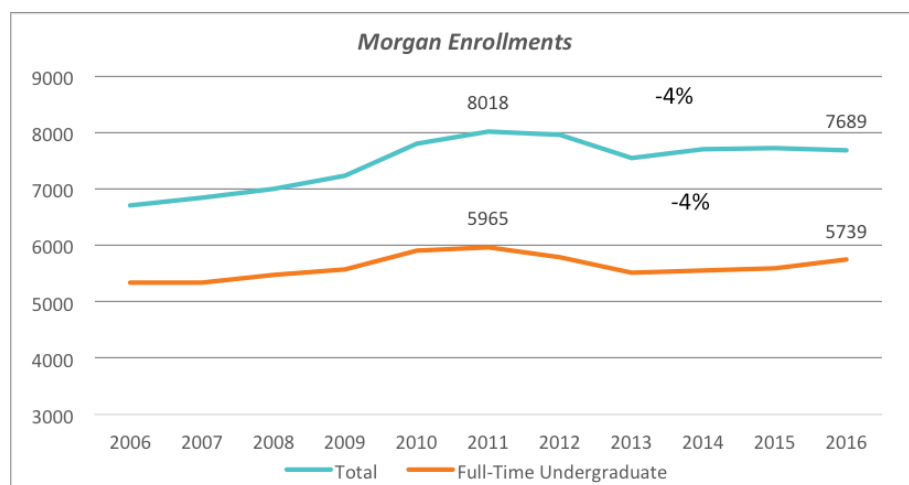
(The statewide figures exclude University of Maryland University College, UMUC, because of its heavy reliance on out-of-state enrollments and its relatively small full-time undergraduate enrollment. In recent years it has included overseas enrollments in its enrollment reporting, which has masked the downturn in the rest of Maryland higher education.)



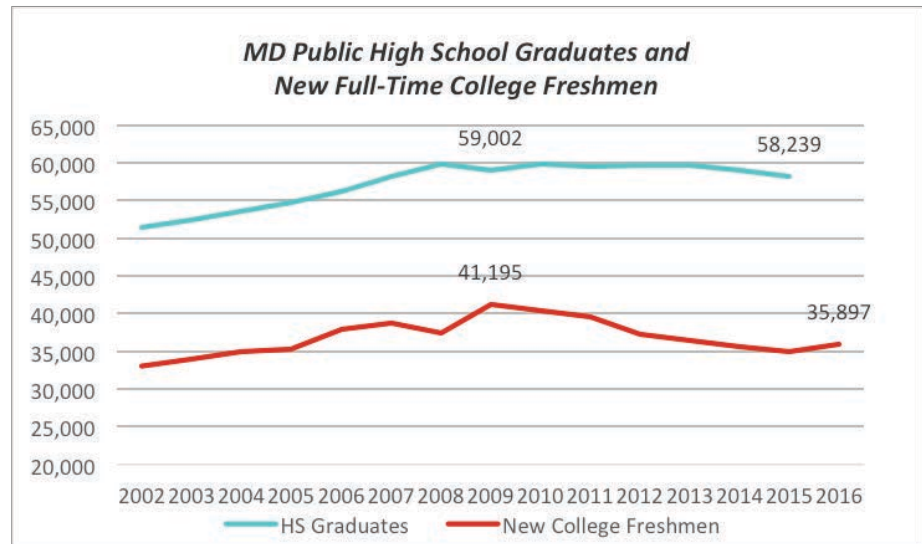




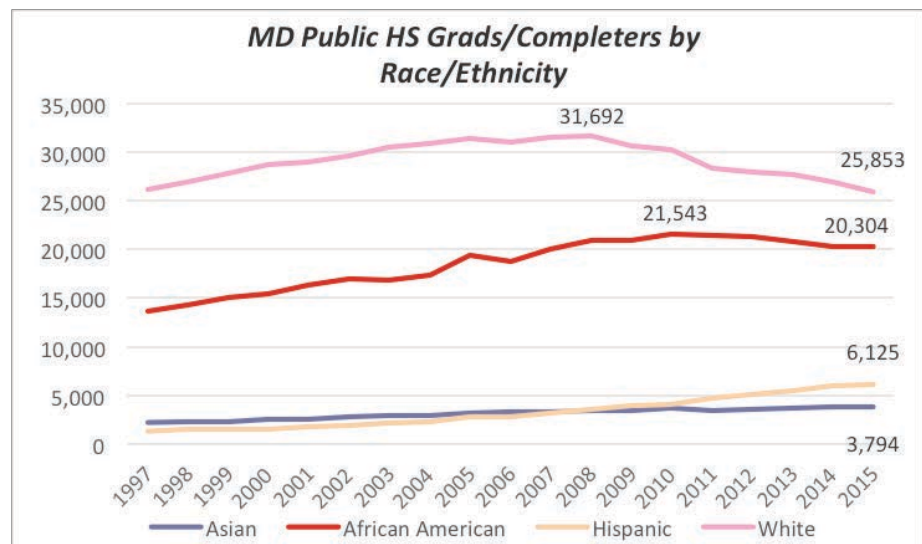
Morgan has performed better than the state as a whole during the enrollment downturn of the past several years. It has experienced only a 4% decline in total and full-time undergraduate enrollments since its peak levels and has actually experienced a modest increase in this latter category of enrollments for the past three years.



