



FY 2023

OPERATING BUDGET TESTIMONY

BOWIE STATE UNIVERSITY

Presented by Dr. Aminta H. Breaux, *President*

Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
Subcommittee on Education, Business and Administration

Senator Nancy King, Chair
February 25, 2022

House Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on Education and Economic Development

Delegate Ben Barnes, Chair
March 3, 2022

BOWIE STATE UNIVERSITY | FY 2023 OPERATING BUDGET TESTIMONY

On behalf of Maryland's first HBCU, I am pleased to offer testimony in support of the Governor's FY 2023 operating budget. I want to thank the Governor and members of the legislature for your continued support of higher education and your recognition of the important role we play in fueling Maryland's economy and transforming the lives of Maryland families.

Our students, faculty and staff have shown great resiliency during the COVID-19 pandemic and I am grateful to be able to look back over many accomplishments. The pandemic did not slow us down. Rather, we pivoted, adapted and even picked up pace along the Race to Excellence, which is the name of our strategic plan. I am happy to share some highlights in key priority areas: academic excellence, student success and long-term viability.

We have emerged from the pandemic bolder and stronger. The demand for a Bowie State University education continues to be high. Applications for fall 2022 are up by 34% over last year. Enrollment is up and we continue to exceed state goals for degree production. Our faculty continue to develop new academic programs and engage in innovative teaching and research, pivoting to fully online or HyFlex classroom instruction as needed. We used emergency federal funds to reduce student debt and close the digital divide for our students by providing laptops, hot spots and webcams.

We surpassed our fundraising goal last year and leveraged a \$25 million, transformational private gift to boost our endowment and expand corporate partnerships. We also launched the university's largest fundraising campaign in its history. We opened – on time, on budget and with full occupancy – a new Entrepreneurship

Living Learning Community, a \$42 million, 170,000-square-foot facility that serves as a focal point for entrepreneurship and is part of the region's entrepreneurship ecosystem. And we are implementing a new economic development plan that will undergird our continued growth.

The BSU community returned safely and boldly to the campus in July 2021 with all the necessary protocols in place. The university is thriving and, with your support, we will continue to deliver on our mission to provide access to affordable, high-quality educational opportunities while supporting Maryland's workforce and economy.

**TOP
25
HBCU**

- U.S. News & World Report 2022

TOP **Producer of African American
GRADUATE DEGREES**
- Diverse Issues 2022

**AMERICA'S
TOP COLLEGES**
- Forbes 2021

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

EXCELLING IN STEAM

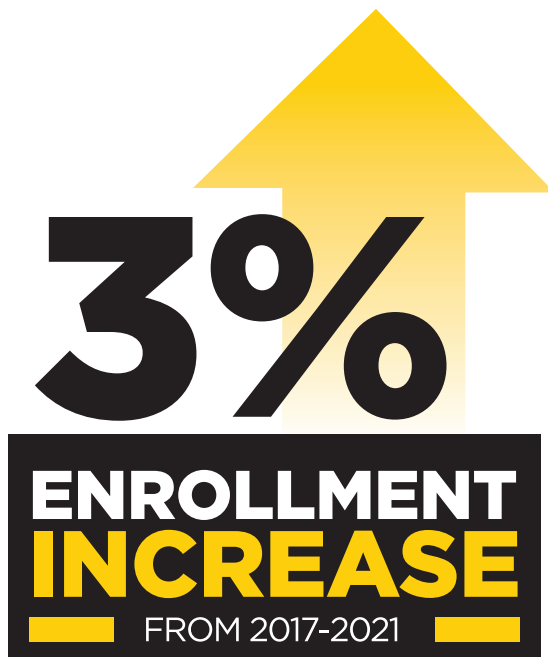
BSU excels in Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics (STEAM) programs, including undergraduate programs in biology, bioinformatics, chemistry, computer science, and computer technology, as well as visual and performing arts.

