

Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

Capital Budget Subcommittee

March 11, 2019

**Testimony by
Tina M. Bjarekull, President
Maryland Independent College and University Association**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of four capital construction and renovation projects at MICUA institutions. The Governor's fiscal 2020 capital budget provides \$9.6 million for these projects. **MICUA respectfully requests \$13.6 million to allow these projects to move forward.** These four projects are:

- **Hood College (\$3.4 million):** Renovation of the Hodson-Beneficial Library and Technology Center to create a modern Learning Commons;
- **Johns Hopkins University (\$3.4 million):** Construction of a new academic building on the Homewood campus to house the Stavros Niarchos Foundation Agora Institute, focused on building strong democracies;
- **Mount St. Mary's University (\$3.4 million):** Renovation and construction of an addition to the Knott Academic Center, a central instructional building on campus; and
- **Stevenson University (\$3.4 million):** Construction of a new academic building on the Owings Mill campus to house the library, a black box theatre, classrooms, and offices.

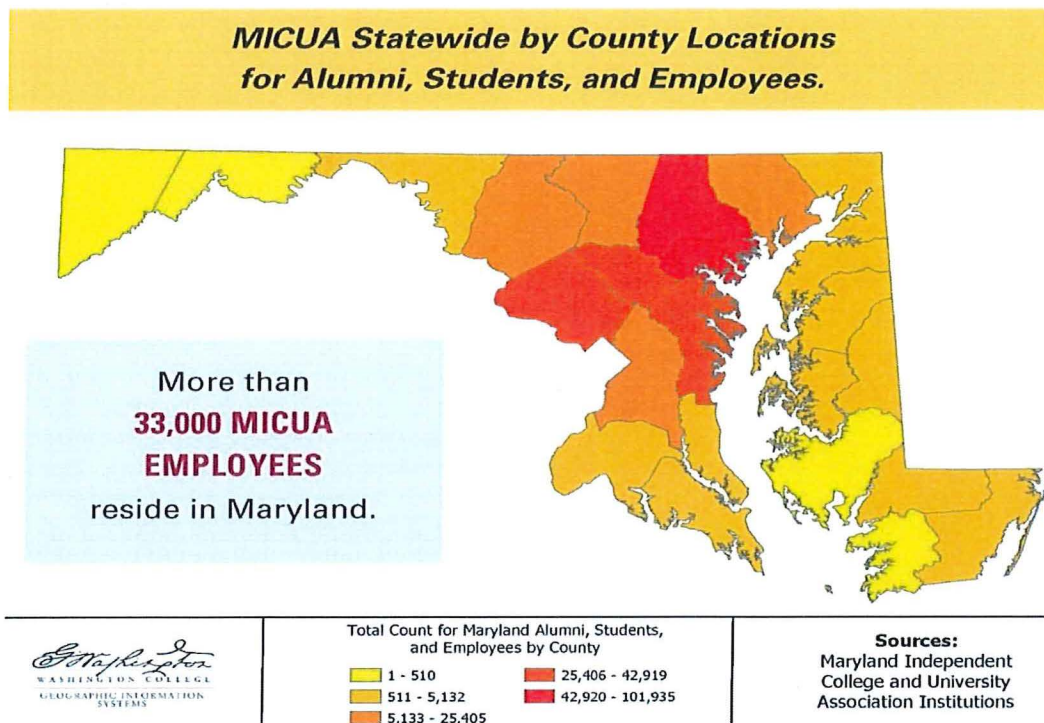
MICUA's request of \$13.6 million includes \$12 million in new funds and \$1.6 million from a prior-year authorization. MICUA requested that the State deauthorize a \$1.6 million grant to Capitol Technology University because the project is no longer eligible.

MICUA's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) includes a total of \$379.1 million in State-eligible capital projects over the next five years. Given the capital needs of our member campuses and the importance of our public mission, we believe that MICUA's fiscal 2020 request of \$13.6 million is reasonable. These projects are well-aligned with the goals identified in the latest *Maryland State Plan for Postsecondary Education* and support important local initiatives in Baltimore City, Baltimore County, and Frederick County. Collectively, these four capital projects will leverage over \$106 million in private resources and support approximately 850 construction jobs. Once completed, these academic facilities will provide future employment for faculty, researchers, staff, and student workers.