The sharp statewide downturn in full-time undergraduates was the result of a significant decline in new full-time freshmen entering Maryland higher education. This was not expected in many quarters, because there has been only a slight decline in high school graduates in recent years.

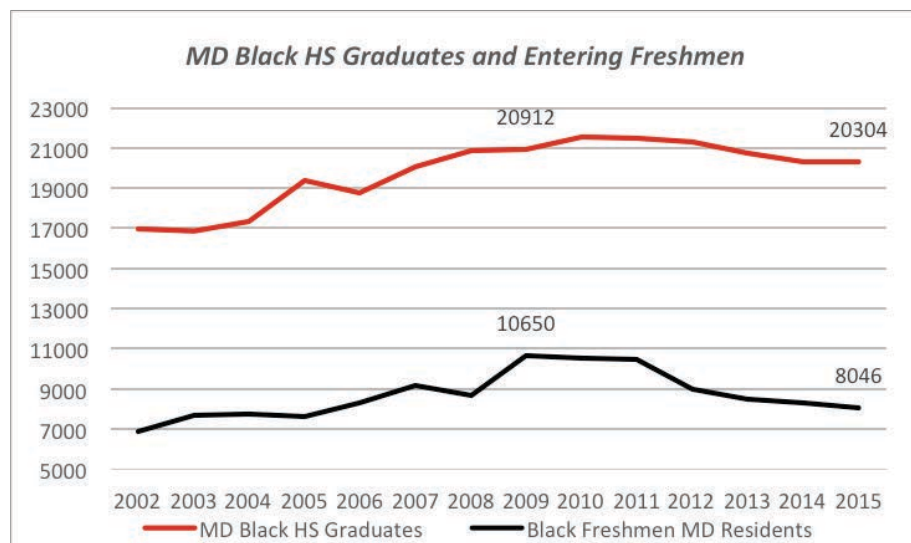


Although a surprise to many, the downturn in college freshmen was predicted by others who tracked the changing demographics of K–12 enrollments. There has been a sharp decline in white high school graduates for the past several years. The share of graduates made up of blacks and Hispanics has correspondingly increased. In general, students from these two groups are less prepared for college and face more difficulty in financing their education than the whites they are replacing. Thus, it should be no surprise that college freshmen are declining in number and that the changing demographics of the young population will continue to influence higher education enrollments.

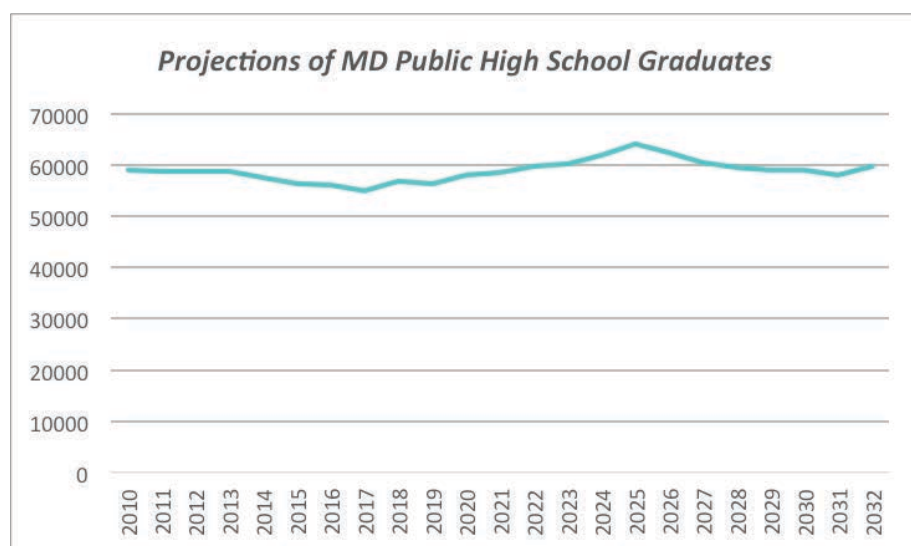


A trend that has added to Maryland's downturn in freshmen is a sharp decline in black freshmen entering Maryland higher education.

Although a downturn in white freshmen is to be expected due to the decline in white high school graduates, the number of black high school graduates has changed very little. Yet black freshmen have accounted for a large share of the total decline in college and university freshmen.



Projections by the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, which periodically calculates national and state-by-state projections of high school graduates, indicate stability for the next several years followed by a brief temporary uptick. But, within the relative stability, the significant change in the racial and ethnic composition of high school graduates will continue.



