

The 2023-2024 Annual Review of *Transformation Morgan*:
The Strategic Plan for Morgan State University, 2021-2030

December 2024



Office of the President

December 19, 2024

The Honorable Governor Wes Moore
100 State Circle
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Bill Ferguson
President of the Senate
State House, H-107
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Adrienne A. Jones
Speaker of the House
State House, H-101
100 State Circle
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dr. Sanjay Rai, Secretary
Maryland Higher Education Commission
6 N. Liberty Street
Baltimore, MD 21201

Dear Governor Moore, Senator Ferguson, Delegate Jones and Secretary Rai:

Please find enclosed a copy of the report on the *Annual Review of Morgan State University's Strategic Plan* as required by **Section 14-104(n)(3)** of the Education Article and in accordance with Section 2-1257 of the State Government Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland.

Please feel free to contact me, should you have any questions or concerns.

Kind regards,

David K. Wilson
President

Enclosure

Cc: Secretary Helene Grady
Mr. David LaChina
Ms. Shira Diamond
Ms. Sarah Albert

Morgan State University
Annual Strategic Plan Update
2023-2024

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 six goals of the University's ten-year strategic plan entitled, *Transformation Morgan: Leading the Future: Strategic Goals 2021– 2030*. Our strategic plan was approved by our Board of Regents in November of 2021 and includes six goals. This report addresses our progress towards these goals.

Institutional Assessment

Goal 1: Enhancing Student Success and Well-Being

Morgan strives to create an educational environment that enhances student success by offering new academic programs and holistic co-curricular activities in a welcoming, diverse and inclusive campus community.

For the fall 2017 cohort, the most recent year that MHEC has data, 42% of those students graduated from Morgan State University or other four-year institutions in Maryland within six years. For African American freshmen, the six-year graduation rate is 42%. The graduation rate of the university is higher than the 28% six-year rate 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.

For the fall 2022 cohort, the most recent year that MHEC has data, MHEC has reported our first to second year retention rate as 68% overall and 69% for African American students. The University would like to point out that the MHEC rates are based on students' Social Security Numbers, which do not take into account students who did not provide their Social Security number because they do not use federal financial aid, students who do not have a Social Security number, or students whose Social Security numbers may have changed from the past year due to

data entry errors. Using campus student identification numbers, the retention rate for the fall 2022 cohort was 71% and was 72% for African American students.

Morgan State University has a well-established approach to enhancing student success which supports the state-wide goals of increasing student access and success. Initiatives include: 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; and a Tutoring Center that offers one-on-one in-person and virtual peer tutoring. Understanding, however, the need for continuous improvement, especially in addressing the needs of the post-pandemic generation, the University continues to enhance its student success efforts. For summer 2024, we redesigned our summer freshman orientation program and look forward to seeing positive outcomes from this initiative. The University is also currently in the process of transitioning to EAB Navigate for advising and early alerts and has implemented the EAB Navigate 360 student app.

The Enrollment Management and Student Success division has continued with a 5th 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 such as students with low GPAs or students who are eligible for specific scholarships. 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.

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-seven 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 38% in 2024. The University has begun initiatives to increase the success of our Pell recipients and these efforts are described in the Institutional Response section of this report.

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.

While our updated strategic plan is to increase enrollment to 10,000 by fall 2030, we are actually on track to achieve this important milestone by fall 2024. Additional enrollment growth beyond the strategic plan objective is expected via the new College of Interdisciplinary and Continuing Studies which houses 18 programs from the bachelor's degree through the doctoral degree that are geared towards adult learners with some college credits who need pathways to earn their degrees. A Summer Accounting Academy program geared for high school and community college students has resulted in an increase in accounting majors.

Another new objective is to increase the number of undergraduates in research. The Association of American Colleges and Universities counts undergraduate research experience as a high impact practice that leads to increased student engagement, retention, and success. An Office of Undergraduate Research has been established to lead this effort. As the University continues to recover from the COVID 19 pandemic, we expect that the number of undergraduates participating in research will reach and surpass the pre-pandemic numbers.