MICUA Capital Project Process and Outcomes

Each year, the MICUA Capital Projects Committee reviews all capital budget requests proposed by its member institutions to determine project readiness, the institution's ability to meet the State's matching requirement, and overall compliance with State and MICUA rules. All four capital projects endorsed by the MICUA Board for fiscal 2020 are directly related to the academic missions of the individual institutions and support the construction or renovation of buildings used for instruction and research. Further, these projects augment the State's higher education agenda, meet eligibility requirements established by the Department of Budget and Management, and comply with MICUA's more stringent criteria for endorsement. The MICUA projects address strategic academic initiatives and priorities on each campus and will be designed to maximize opportunities for student and faculty collaboration and to promote interdisciplinary teaching, learning, and research.

Maryland's independent colleges and universities require these capital investments to accommodate increased student enrollment, address workforce needs, attract research dollars, support a vibrant economy, and provide choice and opportunity for Maryland's citizens. MICUA institutions are anchors in their local communities and regions—driving economic development; providing cultural, recreational, and educational enrichment; and serving as major private sector employers. As illustrated by the map below, MICUA member institutions currently employ more than 33,000 workers who reside in every county in the State.



Stevenson University and Rosewood Property

The Governor's capital budget includes \$6 million in fiscal 2020 for Stevenson University to continue the environmental abatement and demolition of buildings on the Rosewood property. Rosewood is the site of a closed State developmental disabilities center in Baltimore County. This project is outside of the MICUA Capital Grant Program and is the culmination of many years of negotiations between Stevenson and the Maryland Department of Health regarding the transfer of a parcel of the Rosewood property from the State to Stevenson. This property poses significant environmental hazards and cannot be developed by Stevenson in its current state. A representative from Stevenson University will be at the hearing to answer any questions about the project.

Washington College Amendment

MICUA is requesting an amendment to a State capital grant authorized for Washington College in the *Maryland Consolidated Capital Bond Loan of 2018*. The Maryland General Assembly authorized a \$4 million capital grant to the College to construct a 21,000 square foot academic complex adjacent to Cromwell Hall. This 21,000 square foot facility was one of two academic buildings the College planned to construct. The second building, the Semans Griswold Environmental Hall, would be built along the Chester River to house Environmental Sciences and other science programs.

Although the College launched fundraising campaigns for both of these projects, alumni, donors, and other friends of the College have put more of their resources and support behind the Environmental Hall. This is not surprising given that environmental science is a core strength for the institution, and the Chester River watershed is a critical focus for the Chestertown community and surrounding region.

Washington College has requested that MICUA support legislation to shift its 2018 State capital grant to the Environmental Hall. This request was endorsed by the MICUA Capital Projects Committee and approved by the MICUA Board of Trustees. Discussions with the Department of Budget and Management indicate concurrence with this request, and the Department of Legislative Services has recommended language that would officially amend the 2018 authorization for this purpose. With the grant, the College will be able to commence with construction of the Environmental Hall immediately. The total cost of the project is \$11.4 million, and the College has already raised funds to match the \$4 million State grant.

Thank you for your ongoing support of the MICUA Capital Grant Program. We sincerely appreciate our partnership with the State of Maryland and value your leadership.



Senate Budget and Taxation Committee, Capital Budget Subcommittee

Charles G. Mann, Vice President for Finance and Treasurer
March 11, 2019

On behalf of Hood College, thank you for recognizing that capital support for the State's independent colleges and universities is a wise investment benefiting all of Maryland. We are very grateful for the Maryland General Assembly's steadfast support of the MICUA capital grant program.

Hood College is requesting \$3.4 million in Fiscal Year 2020 to support the renovation of the Beneficial-Hodson Library and Technology Center into a modern learning commons. As outlined in the College's master plan, which was approved by the Board of Trustees in October 2015, the renovated facility will provide access to information in all forms and create flexible spaces that facilitate student academic achievement.