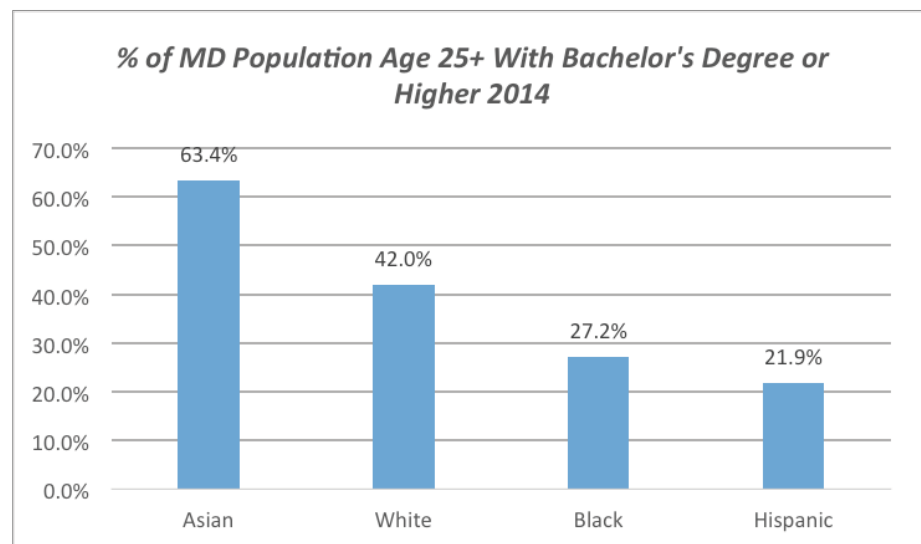


The most notable trend in recent years for the foreseeable future is a decrease in the importance of white graduates within the total. The already-large number of black graduates has stabilized, and the African-American share of graduates is and will remain stable. Hispanic graduates have increased rapidly and will continue to do so. Asian-Americans will continue to grow steadily, although much more slowly than Hispanic graduates.

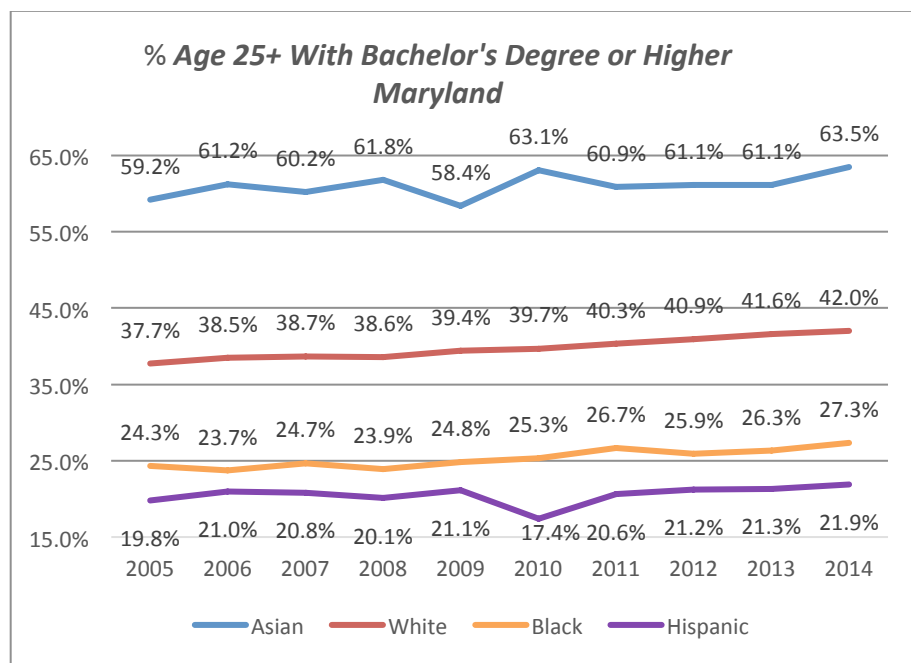
### Racial/Ethnic Composition of MD Public High School Graduates

	10 Years Ago	Now	10 Years from Now
<b>White</b>	60%	44%	40%
<b>Black</b>	31%	35%	33%
<b>Hispanic</b>	3%	10%	21%
<b>Asian</b>	5%	6%	8%

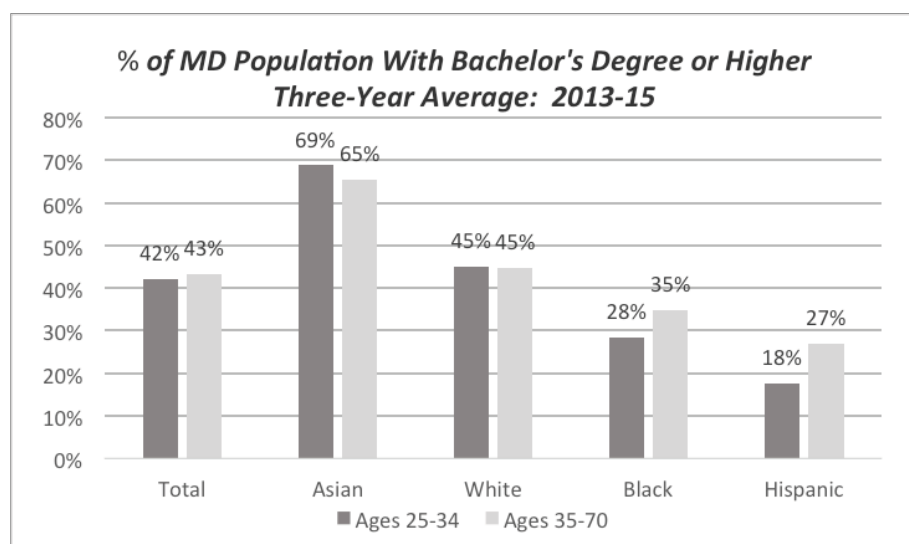
Maryland is one of the leading states nationally in the percentage of its general population that is African-American: 30%. This, and the fact that Hispanics are growing rapidly in number, make it particularly important for Maryland to close the degree attainment gap between whites and both of these minority groups. However, the degree attainment gaps are significant and show no signs of narrowing. Maryland's economy has made the transition from an industrial economy to an economy based on information and professional services. Residents lacking the requisite education will have difficulty participating in an economy requiring relatively high levels of education.