Another component of our goal of Student Success is to add to the racial and ethnic diversity of the student body. Currently, 6.4% of our student body are members of other racial/ethnic groups.

Morgan State University continues to expand services for transfer students. The newly restructured Office of Transfer Initiatives (OTI) has launched a process that allows students/advisors transparency in tracking the status of their transfer credit evaluation and has reduced the turnaround in transcript evaluation from 20+ business days to 5 business days. OTI has also hired an in-house advisor to support transfer students in addition to their School Transfer Coordinator; redesigned the online orientation and onboarding module for new transfer students and sponsored in-person New Transfer Student Welcome Days; and sponsored Welcome activities and engagements throughout the semester, including the celebration of National Transfer Student Week. The University also signed the Degrees to Succeed partnership with the Community College of Baltimore County, a dual admission program providing a streamlined admission and evaluation process. Additionally, we've implemented a transfer student portal that allows prospective students wishing to transfer to Morgan to review coursework that has already been articulated to see its applicability and submit new courses for review before applying to MSU.

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 Maryland urban districts out of all Maryland applicants has averaged 70% for the past six years.

Morgan State University continues to generate strategies to increase student enrollment and retention in the STEM fields. For the academic year 2023-2024, 228 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. Record enrollment has taken place in the newly launched BS in Cybersecurity Intelligence Management.

For the past several years, Morgan State University has continued to rate well in relation to its outcome quality indicators. Data from the Maryland Longitudinal Data System (MLDS) indicates that on average 43% of our bachelor's degree recipients after one year of graduation are included in the state workforce data available through MLDS. Morgan State University's undergraduate alumni continue to express their satisfaction with the way in which the University has prepared them for careers with 71% rating job preparation as good or excellent. Additionally, 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 with 66% of those attending graduate school rating preparation for advanced study as good or excellent. 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 has averaged 30% for the 2019-2024 period. Additionally, on average for the 2019-2024 period, 96% of employers expressed satisfaction with Morgan hires.

To support our student athletes, we have included a new objective to maintain a culture of academic achievement in athletics with at least 60% of student athletes earning a Grade Point Average of 3.0 or higher. Our current percentage of athletes at 3.0 or higher is 60%. In addition to academic support services available to all students, the Athletic Department also provides Study Halls for student athletes and the P.A.W.S. (Providing Athletes With Success Strategies) Program. P.A.W.S. is a "Life Skills" program designed to provide an optimum experience for every Morgan State student-athlete. P.A.W.S. focuses on the "total development" of the student athlete including academic, personal, career, service, and athletic development.

Goal 2: Implement Faculty Ascendancy and Staff Development Initiatives.

The University will implement a broad range of human resource development initiatives for the benefit of faculty and staff. These initiatives will facilitate the ascendancy of faculty to higher ranks and provide staff with progressive opportunities for professional development and merit-based promotions.

An engaged and highly qualified faculty and staff are essential to the accomplishment of our strategic goals. Currently, the University has four endowed professors; two of which have been appointed and two are being recruited. To support faculty ascendancy, 9 Associate Professors were promoted to Professor during the academic year 2023-2024. The average number of Scholarly Publications for the past six years is 462. The average number of faculty and staff engaged in professional publications and creative activities for the past four years is 343.

Morgan State University's strategic plan delineates the University's objective to increase its online presence to better serve both traditional and non-traditional students. This objective ties directly to the Maryland 2022 State Plan for Higher Education goal of expanding access to quality higher education in the state. The percentage of faculty and staff at Morgan engaged in training to teach online has increased from 8% to 26% during the 2019-2024 period. Additionally, the number of faculty and staff with online courses has increased from 45 to 137 during the same period. This growth aligns with Morgan's strategic plan goal of faculty ascendancy and development, demonstrating a commitment to enhancing faculty capabilities and promoting professional growth through initiatives like Quality Matters (QM) and the Association of College and University Educators (ACUE) training.