When constructed in 1992, the 65,870 gross square foot Library was designed to house the College's print collections and archive recorded information. These priorities are reflected in the current layout of the building, which allocates a significant amount of space for physical books. Over the years, advances in digital technology have made information more accessible and changed how libraries support student learning. Libraries are no longer viewed as quiet buildings reserved for storing books. Instead, students seek a vibrant and active environment that supports multiple types of learning activities.

The learning commons concept responds to these changes by combining the functions of a library, laboratory, classroom and lounge into a single academic resource center. For Hood College, transforming the Beneficial-Hodson Library and Technology Center into a learning commons will create a user-friendly environment that supports exploration, encourages collaboration, and centralizes many student academic support services. The existing print collection will be reduced to provide flexible learning spaces that can be configured by students based on their needs. Additionally, the Josephine Steiner Center for Academic Achievement and Retention, the Center for Teaching Excellence, and the Information Technology Department will be relocated to the renovated facility to increase their visibility and accessibility by students.

In 2015, Hood College launched the first doctoral program in Frederick County, responding to the educational needs of community leaders. This program, which offers a doctorate in business administration or organizational leadership, has been highly successful with three full cohorts of leaders from various sectors (e.g., business, education, government, nonprofit, military) participating in the program. The Library has served as the academic facility for this program by reconfiguring existing space into temporary classrooms. The renovation of the Beneficial-Hodson Library will allow Hood College to provide state-of-the-art seminar rooms for this program, which also will be available to the entire campus community for additional academic space.



Testimony to the Senate
Budget and Taxation Committee, Capital Budget Subcommittee
Mary E. Clapsaddle, Director of State Affairs
March 11, 2019

On behalf of Johns Hopkins University, thank you for recognizing that capital support for Maryland Independent Colleges and Universities (MICUA) is a wise investment that benefits all of Maryland. We are very grateful for the General Assembly's steadfast support of this capital grant program, and urge your favorable consideration of an increase of \$4 million in the capital budget for the FY2020 MICUA capital projects

The Project

Johns Hopkins' FY2020 request of \$3.4 million supports an estimated \$97M capital project to design and construct a facility to house the Stavros Niarchos Foundation Agora Institute (SNFAI) on the Homewood Campus in Baltimore, Maryland. The 57,000 gross square feet (GSF) facility will be located on the east side of the campus proximate to Krieger School of Arts and Sciences (KSAS), its academic home.

The facility will house 47 faculty, 11 of which are new positions. In addition to SNFAI's core faculty and existing KSAS faculty from related disciplines, it will accommodate 70 graduate students, a minimum of 16 visiting scholars and 8 staff. The facility will provide a combination of scholarship, research and public facing features organized to support three distinct yet separate interdependent program typologies that support academic, laboratory and conversation/community agendas.

Background

In 2017 the Stavros Niarchos Foundation and Johns Hopkins University announced a joint effort to create an interdisciplinary institute to foster civil engagement and civil discourse, critical elements to strong democracies and functioning communities. The effort recognizes that the United States and other countries across the world are in an era of intense internal division and mistrust. This trend toward polarization is concurrent with social and technological developments that could not have been anticipated one or two decades ago. As a result, today there exists a distinct need for a focused effort to engage in the interdisciplinary research necessary to understand the lack of civil discourse and inclusive dialogue prevalent across cultures and governments. The Institute will support research into the causes of these phenomena and seek to address solutions. In the process the SNFAI will engage not just the leading scholars from a variety of academic disciplines, but also real world experts – elected officials, advocacy group leaders, and K-12 educators along with community members.

Justification and Details of the Facility

Today no building exists on the Homewood campus that could readily support the program that has been developed based on SNFAI's mission. Unlike traditional academic space, there are no precedents for this unique project. Consequently for the better part of a year Johns Hopkins has been testing ideas and developing a program to address the facility's needs. With the ancient Athenian Agora as a model, and recognizing that events focused on conversation and debate are essential to the mission, components for the tailored program to support this extraordinary scholarly mission emerged.