The outlook for narrowing the educational attainment gap among current residents in the near term is not good. In both the black and Hispanic populations, unlike the case for whites and Asian-Americans, the younger segments of the population actually have considerably lower rates of degree attainment than the older population. Yet it is the younger segments of these groups that are growing. Without a reversal of this pattern, the overall educational attainment of blacks and Hispanics will not improve.





## RETURN ON INVESTMENT (ROI): IN THE SPOTLIGHT

### ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AND STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Morgan provides rigorous academic curricula and challenging co-curricula opportunities to promote and facilitate the development of leadership qualities in its student body. Through collaborative academic partnerships that advance knowledge and creativity, our students continue to stand amongst the best and the brightest in the state and nation.

### MSU Seniors Take Top Spots in National STEM Competition

Morgan State University students Nishone Thompson and Sarai Nwagbaraocha were invited to attend and compete in the annual Emory University-Laney Graduate School STEM Research and Career Symposium held in Atlanta, Georgia, in September 2016. Thompson and Nwagbaraocha placed first and third, respectively, in the competition's undergraduate poster session category. An estimated 150 students from across the U.S. participated in the event.



*MSU senior Biology major Nishone Thompson*



*MSU senior Electrical Engineering major Sarai Nwagbaraocha*

Convened and organized by the Laney Graduate School, the symposium brings undergraduates, graduate students and faculty advisors to Emory for several days of presentations, networking, mentoring and recruitment. In addition, participating students were given an opportunity to present their research in a wide variety of scientific categories through oral and poster presentations.

Thompson, a senior Biology major and a member of The Aslan Research Group, presented information about the Metal-Assisted and Microwave-Accelerated Decrystallization (MAMAD) technique, which was developed by Kadir Aslan, Ph.D. of the School of Computer, Mathematical and Natural Sciences. The MAMAD technique, which could one day be used to assist gout sufferers, is used to break down the crystals that are deposited in the joints. Although treatment for gout now exists, there are known side effects, and the current care typically does not remove the crystals present in the joints. Thompson is working within a large group of students to change that reality. Morgan filed for a utility patent on the MAMAD technique in 2016.

Nwagbaraocha, a senior Electrical Engineering major, presented some interesting information on the sentiment analysis of tweets via the social media platform Twitter. Her research analyzed a collective of tweets, specifically those used to detect a water-based crisis, such as the Flint water crisis. The poster included preliminary results on the tracking of such tweets and what potentially could be extracted from the information collected.

### **ASCEND Scholars**

Twenty-eight MSU ASCEND Center for Biomedical Research Scholars attended the 2016 Annual Biomedical Research Conference for Minority Students (ABRCMS) held November 9–12, 2016 in Tampa, Florida. More than 1,300 students participated in poster and oral presentations.

ASCEND Scholars Oluwafunmilayo Ayeni (Psychology), Kelly Boham (Biology), Jada Boyd (Physical Education), Markea Carter (Psychology), Shirley Green (Psychology), and Aliyah Tolliver (Psychology) presented research during the poster sessions, and Deshawn Collington (Psychology) was invited to present her research as an oral presentation. Collington won an award for her research on sexual assault. The project was done in collaboration with the MSU Office of Diversity and ASCEND Scholars Markea Carter and Aliyah Tolliver. Collington's faculty mentor is Dr. Jocelyn Turner-Musa, and her near-peer mentor is Ebele Oranubu.



Scholars participated in professional development workshops, networking opportunities, scientific seminars and inspirational plenary presentations from the leaders in biomedical research. The conference also introduced scholars to a number of graduate schools and internship opportunities.

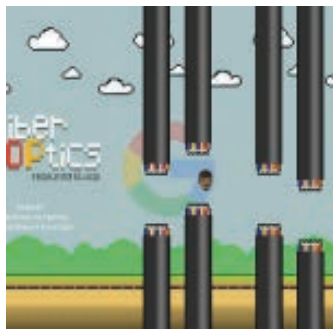


### **Morgan Science Students Shine at Research Symposium**

While Homecoming events were getting into full swing on their campus, six students from Morgan State University's School of Computer, Mathematical and Natural Sciences (SCMNS) were outcompeting their peers for first or second place honors at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County's 19th Undergraduate Research Symposium in the Chemical and Biological Sciences. A total of 14 Morgan SCMNS undergraduates joined 268 other students from a variety of institutions across the region who participated in the event this past October.



Sponsored by the National Institute of General Medical Sciences of the National Institutes of Health (NIGMS/NIH), the symposium featured undergraduate research in all areas of chemistry, biology and biochemistry. MSU biology majors Blessing Akobundu, Benjamin Frey and Dominique Munson and chemistry major Jahnn Drigo were the first place honorees, and biology majors Afua Adusei and Joshua Ross earned awards for second place.



### **Google DC Hackathon**

When it comes to competing in hackathons, Morgan State students are no strangers to experiencing success. Recently, a team of undergraduates from Morgan's Department of Computer Science took first place honors at the *Google DC Hackathon 2016*, an annual competition held at the tech company's Washington, D.C., office. This was the first time that Morgan students participated in the event. Approximately 45 of the 150 competitors in attendance represented Morgan.



