

October 13, 2010



The Honorable Martin O'Malley
Governor of the State of Maryland
Executive Offices
State House
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Governor O'Malley,

Board of Visitors
Towson University
8000 York Road
Towson, MD 21252-0001

At the close of my third year as chair of the Towson University Board of Visitors, I take pride in reporting that FY10 was a year of significant accomplishments for Maryland's Metropolitan University. I am particularly pleased to point out that we moved forward in many areas despite an economic environment that continues to challenge our campus and state.

Mr. Dennis F. Rasmussen, *Chair*
Mr. Gregory A. Devou, *Vice Chair*
Mr. Frank P. Bramble, *Sr.*
Ms. Phyllis Brotman, *Emeritus*
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Ms. Myrna E. Cardin '65
Mr. P. Douglas Dollenberg
Ms. Barbara Dreyer '76
Ms. Kim Fabian '88
Alumni Association Representative
Mr. John B. Ferber '96
Ms. Susan J. Ganz
Mr. Gary T. Gill '74
Mr. Jonathan Graf
Student Representative

First among the university's FY10 achievements is the fulfillment of the *Towson 2010* strategic plan and the launch of *Towson University 2016*, which will culminate in the year we observe our 150th anniversary of service to Maryland and its citizens.

President Robert L. Caret has pointed out that its themes of Academic Achievement; Student Experience, Engagement and Success; Partnerships Philosophy; Resources for Success; and Telling and Selling Our Story represent the commitment of faculty, staff, students, the Board of Visitors and many other on- and off-campus stakeholders to the university's diligent pursuit of excellence.

Dr. Nancy Grasmick '61
Mr. Edwin Hale, *Sr.*
Ms. Ruth R. Marder
Mr. Dennis B. Mather '72
Mr. Daniel J. McCarthy '75 '83
Mr. Laurence M. Merlis
Mr. Fred F. Mirmiran
Mr. Kenneth V. Moreland, *CPA* '78
Mr. James P. O'Connor
Ms. Nancy Palmer '79
Mr. Steve Peck
Mr. Sherman L. Ragland, *II* '84

In keeping with its "Thinking Outside" mission, Towson University maintained its emphasis on outreach with new programs and facilities in Harford County, collaborative programs with the Community College of Baltimore County, development of innovative academic programs, the launch of a website designed to enhance communication between the university and its closest neighbors, and the expansion and strengthening of ongoing efforts in Baltimore City's Cherry Hill community and public school system.

The Hon. William Donald Schaefer
Honorary Member
Mr. John B. Schuerholz '62
Ms. Molly Shock '75
Mr. Francis S. Soistman, *Jr.* '79
Mr. Glenn Stearns '87
Dr. Timothy Sullivan
Faculty Representative
Mr. Joseph C. Tischer '59
Mr. W. Daniel White
Ms. Marcia Zercoe '82

I am delighted to announce that economic setbacks had no apparent effect on external recognition of our efforts, as the university continued to receive honors, awards and recognition from many quarters.

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U.S. News & World Report America's Best Colleges guide ranked Towson University 10th in the public Regional Universities (North) category.

The Princeton Review named Towson University to its list of 50 Best Value Colleges – Public.

Towson University is one of 100 “Best College Buys” in America according to a website feature released by *Forbes*.

GI Jobs magazine named Towson University to its list of Military Friendly Schools.

Kiplinger's Personal Finance magazine identified Towson University as one of the top 100 best values in public colleges for the 2009-2010 academic year.

A report released by the nonprofit Education Trust named Towson University as one of a select group of colleges where black and Hispanic students are as likely to graduate as whites, with no graduation “gap” for either minority group.

Towson University was named to the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll with Distinction, the only institution of higher education in Maryland to attain the honor.

I would be remiss if I did not also include a sampling of the honors bestowed upon our diverse and talented faculty, staff and students during the past year.