Goal 3: Elevate Morgan’s Status to R1 Very High Doctoral Research University

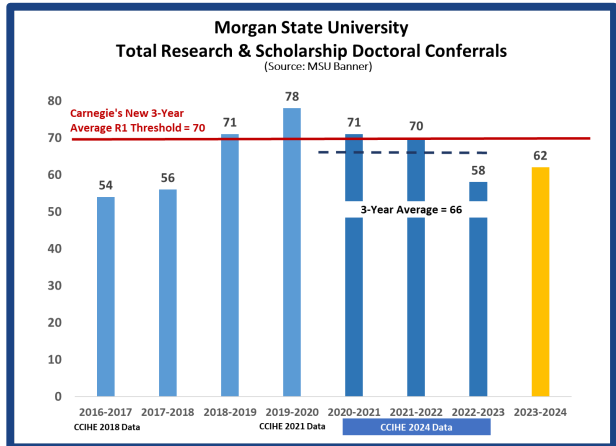
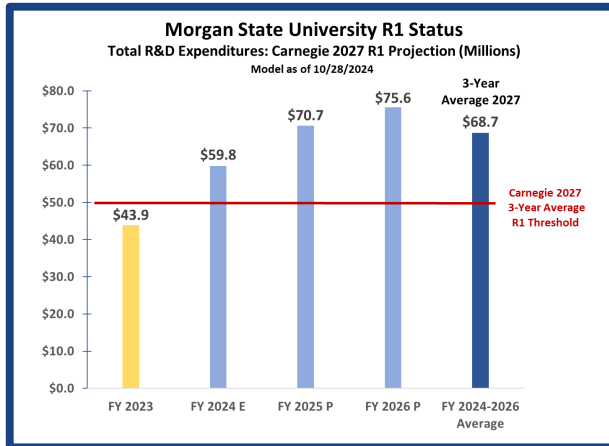
Over the next ten years, Morgan will emerge as an R1 doctoral research university fully engaged in basic and applied research and creative interdisciplinary inquiries undergirded and sustained through increased research grants and contracts.

In Fiscal Year 2024 (FY2024), MSU’s research enterprise received \$88 million in new grants, cooperative agreements, and contracts. Both new awards and expenditures have grown steadily and show remarkable increases over the corresponding numbers in FY2021 and years prior to that. For the first two quarters of FY25 alone, we received \$84M. While the FY2024 expenditures have not yet been finalized, we estimate that the R&D expenditures will be well-above the \$50 million per year R-1 threshold.

Carnegie R1 Threshold and Morgan Status

Our Estimate of next 3-year average

The most recent model projection for Carnegie’s 2027’s three-year annual average for Doctoral conferrals is 73 - above the R1 Threshold.



Morgan State University | Division of Research & Economic Development | Office of Technology Transfer

Morgan now has an expansive research portfolio and is receiving funding from a variety of agencies, including but not limited to, the U.S. Department of Education, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the U.S. Department of Defense, the U.S. Department of Commerce, the U.S. Department of Transportation and the National Science Foundation.

Additionally, to ensure that our research is impactful for Baltimore City, the State of Maryland, and the nation, we have created several new research centers such as the Center for Equitable Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning Systems, the Center for Urban Health Equity, the Center for Urban Violence and Crime Reduction, and the Center on Urban and Coastal Climate Science Research. The research being conducted by these centers will enhance equity, reduce disparities, and save lives.

The University has increased its full-time Post-Doctoral Research staff from 50 in FY2019 to 92 in FY2024. Over the past three years, the University has hired over 120 new tenure track faculty who are expected to conduct research. The University awarded 62 research and scholarship doctorates in 2024 and expects to reach the 70 per year threshold within the next few years.

Goal 4: Expand and Improve a Campus-Wide Infrastructure to Support Operational Excellence and Increase Overall Institutional Capacity

Morgan will advance new construction, capital improvement, deferred maintenance, and campus safety projects in keeping with the University's evolving master plan. The University will also implement an information technology plan to accommodate and optimize operational excellence in all aspects of its service delivery.

The Division of Institutional Advancement exists to advance the vision, mission and core values of Morgan State University. It also aims to foster a culture of philanthropy through strategic fundraising, communications and alumni engagement.