*Morgan's winning team at the Google DC Hackathon: freshmen Joshua Olumese and Chauncey Rogers (computer science) sophomore Trevon Wiggs (computer science) and junior Kurt Kennedy (physics)*

Guided and coached by Ujjwal Das Gupta, a Google engineer-in-residence at Morgan, the team competed in a 24-hour challenge to create a software product from scratch. To win the competition, the Morgan team created a game named Fiber HOptics, which was based on an engaging and interesting approach to fundraising for campus network improvements. A second Morgan team, also from the Department of Computer Science, received an honorable mention for their submission.

In a separate hackathon competition held in Columbus, Ohio, at J.P. Morgan's annual Code for Good event, Morgan senior Michael Shiferaw (electrical engineering) was a member of a four-person team that took top honors for their innovative, ready-to-publish app tool.





Code for Good brought in more than 50 engineering students from universities nationwide, breaking them up randomly into approximately 15 teams. Shiferaw was the only student from Morgan in attendance. Each team was then assigned to one of three non-governmental organizations (NGOs) at the event — Susan G. Komen, Feeding America, and Choices, a youth educational program — and then was given 24 hours to create a technological solution for the organizations, after hearing presentations on their challenges.

Shiferaw's team took first place in the competition for not only creating an impressive app solution for Feeding America but also having enough time to create a second app for Susan G. Komen. To accomplish this feat, Shiferaw introduced his team to a key cross-platform app development tool that was created by students at Morgan State University. It turned out to be a difference-maker.

### **\$2-Million Grant from UNCF to Improve Job Outcomes of Graduates**

After a six-month planning phase, Morgan State University was selected for a five-year, \$2-million grant from UNCF (United Negro College Fund) for the implementation of the UNCF® Career Pathways Initiative (CPI), a transformative effort to design and implement programs to improve employment outcomes for graduates. Morgan is one of 24 colleges and universities awarded grants totaling \$35.3 million, and the university will work collaboratively in a cluster with Norfolk State University and Tennessee State University to improve graduates' career outcomes.



Made possible through a grant from Lilly Endowment Inc., the UNCF® Career Pathways Initiative is a unique pilot program for select historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) and predominantly black institutions (PBIs) that is helping them enhance career readiness for their 54,000 enrolled students. Many of these students will be the first in their families to earn college degrees. The majority of students are from low-to-moderate-income families and must receive federal financial aid to pursue their undergraduate studies.

Morgan submitted a proposal that reflects a commitment to strengthening career advising and mentoring, enhancing curricula and supporting integrated co-curricular engagement. As part of CPI, the selected institutions will develop a range of academic programs,



student internships, industry partnerships, specialty certifications and faculty development as they forge a new model for career readiness.

Morgan's vision for the initiative is for students to attain academic success, complete degrees on time and be prepared to qualify for highly sought-after career opportunities, earning salaries commensurate with their knowledge, skills and abilities. Morgan aspires to enhance student success outcomes while expanding students' access to quality career guidance, connecting growing numbers of students to experiential/career opportunities, managing the University's workforce/community relationships, tracking its students involved in experiential learning, measuring career-related learning outcomes in enhanced curriculum and being informed by data on student outcomes.

The University will work in partnership with Norfolk State University and Tennessee State University on certain components of the grant program, which will focus on a joint-project-based learning activity for students, a faculty learning community activity, internship exchanges among the institutions and linking of students in a system of four employer clusters, among other possibilities.

### **Actuarial Diversity Scholarships**



*Morgan students Rodriguez Djikeuchi, Sika Dzidzonu and Turayo Tijani, all seniors majoring in actuarial science*

Three Morgan State University students were among 48 undergraduates from colleges across the country awarded a 2016 Actuarial Diversity Scholarship by The Actuarial Foundation, a 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to advancing the actuarial profession's contribution to society. The students were recognized for their academic achievements as full-time undergraduate students pursuing a degree that may lead to a career in the actuarial profession.

The Actuarial Foundation awards the annual scholarship to select individuals as part of an ongoing effort to promote cultural diversity through its recognition of outstanding African-American, Hispanic and Native North American students. The Actuarial Diversity Scholarship was formed in 1977 as part of a joint initiative of the Casualty Actuarial Society and the Society of Actuaries (SOA). The scholarship, which has opened the door to the actuarial profession for hundreds of minority students, was transferred to The Actuarial Foundation in 2008, to further expand and continue the pool of diverse, high-quality actuarial candidates.



Morgan's Actuarial Science Program is the only formalized program of its type in Maryland that is approved by Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC). It uniquely incorporates the disciplines of mathematics, finance, accounting and economics into a comprehensive program that fully equips graduates for the workforce. The curricula for all of its degree programs include courses approved by the SOA.

## **RESEARCH**

Beyond educating its students, Morgan is a research university. As is the case at other research campuses, Morgan's faculty are expected to engage in both research and scholarship. At Morgan, however, a significant amount of faculty research is devoted to issues of importance to Baltimore and other urban areas. This expertise, in turn, translates into a wide variety of programs of service to the local community that only Morgan can provide.

### **NASA Recognizes Morgan Atmospheric Scientist**

We congratulate one of our assistant research scientists, Melanie Follette-Cook, Ph.D., for receiving the NASA Outstanding Performance Award for Technical Support. Dr. Follette-Cook, is one of two dozen Morgan State atmospheric research scientists working at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center under the Goddard Earth Science Technology and Research (GESTAR) cooperative agreement. She was recognized at the *2016 Atmospheres Annual Awards*, an event honoring members of NASA's Earth Science Directorate's Atmospheres Division.

