



Support with Amendments

House Appropriations Committee Capital Budget Subcommittee *House Bill 350 Budget Bill (Fiscal Year 2026)*

Matt Power, President
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Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony regarding [*House Bill 350 Budget Bill \(Fiscal Year 2026\)*](#). I write in **support with amendments** of three proposed capital projects at MICUA member institutions. The Governor's fiscal 2026 capital budget provides a total of \$8 million to be divided among projects at Hood College (\$2.48 million), McDaniel College (\$2.16 million), and Stevenson University (\$3.36 million). **MICUA respectfully requests an additional \$3.96 million, for a total of \$11.96 million, to allow these projects to move forward with their full scopes of work.** These projects have all been endorsed by the MICUA Board of Trustees, are well-aligned with the goals identified in the *2022 Maryland State Plan for Higher Education* and are directly related to the academic priorities and missions of each institution. These facilities will be designed and renovated to maximize opportunities for student and faculty collaboration and to promote and facilitate interdisciplinary teaching, learning, and research. Further, these projects will help meet or exceed the postsecondary expectations of a Maryland K-12 population that is increasingly trained to expect state-of-the-art facilities.

Collectively, these projects will leverage nearly \$23 million in private resources to increase student enrollment, address workforce needs, attract research dollars, and support a vibrant economy. During the construction phase, the projects will support 250 construction jobs.

Fiscal 2026 MICUA Capital Project Requests

Hood College requests a **\$4.0 million** grant from the State capital grant program for fiscal year 2026 to support a \$16.6 million renovation project to repurpose the Hodson Annex which was constructed in 1927. The proposed project will include improvements to the roof, building envelope, and windows, and will convert the interior space to teaching, research, and training laboratories and associated support spaces. Programs housed in the Hodson Annex will include the Biomedical Research and Training Center (BRTC), a Nuclear Magnetic Resonance (NMR) lab, cybersecurity labs, and associated support spaces.

McDaniel College requests a **\$2.96 million** grant for fiscal year 2026 to support a \$5.92 million project for the renovation of Merritt Hall to accommodate four new academic programs: Bachelor of Arts in Early Childhood Education, Neuroscience Minor in Psychology, Master of Science in Occupational Therapy, and Master of Science in Speech Language Pathology. The renovation will create larger and more flexible active learning classrooms, clinical labs, treatment and simulation areas, and a neuroscience research lab designed to best meet the specialized pedagogical, space and equipment needs that are required to deliver these new academic programs.

Stevenson University requests a **\$5.0 million** grant for fiscal year 2026 to support construction of a \$12.2 million addition to the Berman Family Performing Arts Center to accommodate a Music Performance Stage. With the addition and expansion of traditional undergraduate programs at the Stevenson University campus in Owings Mills, there was insufficient space to accommodate the University's Music and Performing Arts programs. The Berman Family Performing Arts Center project, which includes a Black Box theater, will provide much needed facilities where hundreds of student performers, from band and music ensembles to theater and fashion majors, can connect, gather, perform, and forge a sense of community and belonging. The Center is expected to open in Summer 2026.

Thank you for your ongoing support of the MICUA Capital Grant Program and your consideration of our fiscal 2026 request for an additional \$3.96 million. We sincerely appreciate our partnership with the State of Maryland and value your leadership on this issue.



**House Appropriations Committee
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Monday, February 10, 2025
Debbie Ricker, Ph.D., President**

On behalf of Hood College, thank you for recognizing that capital support for the State's independent colleges and universities is a wise investment that benefits all of Maryland. We appreciate the General Assembly's steadfast support of the MICUA capital grant program. Hood College, with the endorsement of MICUA, seeks a **\$4 million** State capital grant in fiscal year 2026 in support of an estimated \$16.6 million renovation of the Hodson Annex. The requested grant will augment institutional funds and philanthropy to finance this project.

The current project will repurpose the Hodson Annex, the original Central Heating Plant and Laundry, and convert the interior space to teaching, research, and training laboratories and associated support spaces. Programs housed in the Hodson Annex will include the Biomedical Research and Training Center (BRTC) and cybersecurity labs.