We are among the top 5 Maryland universities awarding undergraduate degrees in computer science to African Americans according to *Diverse Issues on Higher Education*, and our cybersecurity programs are designated by the National Security Agency as models of excellence in cyber defense education. Computer science and technology students work on cyber challenges with expert faculty and industry partners.

Our faculty are infusing data science into curricula and research and helping our students succeed in data-driven markets and careers. Supported by a grant from the National Science Foundation, our data analytics initiative includes development of an upper level undergraduate certificate program in data science analytics. The university also launched a concentration in data analytics for business administration majors, combining computer

science, mathematics and business courses to help students develop high-demand digital technology skills and become leaders in this fast-growing field. Data Science and Analytics: An interdisciplinary approach to infusing data science and analytics into undergraduate curriculum equips students to excel in the data-driven global economy.

Programs in the fine & performing arts continue to garner national recognition. Through an innovative partnership with LAIKA Studios — the Oscar®-nominated and Golden Globe Award-winning feature film animation studio — faculty and students in our Visual Communications and Digital Media Arts (VCDMA) program are building the nation's first animation studio at an HBCU and enhancing career opportunities in the animation industry for BSU students. Students in our theatre arts program have received several Kennedy Center honors, most recently for the production of "Pipeline" by Dominique Morisseau. VCDMA student Sharone Townsend's artwork was chosen for Target's Black Beyond Measure HBCU Challenge. His design is featured on apparel sold by Target nationwide during Black History Month this year.



NEW FULLY ONLINE DEGREE PROGRAMS

The COVID-19 pandemic served to accelerate BSU's efforts to offer more online program options to meet the needs of our students, especially those pursuing graduate degrees. This year, we began offering two of our master's degrees in education online: Reading education, and culturally responsive teacher leadership. The addition of this new fully online option will enable educators in more distant school districts to benefit from our research-based programs. We developed partnerships with the Montgomery County and York, Pennsylvania school systems to enhance professional and leadership development of their educators. Our new online

offerings will open the door for more of these educators to pursue credentials to advance in their careers.

We will offer five additional programs online in fall 2022: graduate programs in computer science and management information systems, along with undergraduate programs in computer science, computer technology and criminal justice. The undergraduate programs will primarily target adults seeking to change careers. These initial online programs will feature a cohort model that will provide opportunities for students to move through the programs while taking the same classes together. This enables students to get to know each other and develop a bond to support each other to succeed.

GRANTS AND RESEARCH SOAR

Between 2017 and 2021 BSU faculty garnered 92% more grant funding, totaling more than \$16.7 million during FY 2021. Even during the pandemic, faculty productivity continued to soar, with grants increasing by 38% in FY 2021 over FY 2020.

Physics professor Dr. Mikhail Goloubev secured a second patent in three years, for his invention, "Universal Method for Precise Projectile Flight Prediction" using an electronic device to quickly and accurately predict the time, location and speed of a capsule or its debris landing on any planet.

Undergraduates in the natural sciences are engaged in course-based research early in their academic

careers beyond the traditional classroom setting. The Course-based Undergraduate Research Experiences (CUREs) program leverages faculty expertise to provide opportunities for students to research unique problems of interest to the scientific community by embedding the research and hands-on laboratory experience into regular courses.

Bowie State natural science students are also discovering the benefits of the soilless agriculture techniques of hydroponics and aquaponics, processes that can expand the capacity to feed the world as traditional agriculture faces growing challenges from climate change and labor shortages. Funded by a five-year grant from the National



Student and professor in microbiology lab

Institute of Food and Agriculture and the United States Department of Agriculture, the research utilizes the greenhouse integrated into our Center for Natural Science, Mathematics and Nursing.

As part of a growing partnership with the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay, students engage in experiential learning, monitoring water quality in local streams as they prepare for green careers.

Faculty in the College of Education continue the work of supporting and advancing the K-12 teaching



Student monitors readings in the hydroponics lab

profession. Bowie State education researcher Dr. Julius Davis launched the Center for Research & Mentoring of Black Male Students & Teachers to help expand the pipeline for more black males to enter the teaching profession, where they represent only about three percent of the workforce. Dr. Davis was recently selected for the Campus Compact Mid-Atlantic's Early Career Engaged Scholarship Award, a recognition of his outstanding research in service-learning.