Laura Bageant, acting director of Institutional Research, received The State of Maryland Meritorious Civilian Service Medal for her “exceptionally meritorious service to the Service Members and families of the Maryland National Guard and Maryland Veterans” in coordinating the series of three Maryland National Guard Conferences for educators, employers and healthcare professionals.

John M. Morgan, director of the university's Geospatial Research and Education Laboratory, and Steven Lev, associate professor in the Department of Physics, Astronomy and Geosciences, were two of only three University System of Maryland faculty members to be named 2010 Wilson S. Elkins Professors.

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Jack Fruchtman, professor of political science, received a University System of Maryland Faculty Award, the highest honor presented to USM faculty by the Board of Regents. Dr. Fruchtman is founder and director of the university's Law and American Civilization Program.

Jonathan Lazar, professor of computer and information sciences, won the Dr. Jacob Bolotin Award for his outstanding contributions toward achieving full integration of the blind into society on a basis of equality. He received the \$5,000 prize for his research in the improvement of web accessibility for blind users.

A team of Towson University students won the Mid-Atlantic Regional Cyber-Defense Competition and advanced to the National Collegiate Cyber-Defense Competition finals.

Towson University's National Art Education Association chapter was unanimously selected by the Retired Art Educators of America for the organization's Outstanding Student Chapter Award.

Although space does not permit me to enumerate every positive outcome of the past fiscal year, I should like to list some accomplishments, initiatives and acquisitions that speak to Towson University's unique mission as Maryland's Metropolitan University.

Last spring the university awarded 16 doctoral degrees, including nine Doctor of Audiology (Au.D.) degrees, two Doctor of Instructional Technology (Ed.D.) degrees, four Doctor of Science (D.Sc.) degrees and the university's first Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree in Jewish Studies.

Also receiving degrees were 15 students enrolled in Towson University's Elementary/Special Education (EESE) program at the Higher Education Applied Technology (HEAT) Center in Harford County, Md. They were the first to complete the entire degree program at that site.

Towson University and the Maryland National Guard hosted "Employer Summit: Recruitment and Reintegration of a Skilled Veteran Workforce, a free, one-day conference which offered Maryland employers throughout Maryland a unique opportunity to be informed about issues affecting returning veterans in the workplace.



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Work continued on several major capital projects, including the College of Liberal Arts Building, the West Village Commons, and a new 1,500-space parking garage. These projects reflect our strong commitment to environmentally friendly building, incorporating “green” materials and energy-saving features wherever possible.

Towson University was assigned the resources of University of Maryland Biotechnology Institute’s K-12 educational programs at the Christopher Columbus Center in Baltimore. This move recognizes our ongoing commitment to addressing the state’s work force needs by preparing allied health professionals and educators to teach in STEM-related fields.

In partnership with the Baltimore CFA Society, Towson University’s College of Business and Economics published the inaugural edition of *Baltimore Business Review*, which focuses on Maryland’s business opportunities.

Towson University received a Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) grant funded through the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) to develop an online post-baccalaureate certificate program in Technical Writing and Information Design.

Towson University reopened its renovated Watson-King Planetarium, which now offers a state-of-the-art projector, new sound system and a redesigned seating layout. Physics Nobel laureate John Mather delivered the inaugural lecture.

The Towson University Field Station, a 228-acre research outpost for faculty and student researchers, opened this spring in Monkton, Md.

Towson University’s Center for GIS (CGIS) and Regional Economic Studies Institute (RESI) played pivotal roles in the Maryland Broadband Initiative. RESI created the survey for the Maryland Broadband Map speed test; CGIS developed the websites that offer Marylanders comprehensive information about the initiative.



Towson University hosted the 2010 Maryland Hispanic Youth Symposium (HYS), a nationally recognized college access program sponsored by The Hispanic College Fund (HFC) that addresses the adversity and lack of educational opportunities faced by much of the Hispanic youth.