The Hodson Annex was constructed in 1927 and is considered a contributing structure to the Hood College Historic District, which is on the National Register of Historic Places. In addition to the benefits of retaining the historic structure, in lieu of demolition and replacing it with new construction, repurposing the existing structure is a more sustainable approach to meeting space needs on campus. The College will work with the Maryland Historical Trust and will go through their review process. The project will be designed to meet LEED Silver requirements.

The renovation will include improvements to the roof, building envelope, and windows along with the installation of a completely new heating, ventilation, and air conditioning system. The project will include necessary upgrades to meet accessibility requirements, such as new entries, stairs, elevator, and restrooms. Mechanical equipment that serves the entire Hodson Science and Technology complex, including chiller, cooling tower, and emergency generator, all of which are past their useful lives, will be replaced as part of the project.

The exterior walls of the Hodson Annex are solid masonry with brick veneer and no insulation. Windows are original steel-framed windows with single pane (uninsulated) glass. Windows and doors need to be replaced, and the masonry repointed. The roof is in poor condition, with cracks and areas that do not drain properly. Roof decks are composed of cast-in-place concrete supported by steel joists. Portions of the roof deck are deteriorating, and the entire roof needs to be replaced. The existing roof structure needs to be reinforced to meet current code-required loads.

The Hodson Science and Technology Center complex has been unable to meet the space needs for the growing science and computer science/cybersecurity programs. The Nursing Program and School of Behavioral and Health Sciences were relocated to space leased from Frederick Health in January 2023 to respond to the space need. Most of the space in the Hodson Annex has been vacant and unutilized since the campus transitioned away from central heating in 2011. Hood anticipates that enrollment in the programs will increase by 5 percent due to demand by FY 2029.

The renovation of the Hodson Science and Technology Center will allow the College to expand its much-needed STEM programs. The new spaces will integrate both research and practice, leveraging the existing rigorous curriculum in the sciences and extensive partnerships in research – locally, regionally, and globally.

Approximately 73% of Hood’s undergraduate students and 81% of its graduate students are Maryland residents. A vast majority of these highly qualified graduates remain in Maryland and enter the workforce in biomedical research and manufacturing, health professions, information technology and cybersecurity, environmental services, and more; thus, benefiting the community, the region, and the State.

The Biomedical Research and Training Center (BRTC) will serve as a training “node” in the Maryland Tech Council BioHub, aimed at helping Maryland life science companies at every stage grow by training the next generation of life sciences talent. The Center will offer a unique opportunity for students and current professionals to receive specialized hands-on training coinciding with industry needs in biomanufacturing and biotechnology. Led jointly by Hood College faculty, scientists from regional companies and federal labs, and contractors from the Maryland Tech Council, the Center places students and current professionals seeking to reskill/upskill at the forefront of innovations in science, technology, and healthcare to help propel the Maryland biotechnology industry into the next generation. As such, the BRTC will draw from a multidisciplinary core of instructors, including faculty from chemistry, biology, physics, business, math, computer science, and health sciences, alongside industry experts with expertise in multiple areas.

Dr. Rana Khan started in January as the inaugural executive director of the BRTC. Rana earned her Ph.D. in molecular and cell biology from the University of Maryland and has held leadership roles at both the University of Maryland Global Campus (UMGC) and Yeshiva University in New York. She served as the founding director of the biotechnology management and entrepreneurship M.S. program at Yeshiva University where she developed a biotechnology program addressing the needs of the biotechnology workforce in New York. At UMGC, Dr. Khan held the position of vice-dean in the graduate school and chair of the Information Technology systems department, overseeing a diverse offering of science and information technology-related programs. In her role at Hood, Dr. Khan will draw on these experiences to establish partnerships and create curricula and programs that meet the specific needs of aspiring students, current professionals, and industry partners.

Without the State grant for renovation of the Hodson Annex, Hood’s ability to adequately support the STEM programs would be seriously compromised. The College would therefore be forced to limit the number of students in these programs in order to maintain academic quality. In so doing, the number of qualified professionals joining the workforce and supporting the science and technology industries in Maryland would be significantly reduced.

Thank you for considering our request for a \$4 million MICUA capital grant in FY2026. We are grateful for the General Assembly’s steadfast support of MICUA, Hood College, and all higher education in the State of Maryland.

