

# FEARLESS IDEAS

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER FOR SUPPORTERS OF THE CAMPAIGN FOR MARYLAND / MAY 2021

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# GRAND CHALLENGES DEMAND FEARLESS IDEAS

## DEAR FRIENDS OF MARYLAND,

Thank you for everything you are doing to support UMD and help provide resources to prepare current and future Terps for lifelong success. Your dedication continues to make a big difference in the University of Maryland, our state, our nation and the world.

Giving Day 2021 was a new milestone for our university. I was deeply moved to see our worldwide Terrapin community come together for this annual online fundraising marathon and the record-breaking results demonstrate a strong commitment to Maryland. We raised a total of \$2,787,447 from 8,882 donors, significantly higher than last year's totals of \$1,639,139 from 7,299 donors. This means our efforts in 2021 yielded a 68% increase in dollars and a 20% jump in donors compared to last year—another testimony of the great things we accomplish by working together toward a shared purpose.

This enduring Maryland spirit continues to drive our Fearless Ideas Campaign. We have raised more than \$1.445 billion so far toward our goal of \$1.5 billion.

I was very pleased to join our provost, Ann Wylie, in co-hosting a recent conversation about graduate education at Maryland: an essential part of the university's mission of preparing students for the rigorous demands of our increasingly competitive knowledge economy. For more about this and other recent campaign events, please see page 4.

In this issue of our newsletter, you will read about the inauguration of Darryll J. Pines as the university's 34th president and his bold vision for Maryland. You will also hear from Naomi Lichtenstein '22, who is promoting her fearless idea to reduce single-use plastic waste on campus. On page 6, we have the story of Richard ("Rick") Davis '84, an exemplary alum whose longtime employer CNN made a gift in his honor to support graduate student education at the Philip Merrill College of Journalism. And you will be inspired when you meet Tiana Wynn '05, who was in the first cohort of our Incentive Awards Program and is now a partner in an accounting firm.

We are grateful to have you as part of our Maryland family. Thank you again for your dedication to the university and our students. Go Terps!

Sincerely yours,

### **William "Brit" Kirwan**

Chancellor Emeritus, University System of Maryland  
Honorary Trustee, University of Maryland College Park Foundation  
Campaign Co Chair

# PRESIDENTIAL INAUGURATION HIGHLIGHTS EXCELLENCE AND INCLUSION

**THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND** community celebrated the inauguration of Darryll J. Pines with a week of events showcasing its strengths in the arts, innovation and research.

The events, spanning April 19-24, highlighted Pines' focus as the university's 34th president on tackling the grand challenges of our time to benefit our state, nation and world, and reflected his priorities of excellence and inclusion.

**"I WILL HAVE TWO PRIORITIES AS YOUR PRESIDENT: TO PROMOTE EXCELLENCE IN EVERYTHING WE DO—TEACHING AND LEARNING, RESEARCH, INNOVATION, THE ARTS AND ATHLETICS; AND TO CREATE AN INCLUSIVE, MULTICULTURAL CAMPUS ENVIRONMENT...THESE TWO PRIORITIES ARE CLOSELY RELATED; EXCELLENCE MUST BE ROOTED IN OUR VALUES BECAUSE WHAT THE UNIVERSITY DOES MATTERS."** —DARRYLL J. PINES.

The president's investiture ceremony featured remarks by U.S. House Majority Leader Steny H. Hoyer '63, Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan, and four of Pines' predecessors at UMD: John B. Slaughter, William E. "Brit" Kirwan, C.D. "Dan" Mote Jr. and Wallace D. Loh, along with students, faculty and staff.

Highlights of the week include the first annual "Flagship's Finest: An Evening of Gratitude" honoring the university's most generous donors. It focused on the life and legacy of the late artist, scholar, curator and distinguished university professor emeritus David C. Driskell. The virtual gala featured a conversation between Pines and Curlee Holton, artist and director of the university's David C. Driskell Center.

The Innovate Maryland 2021 event included awards for Invention of the Year and Startup of the Year; the Alumni Association held its annual Celebration of Terps: Featuring the Maryland Awards; and Pines crossed the campus to distribute to students and employees samples of the new Dairy ice cream flavor named for him—TerraPines and Pralines.

Inauguration Week wrapped up on April 24 with Maryland Day, the university's annual tradition of fun, learning and discovery, which was broadcast online this year.

"It was a fitting celebration of Dr. Pines' bold vision for Maryland," said Brodie Remington, vice president for University Relations and chair of the Committee to Inaugurate the President. "The Maryland family is energized by Dr. Pines' priorities and his vision for a university at the forefront of advancing the well-being of humankind."