Associate Professor Dr. Sean Coleman was selected to lead a task force formed by Prince George's County Executive Angela Alsobrooks to examine the governance structure of the Prince George's County school system.

Assistant Professor Erica Hernandez is one of 22 educators from around the world, and the only one from an HBCU, named to the Stanford University Innovation Fellows program. Fellows work with students to develop unique projects to enhance the learning environment at their institutions while contributing to expanding innovation and entrepreneurship.

PARTNERSHIPS SUPPORT STUDENTS

Bowie State received \$1 million as an inaugural member of the Adobe Anchor School Program. We also partnered with Apple and other HBCUs to develop software and applications, and we joined the IBM-HBCU Quantum Center, the nation's first quantum education and research initiative for HBCUs aimed at driving quantum skills development and building a diverse and inclusive workforce. Faculty in our Computer Science Department are working with Amazon Web Services and Battelle to provide internships, job placement, student training and capstone projects for our students. And we are collaborating with BGE to fund scholarships for STEM majors through the BGE Scholars Program.

BSU hosted the nation's only HBCU-focused Entrepreneurship Conference, sponsored by



Truist, where faculty and community entrepreneur champions came together to share best practices for developing entrepreneurs and business owners to build wealth and prosperity in our communities. The university-wide entrepreneurship initiative continues to expand partnerships to provide mentors and experiential opportunities for students in all majors developing an entrepreneurial mindset.

STUDENT SUCCESS

ENROLLMENT & DEGREE PRODUCTION

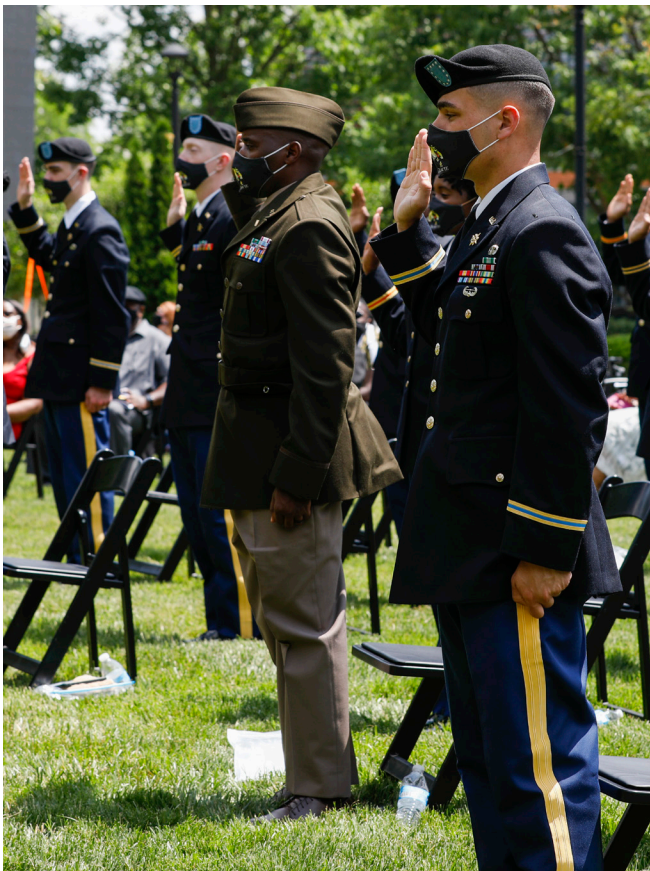
The demand for a Bowie State University education is high. Since 2017, BSU received an average of 11,600 first-time student applications each year, a 300% increase over the average of 3,600 annually between 2012 and 2016. Despite downward trends nationwide, enrollment grew by 1% this past fall, reaching our highest undergraduate enrollment in BSU history, with an average GPA of 3.12 for the fall 2021 freshmen class. Over the past five years, we have seen enrollment grow by three percent. And we are retaining our students — throughout the pandemic, our second year retention rate (72%) has remained steady. We conferred a record high 882 bachelor's and 16 doctorates during the pandemic and we continue to play a major role in the state's 55% completion goal,

exceeding MHEC's projections for degree production by more than 1000 over 10 years.