Laboratory space will be highly flexible and technologically advanced to support ongoing and evolving research and experimentation into civil discourse. It will allow for virtual working sessions amongst scholars and students and interactive collaborations across organizations and individuals. It will provide physical space without imposing physical constraints on research.

Academic space will include collaborative work rooms, classrooms and seminar rooms. They will be designed to build community within the SNF Agora Institute and will be a destination to satisfy intellectual curiosity, and a place to energize passion for an awakening of the fundamentals of democracy.

The conversation convening/public space is essential to the success of SNFAI's mission which intends to communicate and collaborate with the community. These spaces are part of an aspirational "world stage" for inclusive civil discourse, problem solving and the exchange of ideas. The spaces will be welcoming and comfortable, and scalable to suit the purpose of an event- and it will be inviting to all who want to engage.

Project Timeline

Design – 10/18 – 11/20

Construction – 05/20 – 06/22

Financing Plan

The requested \$3.4 million State Capital Grant in FY 2020 will augment a blend of funding sources as follows:

- \$23.6 million in debt and other University funding sources
- \$70 million in philanthropy

Benefits to the citizens of Maryland

Johns Hopkins University was selected to be the home of the SNFAI in part due to its status as America's first research university. Additionally, from History to Neuroscience, Sociology to Political Science, the University is home to top tier programs expected to be involved in scholarly research supporting SNFAI's mission. The Institute will draw from internationally recognized expertise in a variety of fields, thereby benefitting Maryland's economy through travel to the State, accommodation, and associated expenses for visitors to the facility. In addition, the SNFAI will provide the State an opportunity to support a unique academic and public forum and provide national and international leadership in encouraging civil discourse, productive policy making, and the strengthening of democracy.

This project will provide hundreds of construction jobs during the construction phase. As part of Johns Hopkins' commitment to economic inclusion, and the HopkinsLocal program, this project will require a minimum of 20% participation by Minority and Woman owned businesses. There will also be a requirement of 10% participation with Local Business Enterprises that have offices within the limits of Baltimore City. Bringing additional prestige and visitors to our State, the facility will be designed by world-renowned architect Renzo Piano, in partnership with award-winning local Baltimore architect, Ayers Saint Gross. Piano's iconic buildings typically draw visitors from around the world just for the opportunity to see his works.

Thank you for your **favorable consideration** of \$3.4 million in capital funds to assist in the design and construction of the SNF Agora Institute at Johns Hopkins University.



Senate Budget and Taxation Committee, Capital Budget Subcommittee

March 11, 2019

William Davies, Vice President for Business and Finance

On behalf of Mount St. Mary's University, thank you for the capital support of Maryland's independent colleges and universities. This wise and valuable investment benefits the entire state. We are grateful for the Maryland General Assembly's continued recognition of the vital role of independent colleges and universities in educating 63,000 students annually and providing 27 percent of the four-year degrees conferred in Maryland. We are proud of these accomplishments which demonstrate the impact of being the beneficiary of 2 percent of Maryland's investment in higher education.

Mount St. Mary's University's FY2020 request of \$3.4 million is for an estimated \$7.4 million project to construct an addition and renovate Knott Academic Center, one of the primary instructional buildings on the University's Emmitsburg campus. Built in 1975, the building serves the College of Liberal Arts and the Richard J. Bolte, Sr., School of Business. The University community has agreed that improved teaching and learning space is a top priority moving forward. The Campus Master Plan calls for the University to systematically address the condition of its aging academic buildings and to upgrade and modernize instructional space. The renovation and expansion of the Knott Academic Center will add more than 12,000 square feet to the existing building and provide new classrooms, labs, faculty offices, and meeting rooms.

The estimated total cost of this project is \$7.4 million. The request of \$3.4 million represents approximately 46 percent of the total project cost. The University has raised matching funds as a result of its capital campaign including a generous gift of \$3 million from the Bolte Family Foundation to enhance the impact of the Bolte School of Business.