## THANK YOU!

The University of Maryland thanks the individuals and organizations whose generous support helped make possible President Darryll J. Pines' Inauguration Week celebration:



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## EVENTS PROMOTE GRADUATE RESEARCH AND ALUMNI NETWORKING

**THE ESSENTIAL ROLE** of graduate students in the university's research enterprise was in focus during a conversation held on March 10. Former president, chancellor emeritus, and campaign co-chair, William E. "Brit" Kirwan, and interim provost, Ann G. Wylie, co-hosted this event, convened to broaden donor support for graduate fellowships and demonstrate the valuable relationship between graduate students and Maryland's research enterprise.

Kirwan noted the impact of UMD's graduate programs in producing a highly skilled workforce and the next generation of faculty. "Any faculty member will tell you their research success would not be possible without talented, enthusiastic graduate students," he stated.

Wylie highlighted the importance of donor support of graduate fellowships in attracting outstanding students and faculty. "Philanthropy has a huge role to play," she said. "It also builds loyalty to the institution."

Three graduate students participated in the discussion: Ashley Chapin '22, a Ph.D. candidate in bio-engineering; Ebony Toussaint '22, a Ph.D. candidate in health policy and management; and Varun Suryan '22, a Ph.D. candidate in computer science.

Chapin explained her research on the gut-brain axis: "The gut is a complex organ, not just for digesting food, but for sensing our environment, sending signals to our brain to influence our basic emotions, our pain sensitivity and even guide our decisions. We still know little about the connection between the gastro-intestinal tract and the brain. That's where my research comes in."

Toussaint described how her research in health policy and health services uses mathematical models to generate data about access to mental health care. "I'm using patient reports and outcome measures, specifically psychological distress," she said. "One component of my dissertation is explaining who is at risk for developing moderate or severe psychological distress."

Suryan, who works with robots, said: "The broader question in my research is: How can we make robots learn faster and use them efficiently for our day-to-day applications? How can we get robots to transfer between tasks and generalize better, like humans?"

An earlier event, on March 1, was designed to build affinity for Maryland and sustain alumni engagement among Terp employees of Venable LLP, a high-profile law firm. Craig Thompson, '92, a partner at Venable, campaign co-chair and chair of the University of Maryland College Park Foundation's executive committee, spearheaded this initiative, encouraging participants to deepen their involvement with UMD.

President Darryll J. Pines and several university officials also participated, providing updates about administration priorities and such current issues as admissions, rankings, diversity and inclusion, and how UMD and the Fearless Ideas Campaign are prioritizing student success. Attendees also heard about opportunities to engage with the UMD Alumni Association.

CAMPAIGN PROGRESS

0  
\$1,500,000,000

96%  
OF GOAL MET

\$1.445B  
GIVEN TO DATE

\$55M  
REMAINING

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# Making a difference

*“We have the science, the facts, and the strength to make a difference”*

**NAOMI LICHTENSTEIN '22** is quick to state that she's not the only University of Maryland student passionate about the grand challenge of climate change. “My work is merely a continuation from those before me who fought and are still fighting for their rights to proper water and air quality, to protect the environment and our communities,” she said.

Lichtenstein, an environmental science and policy major from Baltimore, Md. was a 2020 recipient of the University of Maryland Alumni Association Scholarship. She's promoting an initiative to reduce single-use plastic waste on campus by branding and selling UMD containers and reusable bags; and using the proceeds to assist marginalized communities affected by climate change. In this interview, Lichtenstein discusses her commitment and why it matters.

## **How did you first develop a passion about climate change and the environment?**

I was lucky enough to attend a school that began educating us youngsters about climate change and the importance of tikkun olam, which in Hebrew means to fix the world, not just for ourselves but for others. This fostered a sense of community in me that extended beyond my family to anyone else struggling. I also grew up in a family that cares deeply about animals and biodiversity overall.

## **You've shared an idea for reducing single-use plastic waste on campus. How would this work?**

We've initiated conversations with Dining Services on this. The plan is to sell sustainably made products like hot/cold cups and multipurpose containers to students at lower prices. The incentive

is that students will get a higher discount than before for reusable items. Ideally, Dining Services would save money on purchasing less single-use items and would have increased sales from students as well. The extra profit yielded would go to organizations helping vulnerable and often marginalized communities suffering the effects of climate change now.

