

### **IIIC. Strengths and Opportunities**

- One of the University's great strengths is its location close to the nation's capital, where it has developed important ties with government agencies and officials, with embassies and internationally focused organizations, and with the community of people who work in the national and international governance, public policy, and public service arenas. As the only public research university in this center of world power, we are uniquely positioned to participate in, influence, and learn from policy making and actions of global significance.
- Location has also been a factor in the establishment of a wide array of close interactions with the many scientific, scholarly, and cultural organizations in the greater Washington region. Very significant partnerships exist with national scientific laboratories and organizations such as NASA, NIST, NOAA, FDA, NSA, NRL, BARC, and NIH, some of which have relocated important facilities close by. Similar partnerships have been established with the National Archives, the American Institute for Physics, the National Agricultural Library, the Library of Congress, and the Smithsonian Museums. The National Foreign Language Center, the National Women's Study Association, and the Association of Black Journalists are located on campus. In addition, there are strong university connections with the rich array of performing arts organizations in the area, through joint efforts with the Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center, through collaborations of faculty with other performance venues, and through the drawing of members of these organizations into the University's faculty ranks. In addition, there are important connections with the vibrant biotechnology industry that is established nearby.
- The University has major and growing strengths in the areas of national security, environmental sustainability, and energy science and policy. These include CASL, START, the National Smart Growth Center, ESSIC, and the UM Energy Research Center.
- The Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center enhances the quality of our performing arts programs, is a strong attraction for outstanding faculty and students, and is an important addition to the cultural life of the entire Washington area.
- The University has important opportunities to expand its emphasis on global issues in its research and educational programs. Through its location and its existing global connections it can provide more venues for students to become involved in national and international policy and action, and can attract more international students. It can greatly increase international affairs related on-campus activities through such initiatives as providing a speaking platform for world leaders visiting DC, or hosting ambassadors for regular visits for seminars or public presentations.
- Continuing and future developments, such as the University's Research Park, the development of East Campus, Route 1 improvements, and the proposed Purple Line will provide opportunities to enhance the recruitment of students, faculty, and staff, and will facilitate the further partnerships with local organizations that contribute so much to the University's strength.

- The University has many academic units or programs that are among the most productive or most highly regarded nationally. There are many programs that are greatly strengthened by being able to incorporate contributions from a number of disciplines. By a number of measures, both reputational and in terms of measurable scholarly productivity and research support, academic program quality has been steadily increasing both in depth and in breadth over the past two decades. This tradition of interdisciplinary activity and this sense of momentum are important strengths.
- The University's educational mission is greatly strengthened by its continuing commitment to, and success in, achieving a highly diverse student body. Its innovative special programs, such as its living-learning programs, help to break down a large student body into smaller and more cohesive learning communities. The beauty of its campus is an important draw for students, faculty, and staff alike.
- The new School of Public Health is creating great opportunities for attracting outstanding new students and faculty, for enhancing partnerships with neighboring institutions, for creating substantial new research opportunities, and for working with the community to enhance community health and well being.
- The Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center will provide new opportunities for enhancing the quality of our performing arts programs and for outreach to the community.
- The burgeoning student interest in environmental sustainability, and the increasing activism of students in general, will greatly aid the University to pursue its commitment to greatly expand its activity in the environmental arena.
- Although the University enrolls a highly talented student body, the large number of talented Maryland students whom we do not currently attract creates an opportunity to further enhance the academic profile of our students.
- Although the University has greatly increased its connections to its alumni over the past decade, and has drawn great support, both financial and in other forms, from them, the remaining large untapped alumni pool provides an opportunity for additional support. There are also other potential fund raising opportunities that may be available.
- The University has the opportunity to greatly improve its use of Information Technology both in instruction and in the administrative arena.
- There are important opportunities to create entrepreneurial educational programs, for such groups as alumni and large number of retirees that are expected in the coming years.
- With the development of a new strategic plan, the University has the opportunity to substantially reorganize its processes and procedures for better efficiency and effectiveness.
- The University has the opportunity to further develop its public relations organization and processes in order to cover campus news and faculty accomplishments more comprehensively.