Dr. Follette-Cook received the award for her exceptional scientific performance on the DISCOVER-AQ field campaign, an initiative utilizing targeted airborne and ground-based observations to improve the ability of scientists to understand the effect that impact conditions on the ground may have on air quality and post-mission analysis and modeling. Dr. Follette-Cook's work involved running and analyzing computer models to determine the level of detail needed in satellite data to allow accurate understanding of chemicals and chemical processes in the air. She is the fifth researcher at Morgan to win an award from the Atmospheres Division since the GESTAR program began in 2011.

Scientists and staff at GESTAR, in collaboration with NASA and other investigators, conceive and develop new, space-based missions; provide mission requirements; conduct research that explains the behavior of Earth and other planetary systems; and, create engagement media that tell NASA's story of exploration and discovery on Earth and beyond.



### **Morgan Receives National Science Foundation Grant for Early STEM Engagement Research**

The University was awarded a \$140,598 research award from the National Science Foundation (NSF) for the study “Early STEM Engagement for Minority Males through a Network of Minority Serving Institutions.” This two-year project is led by J. Kemi Ladeji-Osias, Ph.D., associate professor in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering in the Clarence M. Mitchell Jr. School of Engineering at Morgan. It will expand work now underway by a regional partnership of four Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) that are collaborating to improve science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) outcomes for middle school, minority, male students. In addition to Morgan’s efforts in Baltimore, the HBCU collaborators on this project include North Carolina A&T University in Greensboro, North Carolina; Jackson State University in Jackson, Mississippi; and Kentucky State University in Frankfort, Kentucky. Additional partners include SRI International, the National CARES Mentoring Network and the Verizon Foundation.

*Dr. J. Kemi Ladeji-Osias, associate professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering, with students in Morgan’s Middle Grades Makerspace*



This grant comes as part of a new STEM-focused initiative – NSF INCLUDES (Inclusion across the Nation of Communities of Learners of Underrepresented Discoverers in Engineering and Science) – that has awarded nearly \$14 million for 37 projects nationwide. The highly competitive NSF INCLUDES program was introduced as a comprehensive initiative to enhance U.S. leadership in science and engineering by broadening participation in STEM-related fields. It employs a social innovation approach to increase access to careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics for women, minorities and other individuals from groups that have traditionally been underrepresented and underserved in the STEM enterprise. The initial award recipients were carefully selected for their potential to deliver prototypes for bold, new models that seek to broaden participation in STEM.





Using collective impact-style approaches, Morgan's project goals are twofold: (1) to broaden the participation of underrepresented minority males in science and engineering through educational experiences that prepare them for careers in STEM fields and (2) to create a Network Improvement Community focused on STEM achievement in minority males. Program elements include high-quality instruction in STEM content, mentoring and professional development. The project will expand to include eight additional partners (six HBCUs and two Hispanic-Serving Institutions) and schools and districts in communities local to their campuses. This builds on a two-year award (2015–2017), the Verizon Innovative Learning for Minority Males, directed by Morgan State University, which has funded a Middle Grades Makerspace in Morgan's School of Engineering and has provided opportunities for middle school students in Baltimore City to develop mobile apps, build and print three-dimensional designs and pursue technology entrepreneurship.

The goal of these and other initiatives is to encourage collaborative research approaches to address challenges of urban, regional and national interest; to enhance outreach activities and engage the community in activities relative to economic, cultural, health and educational development; and to increase productivity at the institution by engaging schools/college in more interdisciplinary research.

## **MAINTAINING FORWARD MOMENTUM**

**The No. 1 priority at Morgan State University is student success.** This relates to admitting, retaining and graduating a greater number of students. We are confident that we can and will increase our retention and graduation rates over time. It will only be through targeted investment and development of institutions like Morgan that the education gap will be closed, through the admission and graduation of those who may be considered average students by mainstream institutions' admission standards but who possess the potential to excel in college and beyond. Otherwise, the gap will widen even further, and significant workforce shortages will soon occur in the state.

Although we have reallocated resources in support of initiatives to diversify our funding, by increasing grants and contracts activity, expanding online programs and other courses, and establishing educational partnerships with other prestigious institutions across the nation and around the world, **strong state support is vital for the continued growth of Morgan State University.**



For FY 2018, our allowance for general funds increased by only \$2.3M, primarily for funding earmarked for technology transfer and tuition subsidy (buy down from 5% to 2%). However, our critical and urgent needs continue to exceed the level of support appropriated. For example, our deferred maintenance is approximately \$75M and growing. Our new Behavioral and Social Sciences Center will open soon, requiring an additional \$1M of recurring operational costs. Further, an additional \$2.5M will be needed to equip the facility once it comes on line in FY 2018.

Regarding our capital budget, the new Student Services Building remains an important priority for the University. A total of \$15M was requested in FY 2018 to provide for additional design (\$1.1M), the first phase of construction funding (\$12.6M) and other miscellaneous costs. The Governor's recommendation of \$8.3M is insufficient to keep the project on schedule based on projected cash flow, and, thus, the project will be delayed. Consequently, the period of time student service functions will have to remain in the old, dilapidated Montebello Complex will be extended, which will result in an overall increase in the cost of the project.

### **CLOSING**

I cannot emphasize enough how much more important State support is today than ever before, in consideration of the increasingly competitive environment within higher education. On one hand, competition for students is much higher, while, on the other hand, those students who are admitted face even greater financial need. At the same time, minority students, particularly African Americans, are experiencing unprecedented challenges with beginning and continuing college. The value added to the state's economy for many of our graduates is significant, and Morgan's increasing productivity is essential to moving the percentage of the state's population that attains a college degree toward the state's goal of 55% by 2025.

