

**2021-2022 Annual Review of Growing the Future, Leading the World:  
The Strategic Plan for Morgan State University, 2011-2021**

**August 2022**

## **Annual Review of the Strategic Plan**

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### **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 final 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.*

For the fall 2015 cohort, the most recent year that MHEC has data, 47% of those students graduated from Morgan State University or other institutions in Maryland within six years. For African American freshmen, the six-year graduation rate also is 47%. 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 74% for all students. Second-year retention rates for African American students have averaged around 75%.

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 continued with a 4th year of EAB Metrics Mapping. EAB Metrics Mapping utilizes the Advanced Search Filter, Saved Searches, Watch Lists, and Messaging in EAB Navigate to identify, contact, and monitor students in specific subgroups. EAB Metrics Mapping reports and nudges are now a standard component of the Morgan workflow every semester. EAB Advanced Filter saved searches and draft email communications have been created for 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. Dozens of EAB campaigns are sent to students to encourage them to register for the upcoming semester, especially to students who had stopped-out for one or more semesters. 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 5th or 6th 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.

Another best practice is that all first-year freshman students at Morgan are advised by professional staff from the Center for Academic Success and Achievement (CASA) and the Office of Student Success and Retention (OSSR). Holds are placed on every first-year student's account preventing them from making changes to their course schedule without consulting with an academic advisor first. Once first-year students have earned at least 24 credits with a 2.0 minimum cumulative GPA and a declared major, they are reassigned to their departmental/faculty advisor for the balance of their matriculation. All of the notes from first-year advising meetings are saved in Starfish for faculty advisors to refer back to in subsequent advising meetings. Every student has an online advising folder through Starfish.

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-one 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 36% in 2019 to 40% in 2022. 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.

Beginning in 2020, out of concern for the unknown consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic on enrollment, several rounds of emails to students were added to the withdrawal process for students who request to withdraw from their classes. Morgan was able to help a good number of students to stay enrolled because of the changes to the withdrawal process; the new process will continue indefinitely.

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 26% of the incoming freshmen in fall 2021. Another component of our goal of Student Success is to add to the racial and ethnic diversity of the student body. Currently, 11.8% 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, was at 1% in 2022. Transfer Student Programming (TSP) at Morgan assists transfer students with orientation, transition, and onboarding once they have been evaluated by Transfer Evaluation and Articulation (TEA) in the Registrar's Office. TSP continues to build transfer student pipeline programs such as the CONNECT program. TSP has completed revamped transfer student orientation with a new more detailed orientation experience known as *Bear Notes*. TSP also has been working with the transfer coordinators in each college/school at Morgan to make sure that all transfer students receive early and accurate advisement and access to registration through the technology tools Degree Works and Schedule Planner. TSP partners with the Registrar's Office and TEA to provide the best possible experience for new transfer students. Additionally, 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 33% for the past four years.

Morgan State University continues to generate strategies to increase student enrollment and retention in the STEM fields. For academic year 2021-2022, 265 bachelor's degrees were awarded in the STEM fields. Two initiatives with Google and Intel 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 2019 to 2022 period, survey results indicate that on average 58% 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 31% for the bachelor's recipients from the 2020-2021 academic year.

## **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 70 doctoral degrees during Academic Year 2021-2022, 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.

In Fiscal Year 2022 (FY2022), MSU's research enterprise was authorized to spend \$36 million in grants, cooperative agreements, and contracts. In FY2022, 78 faculty members were engaged as Principal Investigators in funded research or contracts, and MSU had several major prestigious grants funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), Department of Defense (DoD), and the National Science Foundation (NSF).

NIH: ASCEND (A Student-Centered Entrepreneurship Development Training Model to Enhance the Diversity of Biomedical Research Workforce) is an NIH-funded cooperative agreement that brings approximately \$4 million to the campus every year (cumulatively \$40 million over 10 years), resulting in enhanced research infrastructure, preparedness of faculty members, and training of the students in biomedical research. RCMI (Research Centers in Minority Institutions) is another major NIH-funded cooperative agreement that brings over \$3 million to the campus every year (cumulatively \$15 million over 5 years). The funds are spent for enhancing the research infrastructure of the university, as well as conducting research on health disparities in Baltimore. We have several other research and training grants from the NIH, all contributing to MSU's move toward R1.

The GESTAR-I cooperative agreement was a NASA award to the University Space Research Association (USRA), Morgan State University (MSU) and other partners. GESTAR primarily supports NASA's Earth Science Division within the Science Mission Directorate. The GESTAR MSU program is comprised of 17 Goddard-based scientists and a 2-person program office. GESTAR continues to receive top marks from NASA for research. The program is in the 10th year of funding. The current value of GESTAR MSU is \$21,042,171.

The GESTAR II cooperative agreement is a consortium of the University of Maryland Baltimore County and Morgan partnered with Arizona State University, Colorado State University and

Penn State University as additional partners. The consortium supports NASA Goddard's Earth Science Division within the Science Mission Directorate. The GESTAR II MSU program currently consists of 41 research scientists and a 3-person program office. Morgan also provides the senior associate director, chief scientist, and the recruiting lead for the consortium. Morgan's share of GESTAR II is valued at \$27.9M over three years.

DoD: MSU has established a Center of Excellence for Advanced Electro-Photonics with 2D Materials using a major cooperative agreement received from the DoD. MSU's major partner is Johns Hopkins University, and the funds for this center are \$7.5 million.

NSF is another major source of funding for MSU's sponsored activities. We have multiple research grants (specially Excellence in Research or EiR), major research equipment (MRI) grants, and research training grants from the NSF.

MSU faculty members have been remarkably successful in publishing the results of their research. Stanford University listed 6 of MSU's faculty members among the top 2% researchers in the world. Several faculty members have over 5,000 citations to their research, and one has even over 20,000 citations. We hope that funds allocated to create endowed professorships will bring more such faculty members to Morgan, elevating the research status of the university. For academic year 2021-2022, the average number of scholarly publications and activities per full-time tenured/tenure track faculty was 3.5.

### **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 has made progress in reducing energy consumption. The average decrease of electrical usage for the past four years is 2%. The average increase in gas usage for the past four years is 8%. A plan has been developed for fall 2021 to curtail gas usage and to continue to reduce the use of electricity campus wide.

The Division of Information Technology (DIT) provided various services to mature the university's cyber security portfolio in support of the return of employees and students to the campus and new initiatives. This included, but was not limited to Sophos endpoint protection deployment; system and application updates; device upgrades; Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) creation and updates; security awareness training on a new, more interactive platform; etc. In spring of 2022, the Service Desk deployed the first phase of its new IT Service Management (ITSM) tool. This tool allows for the documentation and tracking of IT service requests and inquiries. The second deployment phase, scheduled for fall 2022, includes the launch of a self-service client portal featuring a service catalog, knowledgebase articles, and more.

### **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 30,000 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 young alumni portfolio of 6,000 recent graduates. At this writing, we are still finalizing fundraising results and going through the FY' 22 audit process but, estimate that the annual private and philanthropic support during FY'22 was \$25M.

### **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 381 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. This past academic year approximately 1,031 students participated in university sponsored internship and field experience classes. A recent economic impact study found that Morgan students provide over 20,000 hours of community service annually.