Current FY2026 Capital Budget Allocation: \$2.48 million

Requested FY2026 Capital Budget Appropriation: \$4.0 million

**House Appropriations Committee
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Julia Jasken, Ph.D., President

On behalf of McDaniel College, thank you for investing in the infrastructure of Maryland's independent colleges and universities. We are grateful for Maryland General Assembly's support of the MICUA capital grant program, which in turn accommodates enrollment growth and addresses workforce needs in our State.

With the endorsement of MICUA, McDaniel College requests a **\$2.96 million** State capital grant for fiscal year 2026, in support of a \$5.92 million project to renovate space in Merritt Hall to accommodate four new academic programs which strongly align to workforce needs in Maryland. The specialized spaces required to implement these new programs include larger classrooms, simulation and clinical labs, and a research lab. The building was built in 2003 and has not received any upgrades in its 21-year history. The project will include upgrades to building systems and ADA accessibility improvements.

The four proposed programs are: Bachelor of Art in Early Childhood Education, Neuroscience Minor in Psychology, Master of Science in Occupational Therapy, and Master of Science in Speech Language Pathology. The development of these new programs aligns with McDaniel's mission and commitment to contribute to the health and economy of the region as an educational partner which is responsive to the workforce needs of the local community, Maryland and beyond.

Merritt Hall space will be repurposed to create instructional academic space for classrooms and labs, faculty and staff offices and other support spaces required for the new programs. This change primarily includes repurposing current faculty and staff offices, reception spaces, storage and miscellaneous workspaces, and updating and repurposing existing classroom space to meet the needs of the new programs.

McDaniel conducted feasibility studies as part of the new program development, including a space analysis. The results of the analysis indicated that renovation and alteration of Merritt Hall allows the programs to be co-located and has numerous fiscal and operational benefits.

Maryland is experiencing critical teacher workforce shortages, a focus of both the Moore-Miller State Plan and the Maryland Blueprint. McDaniel has a very strong history of providing quality teacher preparation and advanced degree programs aimed at building a quality teacher workforce. These funds will support McDaniel's response to addressing the goal of both plans to expand access to Pre-Kindergarten (Moore-Miller objective 2.1 and Pillar 2 of the Blueprint) by supporting the development of our new Early Childhood Education program.

This program will enroll 20-30 students annually when at full capacity and will increase the workforce pipeline of high-quality early childhood education teachers.

Additionally, the newly developing health professional programs in Occupational Therapy, Speech Language Pathology, and Neuroscience that will be supported by this project are directly aligned with the Moore-Miller State Plan objective 4.1: Help workers move to in-demand occupations through scaling up and addressing shortages of the workforce in key areas such as healthcare and IT and creating employer partnerships to prepare talent for jobs of the future. These programs will enroll approximately 120 students annually at full capacity who will be prepared to enter the healthcare workforce upon graduation.

Currently, 73% of our undergraduate and 75% of our graduate student bodies are Maryland residents, 41% of the undergraduates are Pell eligible, and 41% of the undergraduate student body is diverse. This success in increasing access will transfer to these programs and will address the need to attract and recruit a more diverse workforce in professions where diversity is significantly underrepresented. This too supports the Moore-Miller State Plan of improving access to education and strengthening the health care system to eliminate health equity and health disparities.

This project aligns with State goals and enhances the educational landscape, supports economic growth, addresses workforce shortages, and fosters a more informed and engaged community.

Examples include:

- More than 27 new jobs will be created over the next five years as a result of the developing programs (faculty and staff).
- Each year, 90-100 graduates will be prepared to work, live and serve in Maryland in high demand career fields such as healthcare and education.
- Students in McDaniel's education and health professional programs will participate in field experience, internships and community outreach activities as part of their degree program. Many of these experiences will be specifically designed to target underserved populations.
- Students and faculty will participate in research to advance understanding and apply research to practice in their respective field, benefiting the State's healthcare and education systems.

Thank you for your favorable consideration of our request for a \$2.96 million MICUA capital grant to assist with the project to renovate space in Merritt Hall.