Towson University acquired a 400 MHz Nuclear Magnetic Resonance (NMR) spectrometer with more than \$307,000 provided by the National Science Foundation (NSF) under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. This powerful instrument will expand our Department of Chemistry's research capabilities and enhance its productivity to allow for better integration of faculty research with undergraduate education.

The impact of the Great Recession has not substantially slowed Towson University's progress toward its development goals. In fact, we exceeded our \$6.4 million annual goal by 7 percent. In the sixth year of a seven-year \$50 million capital campaign, almost \$45 million had been raised by June 30, 2010. The campaign remains on target for a successful completion in FY11.

It is difficult to choose among thousands of gifts that were received in FY10 as those noteworthy of being highlighted. However, two illustrate how challenges are being overcome at Towson during difficult economic times. The Promise Scholarship Fund was established to provide immediate support for students facing financial challenges. In nine months, 317 people stepped forward to make contributions.

A member of the Class 1990 issued a \$30,000 challenge grant to provide operating funds for the speech and debate team. By year end, 161 donors had made contributions and the donor has agreed to keep the challenge open to encourage additional support. Participation was the key in FY10.

President Caret has spoken of the credibility that comes with increasing grants and contract funding. External funding committed to Towson University has now reached \$30 million, of which \$11 million is directly attributed to work by members of the faculty—a major accomplishment.

The following represent a few of the Towson University initiatives that received such funding last year.

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David Schaefer and Ronald Herman, National Science Foundation, "STEM: SUPPORTING ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED UNDERGRADUATES IN PHYSICS (SpEeD-UP)," \$318,960, March 1, 2010, through February 28, 2014

LiYun Jin, U.S. Department of Education, "Destination China, Restructuring Social Studies Curriculum in Middle and High Schools," \$89,659 March 1, 2010, through February 28, 2011

Bruce Herman and James Spivack, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Medical Health Administration, "Towson Suicide Prevention Program," \$300,000 September 30, 2009–September 29, 2012

Marcie Weinstein, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Public Health and Science, Office of Minority Health, "Youth Empowerment Program (YEP): Partnering in Academic and Life Success (PALS)," \$300,000 September 1, 2009, through August 31, 2012

Sheila Green and Kathryn Ogle, "Who Will Care," \$1,118,643

Claire Muhoro and Lev Ryzhkov, "MRI: ACQUISITION OF A 400 MHz NMR SPECTROMETER TO SUPPORT UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH AND CHEMICAL EDUCATION AT TOWSON UNIVERSITY," \$307,323 August 15, 2009 through July 31, 2012

I agree with President Caret that Towson University has become much better known, both locally and nationally. This is due in no small part to our emphasis on identifying desired outcomes and working tirelessly toward attaining them.

"[Our supporters] can see that we set goals, but, more important, we achieve goals," President Caret said. "Whether it is among higher education peers, government, nonprofits or business, the real evaluation is based upon meeting goals and producing outcomes. If you have read our *Towson University 2010* Final Report Card, you know we have focused on outcomes. We will continue to do so."

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May I also add that Towson University continues to leverage scarce resources in innovative and collaborative ways to attain desired outcomes. In FY10, we did just that to attain our most important goal: providing accessible, quality education for our state's citizens.

On behalf of the Towson University Board of Visitors, I once again extend my thanks for your ongoing support for our Metropolitan University mission.

Respectfully yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dennis F. Rasmussen", followed by a horizontal line.

Dennis F. Rasmussen
Chair, Board of Visitors
Towson University

- c: Thomas V. "Mike" Miller, President of the Senate
- Michael E. Busch, Speaker of the House
- Norman H. Conway, Chair, House Appropriations Committee
- Edward Kasemeyer, Chair, Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
- James E. Lyons, Secretary of Higher Education, MHEC
- William E. Kirwan, Chancellor, University System of Maryland
- Clifford M. Kendall, Chair, USM Board of Regents
- ✓ Johanne H. Greer, Department of Legislative Reference Library
- Joyce H. Fowler, Office of Policy Analysis