We are easing the process for community college students to transfer seamlessly to earn a BSU degree through articulation agreements, reverse transfer agreements and guaranteed admission programs with various community colleges in Maryland.

Our Bulldog Battalion continues to be a great source of pride. Our ROTC Program received the 2019–20 MacArthur Award by the U.S. Army Command, recognizing it as one of the best in the nation. A record 23 commissioned officers graduated in FY 2021, and we expect to exceed that number this year, thanks in large part to the 2nd Lt. Richard L. Collins III Scholarship program created by the General Assembly. We are honored to produce strong leaders to serve our country.

ROTC commissioning ceremony



EXCELLENCE ON THE FIELD

Our football team won a third consecutive Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association (CIAA) championship. Damon Wilson was named Division II Coach of the Year by the American Football Coaches Association, and was selected to join three of his star student-athletes as a coach in the inaugural HBCU Legacy Bowl.

BSU celebrates its third straight CIAA championship



IMPROVED STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Bowie State students benefitted greatly from federal CARES and HEERF funding during the pandemic. We were able to provide essential technology tools and direct financial assistance, closing the digital divide and eliminating barriers to student persistence. We enhanced student services including telehealth to meet growing demand for counseling services.

We continue to infuse entrepreneurship into the curriculum so that all students develop an entrepreneurial mindset. Experiential programs across the campus along with community partners help prepare students to become real-world problem solvers as they navigate careers as future business leaders and entrepreneurs. Key to this effort and to our ongoing efforts to bridge learning environments between the classroom and the larger entrepreneurship ecosystem was the opening

of our new, \$42 million Entrepreneurship Living Learning Community (ELLC) in August 2021. This 170,000 square foot facility includes 550 beds, an Entrepreneurship Innovation Center which houses BSU's Entrepreneurship Academy, a resource for student entrepreneurs and the Bowie Business Innovation Center, an accelerator for local startup businesses in Prince George's County.

As part of the Freshman Experience, students are able to pursue one of three tracks: entrepreneurship, civic engagement or social justice, all of which provide a firm foundation for academic success.

A recent merger of the divisions of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management will allow for a more holistic and seamless approach to the student experience that we anticipate will drive increases in retention and graduation rates.



LONG-TERM VIABILITY

CULTURE OF PHILANTHROPY

BSU is committed to creating a culture of philanthropy that begins when students enroll as freshmen. The intention is to nurture Bulldogs for Life. We continue to demonstrate the tremendous value of a BSU education and have realized significant investment in the university.

Led by an energized advancement team, BSU surpassed our \$3.5 million fundraising goal for last year. A \$25 million donation from philanthropist MacKenzie Scott in 2020, the largest gift in the university's history, provided a major boost to the BSU endowment to help secure the long-term viability of the institution. It will also support investments in student financial support, advances in academic excellence and innovation. The Scott gift came at a critical time as we embarked on our largest-ever fundraising effort. Publicly-launched



Announcement of latest tally for the BSU Bold campaign

In December 2021, BSU Bold: The Campaign for Excellence will raise \$50 million to expand scholarships, academic and technology support and experiential learning opportunities as we prepare the next generation of leaders. I am pleased to report that we are well on our way to reaching our fundraising goal, having secured over \$40 million.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Bowie State University is halfway through implementation of our FY 19- FY24 Racing to Excellence Strategic Plan, and I am very excited to see the campus come together around a shared interest in creating a more inclusive university community in support of Goal 4: Enhance our Campus Culture of Diversity, Inclusion and Civic Engagement. Faculty, staff and students have embarked on the important work of developing an innovative action plan to inform BSU's efforts. It is critical to BSU's long-term viability that we examine and expand culturally responsive pedagogies and multicultural programs and services as we deliver education for the next generations of global citizens.