Morgan will continue ***growing the future*** and ***leading the world*** by (1) educating citizens from diverse academic and socioeconomic backgrounds; (2) carrying out research – giving priority to that which is applicable to the problems of the region and its residents; and (3) providing cultural opportunities for the region and offering programs of service to the community and the general public.

Thank you, again, and, on behalf of Morgan State University, I request your support of the Governor's recommendations for FY 2018 and for the additional priorities we outlined above. I will respond to the issues presented by the analyst and will be happy to respond to any additional questions you may have.



## Response to Issues & Recommended Actions

### ISSUES

**Issue#1 (Page 15):** *The President should comment if MSU has undertaken efforts to identify administrative and academic efficiencies and, if so, what actions have or will be taken to not only achieve cost savings but reduce the cost of a degree.*

**Response:** On the academic side, efficiencies taken thus date include but are not limited to: cancelling low enrollment courses; combining course sections for efficiency; reducing the time to degree through course redesign and innovative pedagogy for curriculum efficiency; increasing the use of graduate teaching assistants working with tenured/tenure track faculty to reduce contractual faculty cost; and the addition of two state-of-the-art buildings – one new (existing) and one new (coming online fall 2017) – with advanced technology that will accommodate larger course enrollments. Having larger course sections may further reduce the need to hire additional contractual faculty.

Consistent with the academic operating efficiencies, similar efforts are underway to review all administrative departments and the cost structure for those units. While the University is focusing on new revenue opportunities, such as targeted enrollment strategies, new on-line revenue streams and others, cost containment and developing initiatives for cost savings remain high priorities. Today, the University is working with several partners to explore savings opportunities. During 2016, the grant administration process was re-engineered which will result in future operational efficiencies. The University's physical plant operation is undergoing an extensive review to identify savings in operations, energy management and staffing efficiencies. Recently, we formed a cost reduction task force. This task force is staffed with representatives from key administrative departments across the University. The purpose of this task force is to examine ways to operate more efficiently and find ways to perform the same services with less resources. Last, University vice presidents were asked to conduct a deep dive into their divisions to identify operating savings. This process is underway and might result in additional specific savings. As of now, the actual savings are yet to be determined. However, Morgan is committed to reducing cost and reallocating resources to fund important strategic priorities.

The University recognizes the very competitive and complex environment facing the higher education industry. Higher education has many challenges that affect not only Morgan but all institutions of higher



learning. To this end, financial stability is paramount! Morgan is committed to long-term financial stability. As such, a new initiative focusing on long-term financial planning has been implemented. The above-mentioned initiatives coupled with financial planning efforts will assist Morgan in preserving the precious but inadequate resources it has and will provide support in fostering an environment of cost consciousness and operating efficiencies for the future.

***Issue#2 (Page 15): The President should comment on why the number of filled positions only increased by 3.0 FTEs when MSU was provided with the funds to hire an additional 30.0 instructional faculty.***

***Response:*** The University is very appreciative of the \$2.2 million received in FY 2013 to convert contractual full-time faculty positions to full-time tenured/tenure track positions. This funding enabled the University to hire 30 full-time tenured/tenure track faculty in the fall of 2014. In December 2013, the University reduced 20 full-time contractual faculty positions upon the receipt of the enhancement funding. In the ensuing years, we have had faculty leave the University, and we are continuing to fill the vacant full-time tenured/tenure track faculty positions. Let us be clear that the 30 full-time faculty conversions were not new positions.

***Issue#3 (Page 16): The President should comment on the institution's priorities in filling positions and in particular, the personnel decline associated with operations and maintenance of plant between fiscal 2010 and 2016 despite the opening of new facilities.***

***Response:*** Although the University would like to set aside additional funding to maintain our plant, unfortunately, we simply do not have the funds to do so. For each new building, we have to purchase an additional \$3M in operating equipment. As a result, the University began outsourcing the housekeeping functions at Morgan. Hence, the reduction in personnel.

***Issue#4 (Page 19): The President should comment on why the additional funds provided in fiscal 2017 to increase expenditures on need-based aid were not used for its intended purpose and why spending on need-based aid and scholarships does not increase in fiscal 2018, despite an increase in tuition and continued enrollment growth.***

***Response:*** The University respectfully disagrees. The referenced funds were indeed used for their intended purpose. In fiscal year 2017, the legislators appropriated an additional \$1,443,334 for need-based financial aid. At the beginning of fiscal year 2017, the full amount was allocated to need-based students, \$1.4M to the institutional need-based financial aid budget and \$43,334 to the athletic department budget for need-based athletes. Since that time, the University allocated an additional \$300K to the need-based budget for the spring 2017 semester to assist



approximately 200 additional students who could not make financial arrangements to stay in school. With the added \$300K, the total additional need-based aid allocated to Morgan students is \$1,743,334 over the fiscal year 2016 allocation.

**Issue#5 (Page 23): The President should comment on efforts to educate and guide students in making financial decisions regarding how to pay for college.**

**Response:** The Office of Financial Aid works in concert with the Office of Undergraduate Admission and Recruitment during their outreach and University tours to promote and educate prospective students on how to pay for college. We also educate and guide students on ways to pay for college by implementing and participating in numerous activities both on and off campus, including participating in financial aid and FAFSA nights at high schools, churches and other venues. We also have several campaigns to promote completing the FAFSA, both on campus and through several mailing campaigns. We advertise outside scholarships and grant opportunities through our annual Scholarship Fair along with sharing a wide variety of information on our Facebook and Twitter social media accounts. We also partner with MHEC and DC Tuition Assistance Program to promote financial aid and how to pay for college.