## **Can you share any highlights from being involved in promoting better care of the environment?**

Working with the Do Good Institute on this initiative has been such a positive experience. They have stuck with me through everything. I really don't know where I'd be without their assistance. I'm also slightly obsessed with my environmental fraternity here on campus (Epsilon Eta). I get to spend time with people I love while practicing sustainability and aiming to create permanent and impactful change.

## **Why do you consider good stewardship of the environment an important issue for UMD students and the larger community?**

Caring for the environment means caring for one another in efforts to save future generations from terrible consequences of climate change. College Park is not just home to students. It also has large Hispanic and Black communities that have been hit hard by the pandemic, and who suffer the most from avoidable pollution. It's the right thing to do and it touches everyone. And we have the science, the facts, and the strength to make a difference.

## **What's your message for other UMD students who might be wondering what more they could do to promote awareness about climate change?**

I'd highly recommend getting involved through the environmental fraternity

on campus or the Student Government's sustainability committee. I'm currently a coalition coordinator on the climate action campaign for a student activist group called MaryPIRG. Everyone is welcome and we're working on a ton of great things right now! I also would encourage seeking out the information that's out there. Knowledge is our greatest power.

## **Have you decided whether or how you'll pursue a career geared toward environmental and climate change issues?**

Absolutely! Short term, I'd like to continue my grassroots organizing and also pursue research abroad on rising sea levels/climate change consequences on marginalized communities. Long term, I'd like to use that field experience to help inform international climate policy and participate in global negotiations.

## **How are your studies here at UMD preparing you for career success?**

I've been exposed to environmental policy and law, a key part of my future career, I hope! I first developed my passion for negotiations from a science diplomacy course I took through the Global Fellows program. I'm more prepared for the job search, the interview process, and for navigating the world after graduation.

## **How did you benefit from the scholarship you received from the UMD Alumni Association?**

It truly relieved the stress I'd been experiencing. I could rest easy knowing that part of my textbook fees were covered and that I had that much less loans to pay back. Scholarships can be the difference between staying in school versus having to leave and focus on survival. They really make a difference for us students.

## “A REAL FAMILY AFFAIR”

### Rick Davis '84 adds to a legacy of supporting the success of UMD's journalism students

**YEARS BEFORE HIS LONGTIME EMPLOYER** CNN honored his work and service with a \$300,000 endowed fellowship for graduate student education at the Philip Merrill College of Journalism, Richard (“Rick”) Davis '84 was a steadfast supporter of the University of Maryland—firmly devoted to the success of Maryland students in the classroom and after graduation.

In establishing the CNN Richard Davis Endowed Distinguished Graduate Fellowship in Journalism, which was announced just before Davis retired at the end of January, the television network recognized the exemplary role he has played in mentoring students from a broad range of backgrounds at Merrill College. But his support for the college, where Davis also serves on the Board of Visitors, was making a significant difference long before that.

“Over the last 10 years, no one has taken a greater interest in our students than Rick Davis,” said Lucy A. Dalglish, dean of the Merrill College. “Not only has the Davis family contributed student scholarship support, they have made it a point to meet and mentor each scholarship recipient, which is not an easy thing to do when you

live in Atlanta. We are regularly blown away by Rick’s generosity to the college.”

In 2015, Rick Davis and his wife Linda demonstrated their commitment to UMD when they established the Davis Family Endowed Scholarship in Journalism—under the auspices of the TerpStart Matching Scholarship Program—to support need-based scholarships for undergraduate students at Merrill College. This Davis scholarship gives preference to students who are graduates of high schools in Baltimore City and Prince George’s County, Md., but it’s also open to students from other jurisdictions who meet TerpStart program criteria.

The Davises followed up their TerpStart gift with another endowment establishing the Davis Family Maryland Promise Scholarship, also designated to support Merrill College undergraduate students. They made this commitment as part of the Clark Challenge for the Maryland Promise Program (MPP) designed to increase access to higher education for students with demonstrated financial need from the state of Maryland and the District of Columbia. Gifts to the MPP are matched dollar for dollar by the A. James & Alice B. Clark Foundation and the University of Maryland.

It is particularly important to Rick Davis that the hands-on mentorship he’s been providing to Merrill College students will continue as part of the CNN Richard Davis Graduate Fellowship, and that the fellowship will support diversity in journalism and train talented students for newsroom leadership. Graduate students selected for the fellowship will be mentored by leaders and staff at CNN’s Washington, D.C., bureau—as well as Davis himself.

“I look forward to meeting and, yes, mentoring the recipients of the fellowship who will have the benefit of working with my remarkable colleagues at CNN’s Washington bureau,” Davis said. “My connection to Maryland extends to my daughter Sarah and son-in-law Jonathan Michaels, both Maryland grads. For me, this is a real family affair.”