ECONOMIC DRIVER

The university completed a new 10-year Facilities Master Plan, mapping out a framework for continued growth and academic innovation. The plan makes the case for major investment in new and renovated

facilities. We also completed our first economic development plan, a five-year blueprint for positioning the university as an economic engine for the county and region. Aligned with our Strategic Plan: Racing to Excellence, and the Facilities Master Plan, BSU's Economic Development Plan focuses on enhancement of public spaces and amenities, development of more partnerships, expansion of our presence beyond the county, growth of the university's physical footprint and continued focus on innovation and entrepreneurship. A 2014 United Negro College Fund study on the economic impact of HBCUs reported that BSU had a \$234 million impact on local and regional economies. Our new Economic Development Plan will help expand the level of BSU's impact into the future.

The university is actively working with Prince George's County on plans for transit-oriented development of county-owned land adjacent to the MARC train station on our campus. This development would support BSU's growth and cement its position as an important anchor institution for the region.

LOOKING AHEAD

NEW ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

The BSU community celebrated the historic passage of Senate and House Bill 1, which Governor Hogan signed on our campus in March 2021. We are pleased to begin receiving operating funds in FY 2023 to support development of new, high-demand academic programs, which is already underway. BSU will continue to focus on its strengths with new and revamped programs in “niche” areas such as cyber security, computing and technology, business and professional studies (including health) and education. Funds will also be used for marketing, student financial assistance and faculty development.

As we move forward over the next ten years to enhance our competitiveness, we must focus on our infrastructure. Bowie State University is a growing institution. Our infrastructure must

keep pace with that growth and enable us to attract a diverse pool of high-achieving students, outstanding faculty and dedicated staff.

On behalf of our 6,308 students, our faculty and staff, I want to again thank the Governor and members of the legislature for your support. We are especially grateful to the Governor for providing funds for one-time bonuses, cost-of-living and merit increases for our hard-working faculty and staff. The past two years have been extremely challenging. But we have persevered, always keeping student success at the forefront of our efforts and demonstrating each day what it means to be Bowie Bold!

I urge this subcommittee to support the Governor’s FY 23 allowance for the University System of Maryland and Bowie State.



Governor Hogan signs SB 1 and HB 1

RESPONSES TO DEPARTMENT OF LEGISLATIVE SERVICES

OPERATING BUDGET RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 1. Adopt narrative requesting information on the Bowie State University Nursing Program's progress toward meeting the Maryland Board of Nursing's required pass rate for the National Council Licensure Examinations for Registered Nurses.** The University agrees with this recommendation. As noted in the analysis, the NCLEX pass rate has improved significantly, thus far, this year (average score of 83). We expect to meet the required pass rate for the full FY 2022.

REQUESTS FOR COMMENT

- 1. The President should comment on how the institution plans to return to an operational structure in fiscal 2021 without the assistance of federal emergency relief funding should pandemic-related expenditures/impacts continue into the 2022-2023 academic year.**

The University was recently notified that the deadline to spend federal emergency relief funds (HEERF) has been extended through fiscal year 2023. Also, we have been cognizant of the fact that these are "one-time" funds and endeavored to be prudent in our spending as we addressed critical needs relating to the pandemic. Moving forward, barring a repeat of the pandemic conditions we experienced in 2020-21, we anticipate minimal ongoing costs to maintain operations into the 2022-2023 academic year.

- 2. The President should comment on the university's anticipated auxiliary revenue projections, identifying if those projections are realistic given the continued impact the COVID-19 pandemic has had on auxiliary services.**

Thanks in large part to our enrollment growth and the opening of the new Entrepreneurship Living Learning Community (ELLC) at full occupancy in fall 2021, the University has already begun to see a rebound in auxiliary revenue associated with residential services (room and meal plans). We believe our revenue projections are realistic given our enrollment growth, the return to full occupancy in campus housing and associated revenue generated through auxiliary operations.