

**2019-2020 Annual Review of  
Growing the Future, Leading the World:  
The Strategic Plan for Morgan State University, 2011-2021  
Required by Education Article § 14-104 (n)(3) (MSAR # 11636)**

**December 2020**

# Annual Update of Strategic Plan

2020

## Morgan State University

The Strategic Plan for Morgan State University was adopted in August 2011, by the Board of Regents. It covers the period 2011–2021. This report is a brief review of the degree of implementation of the Plan during its ninth year.

### Mission

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.

Morgan State University is, by legislative statute, Maryland's Preeminent Public Urban Research University. The goals and objectives in this Performance Accountability Report reflect the legislatively mandated mission as well as the five goals of the University's ten-year strategic plan entitled, *Growing the Future, Leading the World: The Strategic Plan for Morgan State University, 2011– 2021*, including:

1. Enhancing Student Success;
2. Enhancing Morgan's Status as a Doctoral Research University;
3. Improving and Sustaining Morgan's Infrastructure and Operational Processes;
4. Growing Morgan's Resources; and
5. Engaging with the Community.

### Institutional Assessment Results

#### Goal 1: Enhancing Student Success

*Morgan State University will create an educational environment that enhances student success by hiring and retaining well qualified, experienced, and dedicated faculty and staff, by offering challenging, internationally relevant academic curricula, and by welcoming and supporting a diverse and inclusive campus community.*

In the most recent year, Morgan State University graduated 46% of its entering freshmen within six years. This percentage includes students who began at Morgan but finished at another Maryland public four-year institution. For African American freshmen, the six-year graduation rate is 48%. The graduation rate of the university is higher than would be predicted based on national data (i.e., UCLA Higher Education Research Institute); however, the university's goal is to increase graduation rate to 50% by 2025.

Second-year retention rates have been above 70% for the past ten years, increasing from 68% for the 2009 cohort. Second year retention rates have averaged around 73% for all students. Second-year retention rates for African American students have averaged around 72%. Retention rates include those students who began at Morgan but transferred to another Maryland public institution.

Morgan State University has a well-established approach to enhancing student success, including: a six-week summer bridge program for students with demonstrated potential but whose SAT scores and/or GPA do not meet the University's criteria for admission (CASA Academy); a summer bridge program for incoming freshmen majoring in Engineering (PACE) designed to increase their likelihood of successful and timely degree completion; an early alert and response system for faculty to alert students and advisors to students showing signs of being in jeopardy (Starfish); Degree Works, the University's degree auditing system; a Tutoring Center that offers one-on-one peer tutoring; a mandatory four day summer freshman orientation experience (Access Orientation).

The Enrollment Management and Student Success division has officially launched EAB Metrics Mapping. EAB Metrics Mapping utilizes the Advanced Search Filter, Saved Searches, Watch Lists, and Messaging in EAB Navigate (formally known as the EAB Student Success Collaborative) to identify, contact, and monitor students in specific subgroups such as students with low first semester GPAs, low cumulative GPAs, Pell-eligible students, students who earn fewer than 15 credits per semester, students who have not enrolled for the upcoming term, and students who are eligible for specific scholarship opportunities. The first round of interventions began after Spring 2019 mid-terms; EAB metrics mapping interventions are ongoing throughout the academic year. One of our signature innovations is the Reclamation Project, in which we invite students back who left the University in good academic standing (2.0 GPA or better) and earned at least 90 credits to return in their 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> academic year to finish Morgan "on-time" in six consecutive years or less. These initiatives are aligned with the State higher education goals of ensuring equitable access and promoting student success.

Morgan State University continues to provide higher education access to a segment of the population which faces financial constraints and challenges which impact our retention and graduation rates. Fifty-three percent of our undergraduates are Pell recipients. However, Pell grants only cover about a third of the cost of attendance for an in-state student. The six-year graduation rate for Pell recipients has increased from 32% in 2017 to 38% in 2020. The University has begun new initiatives to increase the success of our Pell recipients. Special campaigns are undertaken to identify Pell recipients who have not completed their financial aid applications, or registered early for the next term, or have not registered for 15 credits. These targeted initiatives should continue to have a positive effect on Pell recipients' success.

The University is facing increasing competition nationally for high-ability students as the number of high school graduates' transition from an era of growth to one of modest decline. This trend,

coupled with tightening amounts of institutional funding allocated to high-ability students at Morgan State University, has led to our inability to provide scholarships for all potential honors students. Despite these demographic and fiscal realities, honors freshmen comprised 21% of the incoming freshmen in fall 2019. Another component of our goal of Student Success is to add to the racial and ethnic diversity of the student body. Currently, 12.6% of our student body are members of other racial/ethnic groups or are international.

Morgan State University continues to expand its cooperative agreements with Maryland community colleges and other educational organizations. The percentage of transfer students from Maryland community colleges, however, has declined from 3.3% in 2017 to 2.1% in 2020. The University is working with the Thurgood Marshall Fund and McKinsey and Company to develop initiatives to increase our percentage of transfer students.

The Office of Undergraduate Admission and Recruitment (OUAR) has expanded its recruitment efforts in out-of-state territories and modified its in-state recruitment philosophy to position the University to continue its enrollment growth. The percentage of applicants from urban districts has averaged 34% for the past four years.

Morgan State University continues to generate strategies to increase student enrollment and retention in the STEM fields. The number of bachelor's recipients in the STEM fields has steadily increased from 210 in 2017 to 361 in 2020. Two initiatives with Google and Intel will provide our STEM students with opportunities to work with these leading innovators in technology.