Davis earned his B.A. in government and public affairs from American University, followed by his master’s in television production/communications from Maryland in 1984. He’d joined CNN in 1980 as one of the pioneer team members who helped launch the network. He retired this January after serving as CNN’s executive vice president of news standards and practices since 1998.

“Rick Davis is a CNN original,” said Jeff Zucker, president of CNN Worldwide. “This fellowship will support diversity in the newsroom and provide training for newsroom leadership. We cannot think of a better way to show our appreciation for Rick than the well-trained journalists of the future.”

Explaining why this way of honoring his four decades at CNN holds special meaning for him, Davis said: “It combines three of my great passions: CNN, the University of Maryland and helping to grow diversity in America’s newsrooms.”





## DETERMINED TO SUCCEED

**Fifteen years after graduation, IAP scholar Tiana Wynn '05 rose to partner in an accounting firm**

**SHORTLY AFTER THE BEGINNING** of her freshman year at the University of Maryland, Tiana Wynn lost her mother. It was a time of intense, disorienting grief for her and her six siblings—among whom she's the oldest. But Wynn wasn't going to let her emotional pain derail her intense desire for college and success. So, even as she struggled with the loss, she stayed the course. She had a goal to reach, and she knew her siblings were looking up to her.

This difficult time was also when Wynn realized the strength and depth of the support network she had in UMD's Incentive Awards Program and at the Robert H. Smith School of Business. "I was in the first cohort of the program, and I felt strongly supported, by my IAP peers and the program staff, as well as people at the Smith School," she said. "That personal support meant a lot to me. That was what kept me going. And it has also kept me connected to UMD to this day."

*“Wynn has proved herself a trailblazer in several respects. When she set her sights on getting into UMD and succeeding in college, she was a role model for her siblings.”*

Wynn's connections to UMD run deep. She's a lifetime member of the UMD Alumni Association. She is also a member of the Association's Board of Governors, and has served as chair of the board's scholarship committee. Wynn is now a donor as well: she gives to the Alumni Association, as well as the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. Incentive Awards Fund, which supports IAP scholars. In a sense, her UMD journey has come full circle—from scholarship beneficiary to donor. It's a commitment anchored on robust gratitude for the pivotal impact her Maryland education has had on her career success.

Wynn has proved herself a trailblazer in several respects. When she set her sights on getting into UMD and succeeding in college, she was a role model for her siblings. In addition to being one of only nine scholars in the first cohort of IAP, Wynn was also the first IAP scholar to pledge for a UMD sorority and the first to study abroad—in Britain—during the spring semester of 2004. Many more IAP scholars have followed her example since.

Born and raised in Baltimore, Md., Wynn always wanted to attend UMD—she was so laser-focused on this goal that she only applied to a couple of other universities just to please her high school guidance counselor. But even as she looked forward to being accepted, she worried about the cost of college. The Incentive Awards Program solved that problem, while providing her with a level of guidance and mentoring that surpassed her expectations.

After graduating in 2005 with bachelor's degrees in accounting and finance, Wynn joined the Baltimore office of the accounting firm Ernst & Young, and spent about five years there, along the way earning an MBA from Loyola University Maryland. Then she went to work as an audit manager for SB & Company, LLC, a certified public accounting and business advisory firm headquartered in Owings Mills, Md. She quickly rose to senior manager and then, in July 2020, she was named a partner at SB & Company.

Wynn's promotion to partner demonstrated the confidence SB & Company's founders and senior management had in her abilities and work ethic. In her new role, she's entrusted with managing a new line of business for the company, to ensure compliance with technical requirements, make decisions that are in the best interest of the firm, and help protect its profitability.

Wynn has been highly motivated for as long as she can remember, but she's also quick to credit the impact of her Maryland education. "UMD pushes you, encourages you to break barriers," she said. "And the IAP provided excellent training in so many ways. I was always trying to see what else was out there, but UMD encouraged me to aim high, to work harder, and to be more inquisitive."



# GIVE THE GIFT OF EDUCATION

The Clark Challenge for the Maryland Promise is building a \$100 million endowment that is providing need-based scholarships to undergraduate students from the state of Maryland and the District of Columbia. For more information, contact Susan Smith in University Development at 301.405.0196 or [ssmith86@umd.edu](mailto:ssmith86@umd.edu).

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- 3** Receive a dollar-for-dollar match from the university and the A. James & Alice B. Clark Foundation.
- 4** See your scholarship awarded, enhancing the success of UMD students—in perpetuity.