Undergraduate and graduate enrollments at Mount St. Mary's have increased from 1,900 students in 2005 to more than 2,400 students in 2018. Additional enrollment growth at the undergraduate and graduate levels is projected between 2019 and 2023, bringing the total student body to over 2,500 students. Student enrollment growth and academic program expansion at the University have caused classroom shortages throughout campus during peak scheduling times. In addition, growth in full-time undergraduate faculty has created significant need for additional office space. The renovation and expansion of the Knott Academic Center is

crucial to the University's ability to effectively accommodate these student, program and faculty increases as well as future growth.

Over the past two years, Mount St. Mary's has launched several undergraduate and graduate certificate and degree offerings in data science, risk management, cybersecurity, entrepreneurship, quality assurance and regulatory science, applied history, Italian, and the interdisciplinary major of philosophy, politics and economics. The renovation of Knott Academic Center will support these and other planned academic programs, assuring the University remains competitive and responsive to the needs of its students, faculty and surrounding community, as well as businesses and federal agencies in the region.

Mount St. Mary's University is the second largest employer in Northern Frederick County, slightly surpassed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. We are committed to strengthening Maryland's regional economy and economic competitiveness. We are dedicated to educating and developing ethical leaders who are driven by core values and a desire to change their community and the world positively by maximizing their potential and leading lives of meaning and purpose.

Thank you for your continued efforts and support of the mission of independent colleges and universities to serve Maryland's higher education needs and for your favorable consideration of our request for a \$3.4 million MICUA capital grant. This funding is critical to enable Mount St. Mary's University to continue its quest to graduate ethical leaders who are inspired by a passion for learning and lead lives of significance as well as meet the needs for a highly skilled workforce in Maryland.

Testimony to the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee, Capital Budget Subcommittee

March 11, 2019

Melanie Edmondson, Associate Vice President for Financial Affairs/Controller

On behalf of Stevenson University, thank you for recognizing that capital support for the state's independent colleges and universities is an investment that ultimately benefits all of Maryland. We are grateful for the Maryland General Assembly's steadfast support of the MICUA capital grant program.

Stevenson University's FY2020 request of \$3.4 million in matching grant funds is for the design and construction of a new academic building on our Owings Mills campus. This new building is an integral part of Stevenson's long-term master plan and the development of the Owings Mills campus. As we continue to relocate academic programs and operations from our historic Greenspring campus, there is a significant need for academic space.

This building which is approximately 50,000 square feet will house the University's library, black box theater, and faculty offices. The black box theater is a versatile and adaptable performance space with flexible staging and seating configurations. The design provides maximum versatility for support of Stevenson's Theatre and Media Performance degree, theater productions, and other cultural arts programs.

Our current library and theater are located on the Greenspring campus, which poses significant challenges since the majority of the academic programs are now located on the Owings Mills campus, seven miles away. Without the addition of this new academic building in Owings Mills, there is no room to relocate additional faculty, academic programs, the theater, or the library. Leaving these facilities on the Greenspring campus is challenging to faculty and students requiring travel between campuses for those who have courses at both locations.

Consolidation into one geographic location will reduce Stevenson's cost of operations through the elimination of redundant infrastructure, services, and expenses. Additionally, it will enhance the student's experience by providing classes, activities, services, and access to faculty, research materials, and academic programs on one campus.

The request for \$3.4 million represents approximately 40 percent of the total project cost of \$8.4 million. Without the State grant, Stevenson will not be able to go forward with this project and continue to meet goals set by our long-term plan. Enrolling over 3,900 undergraduate and graduate students, Stevenson University plays a unique role in Maryland higher education, blending liberal arts and career preparation. Academic space and services are central to helping fulfill our educational mission. This new building will enable the University to continue to expand its academic program offerings providing more robust educational opportunities to current and perspective students.

The University is committed to strengthening Maryland's workforce, particularly in critical areas such as science, technology, engineering, business, and nursing. Thank you for your continued support of Stevenson University and we appreciate your generous funding of the state's capital funding for their independent colleges and universities.