For the past, several years, Morgan State University has continued to rate well in relation to its outcome quality indicators. The ability of graduates to gain employment in fields related to their majors is comparable to the statewide average. For the 2017 to 2020 period, survey results indicate that on average 62% of our alumni were employed in Maryland one year after graduation. Morgan State University's undergraduate alumni continue to express their satisfaction with the way in which the University has prepared them for advanced degree programs. Undergraduate students at Morgan State University have continued their studies in graduate school or first professional degree programs. Based on survey results, graduate or professional school going rate is about 43% during the 2017-2020 period.

## **Goal 2: Enhancing Morgan's Status as a Doctoral Research University**

*Morgan State University will enhance its status as a Doctoral Research University through its success in securing grants and contracts and its faculty's achievements in basic and applied research, professional expression, artistic creation, and creative inquiry. Additionally, initiatives will be designed to enhance doctoral achievement in both STEM and non-STEM disciplines.*

The University awarded 78 doctoral degrees during Academic Year 2019-2020, a historic high and in keeping with the University's new Carnegie designation as an R2. This number reflects the quality and expansion of the University's inventory of doctoral programs, which has also made the university one of the state's primary sources of doctoral degrees granted to African Americans in critical fields, such as engineering and public health.

The research enterprise at the university enjoyed another phenomenal year, garnering \$35M in awarded grants and contracts for FY20. Morgan State University is a partner with the University Space Research Association (USRA) to provide scientists and engineers, primarily in Earth System

Sciences to NASA's. The Goddard Earth Sciences Technology and Research (GESTAR) initiative is a 5-year Cooperative Agreement with a potential value of \$20.8M. The program continues to receive accolades from NASA for its research output and future efforts entail increasing the involvement of Morgan students and faculty in research being conducted by the twenty (Morgan) GESTAR scientists working on the NASA Goddard campus.

ASCEND is a National Institutes of Health Funded Student-Centered Entrepreneurship Development Training Model to Increase Diversity in the Biomedical Research Workforce that is novel, sustainable, flexible, and has measurable outcomes. The Program recently has been highly successful, and its funding has been extended from 5 to 8-years. ASCEND is also tasked with enhancing the research capacity at Morgan State University, particularly by providing research support to faculty members, such as funding for pilot research projects, research equipment and supplies, and release time. One measure of research success is publication. To date, ASCEND support has resulted in 50 peer-reviewed publications. These publications include a wide range of research topics, including biomedical bench research, mathematical methods used for biomedical research, and community-based participatory research projects. Morgan State University faculty members, postdoctoral fellows, graduate students, and undergraduate students have contributed to these publications and are listed as coauthors.

### **Goal 3: Improving and Sustaining Morgan's Infrastructure and Operational Processes**

*Morgan State University will enhance its infrastructure and processes by improving the efficiency and efficacy of its operating procedures, focusing on the environmental sustainability of its facilities, and by meeting the technological customer service needs of its students, faculty, staff and community.*

The campus also has made progress in reducing energy consumption. Although the campus square footage has increased in recent years, electricity consumption has been declining. Additionally, the University has formed the Bears Energy Savings Team, a group of faculty, staff, and students, who work with the Director of Energy Management and Sustainability on energy saving initiatives throughout the campus.

In fall 2019, the university successfully changed its Learning Management System (LMS) from Blackboard to Canvas. The decision to switch LMS platforms was a collaborative effort that included support and participation from faculty, staff, and students.

Work is currently underway to virtualize popular software applications allowing faculty, staff, and students to access these resources for teaching, learning, and research from any location by the end of summer 2020. Also underway is a project to address the disparities in audio/visual classroom equipment across campus to ensure these spaces all have a standard set of equipment. The proposed upgrades, which are scheduled to start in mid-July and conclude in the fall, will provide a more robust in-person experience, while enhancing remote instruction capabilities.

### **Goal 4: Growing Morgan's Resources**

*Morgan State University will expand its human capital as well as its financial resources by investing in the professional development of faculty, staff, and students, by seeking greater financial support from the alumni, the State and federal governments, private and philanthropic sources, and by establishing collaborative relationships with private as well as public entities.*

The Division of Institutional Advancement engages and solicits an institutional portfolio of 160 corporations and foundations; a major gifts portfolio of 3,000 plus alumni and friends who have capacity to make gifts at the \$10,000 plus giving level; an annual fund portfolio of 26,000 plus alumni and friends who make gifts in the range of \$1-9,999; a planned giving portfolio of 5,644 mature alumni; and a 6,000 plus young-future alumni portfolio of students and recent graduates. Cumulative private and philanthropic donations during the period FY'11 to FY'20 increased to \$73.5M. Often potential donors use alumni participation as one of the criteria in the decision to make a gift to an institution. The percentage of alumni who contribute to the University ending FY'20 is 14%.

### **Goal 5: Engaging with the Community**

*Morgan State University will engage with community residents and officials in the use of knowledge derived from faculty and student research, the sharing of mutually beneficial resources, and in the appropriate and timely dispatch of University experts and professionals to collaborate in addressing community concerns.*

Morgan State University has a strong commitment to serve the residents of Baltimore City, Maryland, and the nation as evidenced by its numerous partnerships with local school, government agencies, businesses and industries, and community organizations. Overall, Morgan has 175 partnerships with Baltimore City Public Schools, 40 partnerships with other state public school systems, and 378 partnerships with other government agencies, businesses, industries, non-profit, and community organizations. Morgan's signature community service program is the Morgan Community Mile which serves neighborhoods in Northeast Baltimore that are within a 1-mile radius of the campus. This area includes nine communities encompassing 56 community associations.

Morgan State University's students also play an active role in the local area. Annually, approximately 2,000 students participate in University sponsored community service. A recent economic impact study found that Morgan students provide over 20,000 hours of community service annually.