Current FY2026 Capital Budget Allocation: \$2.16 million

Requested FY2026 Capital Budget Appropriation: \$2.96 million

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Elliot Hirshman, Ph.D., President

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.

With the endorsement of MICUA, Stevenson University requests a **\$5.0 million** State Capital Grant for fiscal year 2026 in support of a \$12.2 million project for construction of an 8,778 NASF/11,984 GSF wing to the Black Box Theater which will include a music performance stage and classrooms. Collectively, the black box theater, music performance stage, and the associated classrooms will constitute a comprehensive performing arts center that will serve Stevenson students and the broader community.

Every student at Stevenson is required to take at least one three-credit course in Fine Arts as part of the University's general education requirement. With the addition of traditional undergraduate programs at the Stevenson University Owings Mills campus there was insufficient space to accommodate Music and Performing Arts programs. As a result, the program activities are performed in three locations: Greenspring, South, and North Campuses. A new performing arts facility, the Berman Performing Arts Center is under construction to consolidate the Theater and Media Performance programs at the Owings Mills campus. The Berman Performing Arts Center, which includes a Black Box Theater, is expected to be completed in January 2026.

The Berman Performing Arts Center will provide practice and performance spaces for Stevenson's growing Music minor, as well as the vibrant co-curricular music and performance programs. These programs include the Greenspring Valley Orchestra (60 students), the Stevenson University Singers choral ensemble (55 students), the Marching Band (100 students), the Concert Band (65 students), Ukulele Ensemble (30 students), the Color Guard (15 students), the Stevenson Dance team (30 students), and the Pep Band (60 students). The proposed performance stage will also provide opportunities for culturally based music and dance performances by Stevenson's many cultural groups.

Currently, students must travel approximately 30 minutes between the Owings Mills and Greenspring campuses, where the referenced programs are currently housed, to participate in music and performance programs. This lengthy travel discourages many current students from participating in these programs and hinders the University's ability to recruit students who are interested in these important academic and co-curricular programs. Second, without the proposed project, Stevenson would not be able to recognize the operational and cost efficiencies gained by integrating the Music Performance Stage with the Black Box Theater. Without these efficiencies, the long-term costs of constructing and operating the Music Performance Stage will be significantly greater for the University and the students. In addition, academic synergies associated with housing the theater and music programs together will not be realized. There is currently not a space dedicated to all the performing students to foster community and build bridges between and amongst

programs. This project, together with the Black Box theater, will provide a home where hundreds of performers from band and music ensembles and theater can connect, gather and have a sense of community and belonging.

For the music and performing arts programs, the project addresses several critical needs. There is currently no adequate dedicated rehearsal space for the band or musical theater. The planned project will provide that space. Further, the current stage cannot hold all the music performers, so performers are in the wings and on the floor during performances. The new space will provide areas for the entire band to practice and perform together. In addition, currently all relevant equipment, including musical instruments, is brought by truck from the Greenspring campus to the Owings Mills campus prior to each performance. With the new Music Performance Stage, there will be equipment and instrument storage adjacent to the practice and performance areas, obviating these challenges.

An additional benefit of the current project is that it will enhance Stevenson's already strong relationship with the local community. The University values its relationships with its neighbors. Stevenson welcomes community groups and neighbors to campus and special events, particularly cultural programs. The new larger stage will be of sufficient size to host high school concerts and orchestral events, to support the University's Arts Alive program, and to provide music education within the community. Stevenson expects its outreach to become more vibrant in the Owings Mills area because of this project.

Stevenson University is the third-largest independent university in Maryland and over 70 percent of the students are Maryland residents. The University serves a diverse student population representative of the State of Maryland. Approximately 50 percent of Stevenson students are students of color and over 30 percent of the students are Pell eligible, with a similar proportion being the first in their families to attend college. Stevenson is dedicated to supporting its students' career aspirations with over 92 percent of the graduates being employed or in graduate school within six months of graduation, and the vast majority of these alumni reside in Maryland, making significant contributions to Maryland's workforce and economic prosperity.

Thank you for your continued support of Stevenson University. We appreciate your generous funding of the State's capital funding for their independent colleges and universities.

Current FY2026 Capital Budget Allocation: \$3.36 million

Requested FY2026 Capital Budget Appropriation: \$5.0 million