House Appropriations Committee

Capital Budget Subcommittee

March 12, 2019

**Testimony by
Tina M. Bjarekull, President
Maryland Independent College and University Association**

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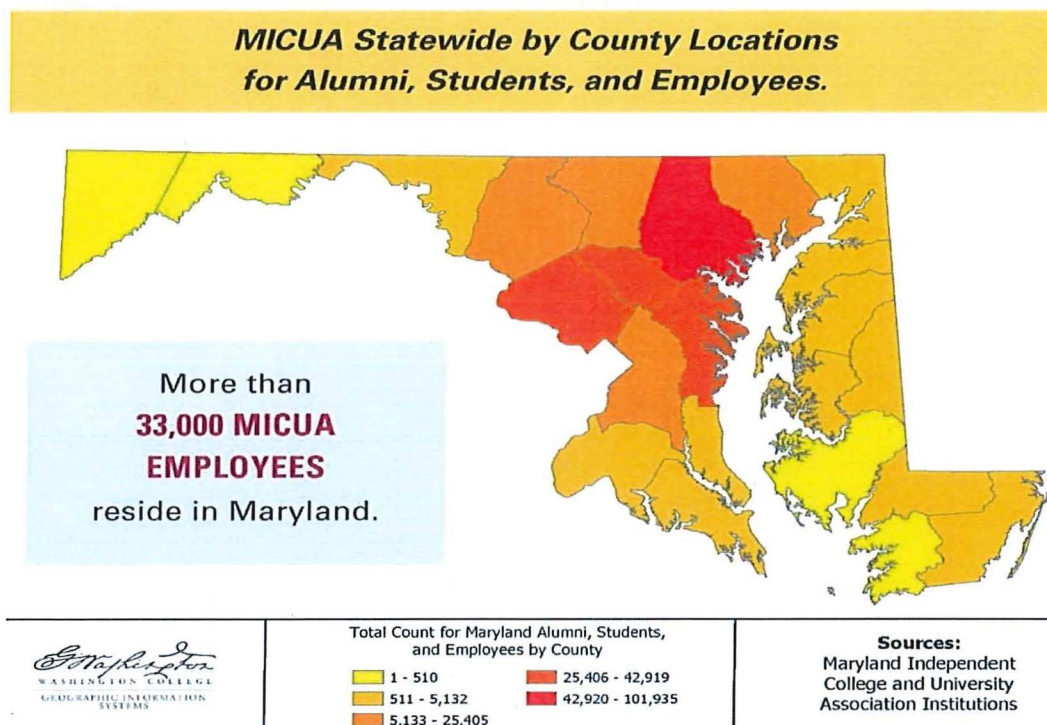
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MICUA Capital Project Process and Outcomes

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Thank you for your ongoing support of the MICUA Capital Grant Program. We sincerely appreciate our partnership with the State of Maryland and value your leadership.



House Appropriations Committee, Capital Budget Subcommittee

Charles G. Mann, Vice President for Finance and Treasurer

March 12, 2019

On behalf of Hood College, thank you for recognizing that capital support for the State's independent colleges and universities is a wise investment benefiting all of Maryland. We are very grateful for the Maryland General Assembly's steadfast support of the MICUA capital grant program.

Hood College is requesting \$3.4 million in Fiscal Year 2020 to support the renovation of the Beneficial-Hodson Library and Technology Center into a modern learning commons. As outlined in the College's master plan, which was approved by the Board of Trustees in October 2015, the renovated facility will provide access to information in all forms and create flexible spaces that facilitate student academic achievement.

When constructed in 1992, the 65,870 gross square foot Library was designed to house the College's print collections and archive recorded information. These priorities are reflected in the current layout of the building, which allocates a significant amount of space for physical books. Over the years, advances in digital technology have made information more accessible and changed how libraries support student learning. Libraries are no longer viewed as quiet buildings reserved for storing books. Instead, students seek a vibrant and active environment that supports multiple types of learning activities.

The learning commons concept responds to these changes by combining the functions of a library, laboratory, classroom and lounge into a single academic resource center. For Hood College, transforming the Beneficial-Hodson Library and Technology Center into a learning commons will create a user-friendly environment that supports exploration, encourages collaboration, and centralizes many student academic support services. The existing print collection will be reduced to provide flexible learning spaces that can be configured by students based on their needs. Additionally, the Josephine Steiner Center for Academic Achievement and Retention, the Center for Teaching Excellence, and the Information Technology Department will be relocated to the renovated facility to increase their visibility and accessibility by students.

