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The Honorable Martin O'Malley
Governor of Maryland
State House
Annapolis, Maryland 21401-1991

Dear Governor O'Malley,

As required by legislation, the Frostburg State University Board of Visitors respectfully submits its annual report for Academic Year 2009-2010. During this reporting year, Dr. Jonathan Gibraltar entered his fourth year as president. Dr. Gibraltar is a strong, innovative, and highly respected leader whose commitment to students, faculty, and the community has moved the University significantly forward even in difficult economic times. For the reporting period, some of the most important institutional achievements that have strengthened the University include:

- Enrolling 4,755 undergraduate students in the fall of 2009 and achieving, for the second consecutive year, the largest undergraduate enrollment in its history. This fall, Frostburg once again welcomed more than 1,000 entering freshmen and enrolled a total of 5,470 students, the largest number in the history of the institution. Seventy-four percent (74%) of first-time freshmen entering Frostburg on a full-time basis last year returned to continue their education in fall 2010, which represents a two percent (2%) increase in freshman retention at the University.
- Continuing to address University retention and graduation rates through innovative programming, including the *Closing the Achievement Gap* initiatives, which include a supplemental instruction program designed to reach students who may not otherwise seek out support services. The University has also improved student learning through its Course Redesign initiative in the Department of Psychology, which has been expanded to the Department of Mathematics and the Programs for Academic Support and Studies.
- Submitting in September 2009 its Climate Action Plan to the Association for Sustainability in Higher Education. With a goal of climate neutrality in 2030, the University has identified 49 strategic initiatives to be implemented within two years. In the fall of 2010, the University launched its new and innovative academic minor in Sustainability Studies.
- Continued commitment to strategic planning through the establishment of a Strategic Planning Committee and a new President's Advisory Council on Planning and Institutional Effectiveness.
- Securing an \$836,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Energy's National Energy Technology Laboratory for equipment and staffing of the University's new Sustainable Energy Research Facility to be located at Allegany Business Center at Frostburg State University.
- Expanding curricular opportunities through the establishment of new undergraduate programs in computer science, psychology (at USMH), geography, STEM education, and ethnobotany. Federal funding in the amount of \$1.4 million over the last five years has been awarded to the Appalachian Center for Ethnobotanical Studies (ACES).

- Working to make its academic programs accessible to a greater number of students, the University now offers its Master of Business Administration (MBA), M.S. in Recreation and Parks Management, and the R.N. to B.S. in nursing program fully online. The University's MBA was recently ranked ninth nationally as a best value in accredited online MBA programs.
- Securing for its new R.N. to B.S. online nursing program a second grant from the Maryland Higher Education Commission totaling almost \$274,000.
- Successfully pursuing the University's *Staking Our Claim: The Campaign for Frostburg*, a \$15 million funding effort focusing on the themes of academic, regional, and cultural enrichment. This fall, the campaign reached \$13.4 million thanks to the generosity of the University's friends and supporters.
- Completing the Western Maryland Stem Plan (WMSP), which will help enhance workforce development by promoting STEM awareness and education in the region. Work to identify public and private funds to support the strategies and programs of the WMSP is presently underway.
- Helping students make better choices about their health and wellness through the University's *Creating Healthy, Informed, Lasting Lifestyles (CHILL)* program and providing unique student leadership development and volunteerism opportunities through the President's Leadership Circle and the Office of Leadership and Civic Engagement.
- Developing the University's new Cultural Diversity Program, which is designed to increase the number of minority faculty and staff at Frostburg and enhance the understanding and appreciation of different cultures by all members of the University community.
- Enhancing the international climate on campus by hosting students from 17 different countries; increasing study abroad opportunities for FSU students; and further developing the University's partnerships with universities in China, India, Ireland, Great Britain, and Denmark.
- Focusing the University's communications and marketing efforts on the use of technology and new media such as Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter. These efforts have resulted in increased involvement in University events from a growing number of alumni, current and prospective students, and members of the community.

We are especially pleased to learn that the Princeton Review's Guide to 286 Green Colleges recognized Frostburg and its commitment to sustainability in its infrastructure, activities, and initiatives. The important leadership role Dr. Gibraltar plays nationally on environmental issues was demonstrated by his appointment last spring to the Second Nature's National Transportation Policy Task Force, a group of fifteen college and university presidents developing recommendations to decision makers regarding the incorporation of climate goals into the nation's transportation policy.

We recognize and fully endorse President Gibraltar and the University's work to address the issue of alcohol abuse on campus. We are highly pleased that a campus survey indicates the number of FSU students who report drinking alcohol at least once a month has decreased by nearly 20 percent between 1997 and 2009. We are also encouraged by the fact that approximately 57% of students entering the University classify themselves as nondrinkers.

The University's commitment to the region and to its students and alumni remains unwavering, and the institution remains strong and unified. We believe, however, that the institution faces important challenges that require the immediate attention of the state.

1. *We are concerned that over the last four years faculty and staff at Frostburg have endured salary reduction days and have gone without cost of living and merit salary increases. Frostburg State University faculty salaries are the lowest in the University System of Maryland.*

Dr. Gibraltar increased adjunct faculty salaries shortly after arriving at Frostburg, but budgetary constraints have made it impossible for him to increase full-time faculty salaries. Inadequate and eroding salaries at Frostburg are highly demoralizing for faculty and staff, who work tirelessly for the University and remain committed to the institution.

2. *We again thank you for your approval of the University's new Center for Communications and Information Technology (CCIT) and the renovation and expansion of the Lane University Center. These important capital projects will enhance the campus and will help meet the instructional and co-curricular programming needs of Frostburg students.*

The Board is concerned, however, that construction of the new CCIT facility has been delayed until 2013 with the building scheduled to open in 2014. Because of the importance of the facility to the University and the entire Western Maryland region, we highly recommend that construction begin in 2012.

3. *We are deeply concerned over the deteriorating condition of the University's infrastructure. The Department of Budget and Management reports that Frostburg has the oldest academic buildings in the University System of Maryland.*

The expedited planning and construction of Frostburg's proposed new Education and Allied Health Building would help to address this concern. However, the state must also take steps on a broader scale to replace the University's aging academic buildings that are increasingly unable to support the important teaching, scholarship, and learning that is taking place at the University.

4. *Frostburg State University is of critical importance to the economic prosperity of Western Maryland and the state. We strongly recommend that the University System of Maryland designate FSU as a growth campus and provide the capacity needed to support this designation.*

With growth comes the responsibility for the careful allocation of resources, and we are very pleased that the University is developing a new strategic plan that focuses on creating experiential learning opportunities for students and emphasizes the importance of sustainability.

The role Frostburg State University plays in Western Maryland has never been more significant, and the future economic prosperity of our region will increasingly depend on the University's growth and vitality. Frostburg State University's excellence is unquestionable. The University continues to demonstrate its extraordinary value by the quality of its graduates and their important accomplishments after leaving the University. We believe Frostburg State University must be given the opportunity, the facilities, and the faculty and staff to grow, flourish, and reach its full potential as a nationally recognized and highly respected institution of higher education.

Sincerely,



Mr. David Turnbull
Chair, FSU Board of Visitors

cc: Hon. Thomas V. Mike Miller
Hon. Michael Busch
Dr. William E. Kirwan
Dr. James E. Lyons, Sr.
FSU Board of Visitors