During fiscal year 2024, the Division of Institutional Advancement upgraded the constituent relationship management system which allows front-line fundraisers greater access to data on major donor prospects. The division is in the final stages of implementing an integrated prospect management infrastructure which will include strategically defining portfolios development staff for cultivation. In addition, donor prospects were screened using public data and predictive modeling to determine their propensity to make a major gift of \$25,000 or more. Lastly, the unit is expanding its team with several open positions that will enhance capacity and result in raising additional funds. One of these positions, the Director of Development for the School of Engineering and the School of Business, is a new role that will directly support these two units with priority fundraising initiatives. Other open positions include Associate Vice President for MSU Foundation Operations, Assistant Vice President for Advancement Services & Donor Relations and Director of Donor Relations.

The fundraising results for fiscal year 2024 from private was \$15.3M, and the alumni participation rate of 12%.

The campus has made progress in reducing energy consumption. The average decrease of electrical usage for the past six years is 5%. The average gas usage in 2024 declined by 28% from 2023. This decline is mainly due to the ongoing implementation of an Energy Performance Contract which includes key natural gas usage reduction initiatives such as improved infrastructure. A plan was developed in fall 2021 to curtail gas usage and to continue to reduce the use of electricity campus wide.

The Division of Information Technology (DIT) improved resiliency, scalability and capacity of enabling technology services such as Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI), endpoint device management, and patch management through strategic hybrid cloud infrastructure integration. In addition, the enterprise firewall upgrade was completed in fall 2023. A total of 667 computers were upgraded throughout campus in an effort to remove obsolete computers from the university's network and minimize risk. The Technology Refresh Program (TRP) funded the upgrade of 188

office desktop computers while grant funding was used to upgrade 399 computers in student labs and 79 instructor podium computers in classrooms.

Goal 5: Serve as the Premier Anchor Institution for Baltimore City and Beyond

Morgan will expand and deepen its role as a recognized anchor institution with broad social and economic impact. The University will engage community residents and officials in the application of knowledge and policy analyses derived from faculty and student research, an appropriate sharing of mutually beneficial resources and the deployment and utilization of University experts and professionals to address local and regional concerns in the areas of public education, housing, safety, employment and neighborhood revitalization. In this way, Morgan State University will serve as a dynamic epicenter dedicated to the generation, integration and dissemination of new knowledge as a driving force to effect policy and catalyze meaningful social change.

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. Over the course of the next ten years, Morgan expects to expand its partnerships with a focus on providing internships for Morgan's undergraduate and graduate students. Overall, Morgan executed 33 new partnerships in 2024 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 900 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.

The University, with the help of state support, has established seven cross-school research centers that address research and manufacturing challenges through an interdisciplinary lens. These centers provide focal points for the development and transfer of new knowledge, technologies, processes, and equipment in a cooperative environment with academic, industrial, government, non-profit, and community organizations. Output from these centers will allow Morgan to serve as a dynamic epicenter dedicated to the generation, integration, and dissemination of new knowledge as a driving force to affect policy and catalyze meaningful social and technological change.

Goal 6: Accelerate Global Education Initiatives and Expand the University's International Footprint

Morgan will enhance its study abroad program and promote global awareness and intercultural competencies through its diverse curricular and co-curricular programs and activities. The University will also increase international student enrollment and leverage its ongoing presence in West Africa to develop effective and replicable models of excellence in international

development and responsive, market-based educational service delivery in Latin America and the Caribbean nations.

The University continues to build back its enrollment of international students that was impacted by the COVID 19 pandemic and changes to federal international student policy. In 2024 the University hosted 336 international students. The University also is in the process of establishing additional partnerships with universities in Africa. Additionally, the University continues to build back its study abroad program which was impacted by COVID 19. In 2024, 145 Morgan students participated in Study Abroad programs, while 310 participated in the Virtual Exchange-COIL Study Abroad Program. The University expects to increase the number of faculty and staff engaged in both face-to-face Study Abroad programs as well as the Virtual Exchange-COIL Study Abroad Program.