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Mary E. Clapsaddle, Director of State Affairs
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The Project

Johns Hopkins' FY2020 request of \$3.4 million supports an estimated \$97M capital project to design and construct a facility to house the Stavros Niarchos Foundation Agora Institute (SNFAI) on the Homewood Campus in Baltimore, Maryland. The 57,000 gross square feet (GSF) facility will be located on the east side of the campus proximate to Krieger School of Arts and Sciences (KSAS), its academic home.

The facility will house 47 faculty, 11 of which are new positions. In addition to SNFAI's core faculty and existing KSAS faculty from related disciplines, it will accommodate 70 graduate students, a minimum of 16 visiting scholars and 8 staff. The facility will provide a combination of scholarship, research and public facing features organized to support three distinct yet separate interdependent program typologies that support academic, laboratory and conversation/community agendas.

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Justification and Details of the Facility

Today no building exists on the Homewood campus that could readily support the program that has been developed based on SNFAI's mission. Unlike traditional academic space, there are no precedents for this unique project. Consequently for the better part of a year Johns Hopkins has been testing ideas and developing a program to address the facility's needs. With the ancient Athenian Agora as a model, and recognizing that events focused on conversation and debate are essential to the mission, components for the tailored program to support this extraordinary scholarly mission emerged.

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Project Timeline

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Construction – 05/20 – 06/22

Financing Plan

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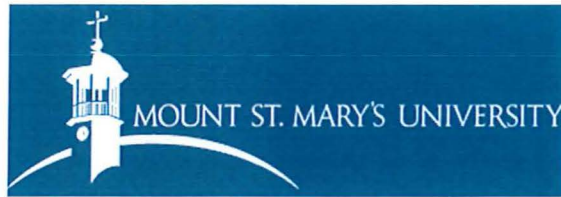
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- \$70 million in philanthropy

Benefits to the citizens of Maryland

Johns Hopkins University was selected to be the home of the SNFAI in part due to its status as America's first research university. Additionally, from History to Neuroscience, Sociology to Political Science, the University is home to top tier programs expected to be involved in scholarly research supporting SNFAI's mission. The Institute will draw from internationally recognized expertise in a variety of fields, thereby benefitting Maryland's economy through travel to the State, accommodation, and associated expenses for visitors to the facility. In addition, the SNFAI will provide the State an opportunity to support a unique academic and public forum and provide national and international leadership in encouraging civil discourse, productive policy making, and the strengthening of democracy.

This project will provide hundreds of construction jobs during the construction phase. As part of Johns Hopkins' commitment to economic inclusion, and the HopkinsLocal program, this project will require a minimum of 20% participation by Minority and Woman owned businesses. There will also be a requirement of 10% participation with Local Business Enterprises that have offices within the limits of Baltimore City. Bringing additional prestige and visitors to our State, the facility will be designed by world-renowned architect Renzo Piano, in partnership with award-winning local Baltimore architect, Ayers Saint Gross. Piano's iconic buildings typically draw visitors from around the world just for the opportunity to see his works.

Thank you for your **favorable consideration** of \$3.4 million in capital funds to assist in the design and construction of the SNF Agora Institute at Johns Hopkins University.



House Appropriations Committee, Capital Budget Subcommittee

March 12, 2019

William Davies, Vice President for Business and Finance

On behalf of Mount St. Mary's University, thank you for the capital support of Maryland's independent colleges and universities. This wise and valuable investment benefits the entire state. We are grateful for the Maryland General Assembly's continued recognition of the vital role of independent colleges and universities in educating 63,000 students annually and providing 27 percent of the four-year degrees conferred in Maryland. We are proud of these accomplishments which demonstrate the impact of being the beneficiary of 2 percent of Maryland's investment in higher education.

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The estimated total cost of this project is \$7.4 million. The request of \$3.4 million represents approximately 46 percent of the total project cost. The University has raised matching funds as a result of its capital campaign including a generous gift of \$3 million from the Bolte Family Foundation to enhance the impact of the Bolte School of Business.