For continuing students, we also hold workshops and host a Financial Aid Awareness Week dedicated to informing and educating students about financial aid and how to pay for college. Attached is a sample flyer of Financial Aid Awareness Week activities. One activity that takes place as part of Financial Aid Awareness Week is titled "Know Your Money, Know Your Debt." This symposium educates students on basic financial literacy, with an emphasis on budgeting, credit and loan repayment. The Office also partners with the Office of Student Success and Retention on its financial literacy program.

In addition, all students are required to complete Entrance Counseling to receive a disbursement on a Federal Direct Stafford Loan. Morgan's Financial Aid Office found the online portal provided by the U. S. Department of Education to be insufficient in expressing the effects of loan borrowing and repayment for our student population. Therefore, in fall 2014, the Office created a mandatory in-person session that students are required to attend in lieu of the online portal. The in-person Entrance Counseling Program goes over various topics, including definitions of the loans, risks of over-borrowing, loan repayment, how to save while in school and the risks of being delinquent or being in default on a student loan.







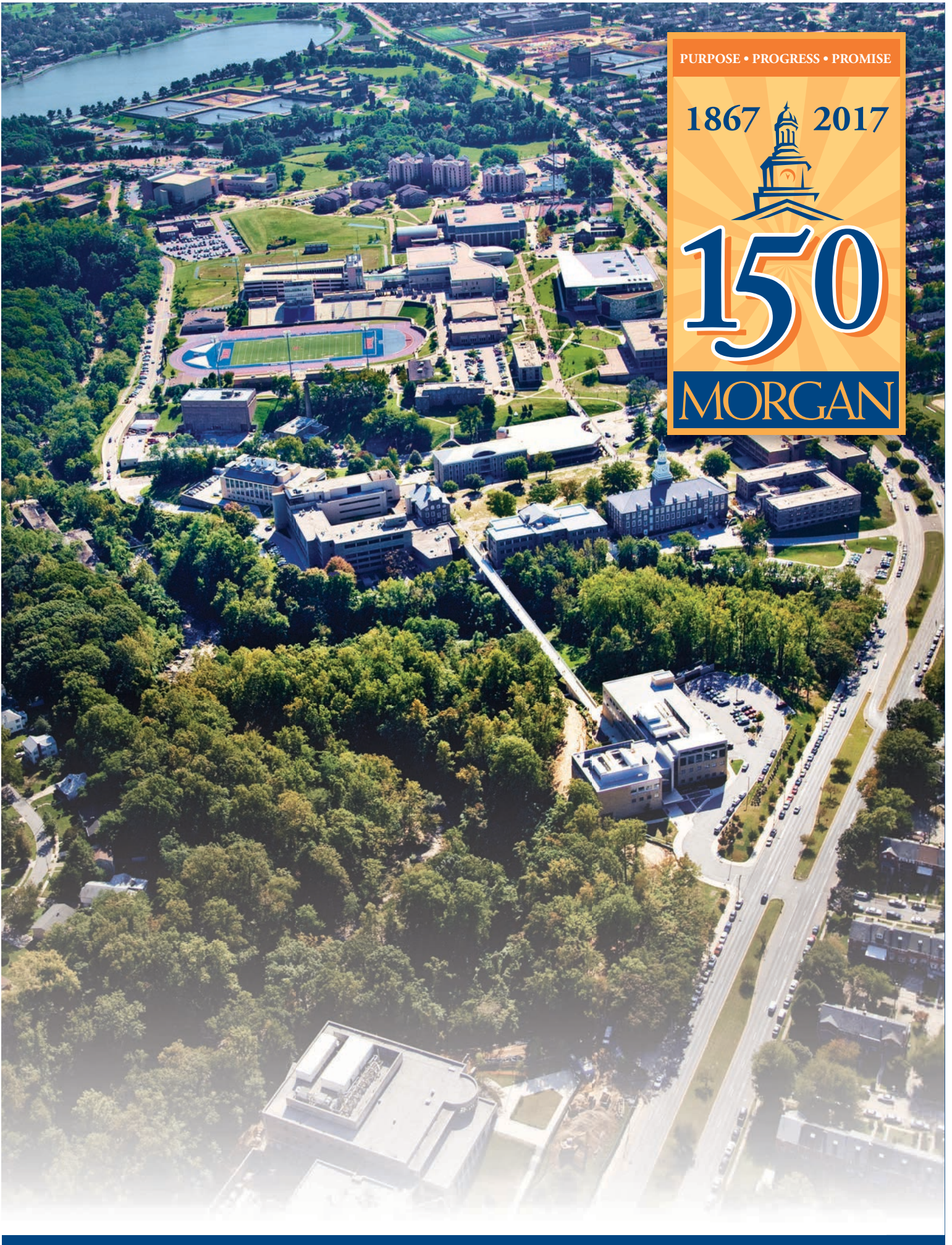
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*Office of the President*

*1700 E. Cold Spring Lane • 400 Truth Hall • Baltimore, MD 21251  
(443) 885-3200 • Fax (443) 885-8296*