Undergraduate and graduate enrollments at Mount St. Mary's have increased from 1,900 students in 2005 to more than 2,400 students in 2018. Additional enrollment growth at the undergraduate and graduate levels is projected between 2019 and 2023, bringing the total student body to over 2,500 students. Student enrollment growth and academic program expansion at the University have caused classroom shortages throughout campus during peak scheduling times. In addition, growth in full-time undergraduate faculty has created significant need for additional office space. The renovation and expansion of the Knott Academic Center is

crucial to the University's ability to effectively accommodate these student, program and faculty increases as well as future growth.

Over the past two years, Mount St. Mary's has launched several undergraduate and graduate certificate and degree offerings in data science, risk management, cybersecurity, entrepreneurship, quality assurance and regulatory science, applied history, Italian, and the interdisciplinary major of philosophy, politics and economics. The renovation of Knott Academic Center will support these and other planned academic programs, assuring the University remains competitive and responsive to the needs of its students, faculty and surrounding community, as well as businesses and federal agencies in the region.

Mount St. Mary's University is the second largest employer in Northern Frederick County, slightly surpassed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. We are committed to strengthening Maryland's regional economy and economic competitiveness. We are dedicated to educating and developing ethical leaders who are driven by core values and a desire to change their community and the world positively by maximizing their potential and leading lives of meaning and purpose.

Thank you for your continued efforts and support of the mission of independent colleges and universities to serve Maryland's higher education needs and for your favorable consideration of our request for a \$3.4 million MICUA capital grant. This funding is critical to enable Mount St. Mary's University to continue its quest to graduate ethical leaders who are inspired by a passion for learning and lead lives of significance as well as meet the needs for a highly skilled workforce in Maryland.

Testimony to the House Appropriations Committee, Capital Budget Subcommittee

March 12, 2019

Melanie Edmondson, Associate Vice President for Financial Affairs/Controller

On behalf of Stevenson University, thank you for recognizing that capital support for the state's independent colleges and universities is an investment that ultimately benefits all of Maryland. We are grateful for the Maryland General Assembly's steadfast support of the MICUA capital grant program.

Stevenson University's FY2020 request of \$3.4 million in matching grant funds is for the design and construction of a new academic building on our Owings Mills campus. This new building is an integral part of Stevenson's long-term master plan and the development of the Owings Mills campus. As we continue to relocate academic programs and operations from our historic Greenspring campus, there is a significant need for academic space.

This building which is approximately 50,000 square feet will house the University's library, black box theater, and faculty offices. The black box theater is a versatile and adaptable performance space with flexible staging and seating configurations. The design provides maximum versatility for support of Stevenson's Theatre and Media Performance degree, theater productions, and other cultural arts programs.

Our current library and theater are located on the Greenspring campus, which poses significant challenges since the majority of the academic programs are now located on the Owings Mills campus, seven miles away. Without the addition of this new academic building in Owings Mills, there is no room to relocate additional faculty, academic programs, the theater, or the library. Leaving these facilities on the Greenspring campus is challenging to faculty and students requiring travel between campuses for those who have courses at both locations.

Consolidation into one geographic location will reduce Stevenson's cost of operations through elimination of redundant infrastructure, services, and expenses. Additionally, it will enhance the student's experience by providing classes, activities, services, and access to faculty, research materials, and academic programs on one campus.

The request for \$3.4 million represents approximately 40 percent of the total project cost of \$8.4 million. Without the State grant, Stevenson will not be able to go forward with this project and continue to meet goals set by our long-term plan. Enrolling over 3,900 undergraduate and graduate students, Stevenson University plays a unique role in Maryland higher education, blending liberal arts and career preparation. Academic space and services are central to helping fulfill our educational mission. This new building will enable the University to continue to expand its academic program offerings providing more robust educational opportunities to current and perspective students.

The University is committed to strengthening Maryland's workforce, particularly in critical areas such as science, technology, engineering, business, and nursing. Thank you for your continued support of Stevenson University and we appreciate your generous funding of the state's capital funding for their independent colleges and universities.