

ST MARY'S

COLLEGE *of* MARYLAND

RD14D00
FY2027 Capital Budget Request

House of Delegates Appropriations Committee
Capital Budget Subcommittee
Chair Malcolm Ruff
March 16, 2026

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Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
Capital Budget Subcommittee
Chair Craig Zucker
March 17, 2026



Dr. Rhonda Phillips, President
Mr. Aaron Tomarchio, Trustee
Mr. Brandon Engle, Director of Government Affairs

Introduction – The Public Honors College

As the State's designated public honors college, St. Mary's College of Maryland provides a premier liberal arts education that is both affordable and accessible. The College awards a variety of undergraduate degrees, as well as a Master of Arts in Teaching graduate degree. With a faculty of gifted teachers and distinguished scholars, a talented and diverse student body, and a low student/faculty ratio, St. Mary's College of Maryland provides a challenging curriculum within an academically nurturing environment. Additionally, the College fosters a sense of social responsibility and community among its students through its curriculum and campus life.

*The Nation's 1st
Standalone Public
Honors College*

Supporting the two goals articulated by the State's vision for the College – the educational requirements of an honors program and the promise of access – sets St. Mary's College uniquely apart in the State and national higher education sector. The College has been highly successful in supporting statewide goals, with among the highest retention and completion rates among our public and private peers, a commitment to diversity in all its manifestations, and in providing financial resources for students with need.

As a public institution that is both accessible and affordable, St. Mary's College provides the opportunity for academically talented students from a broad spectrum of socioeconomic backgrounds to acquire a rigorous liberal arts education. This diversity creates a rich academic and social environment that enhances the education provided by the College. Additionally, St. Mary's College students graduate with low levels of debt and are well prepared to serve as productive and engaged citizens of the world.

The College also continues to evolve as an innovator within the national higher education sector. Our core curriculum, Learning through Experiential and Applied Discovery (LEAD), provides every student with the opportunity and means to engage with thematic and integrated learning experiences, practical skill development, internships, research, international education, creative endeavors, and other faculty-directed activities that balance career preparation with an honors-level, liberal arts foundation. Our national standing and successes make us the leader among public liberal arts institutions. St. Mary's College of Maryland has become The National Public Honors College.



As always, the College remains grateful to the Governor, the Legislature, and the Maryland Higher Education Commission for their ongoing commitment to higher education, in general, and to St. Mary's College of Maryland specifically.

St. Mary's College of Maryland Capital Budget Testimony

Capital Budget Request for FY 2027:

Summary of the Governor's Allowance

The Governor's FY27 Capital Budget includes \$3.23M in funding for the purpose of reducing the College's deferred maintenance backlog, as well as to continue planning and design efforts for the renovation of Montgomery Hall.

Campus Infrastructure Improvements (\$2.271M)

The College requests approximately \$2M annually to support various phased infrastructure improvements to address critical deferred maintenance and renewal needs. Funding for these capital investments in the College's physical plant is essential to both our strategic planning efforts and campus master plan by creating an environment which improves our capacity to recruit and retain talented students, faculty, and staff. The allocated FY27 funds are designated for restoration of St. Mary's Hall, the oldest building on campus, and will address significant interior and exterior components. These include the building's masonry facade, slate roof, HVAC and electrical systems, and other legacy components that currently place strain on the College's operational budget.

Montgomery Hall Renovation (\$0.959M)

This project remains core to SMCM's strategic planning efforts to provide adequate facilities for our academic programs as identified in the College's current strategic plan and campus master plan. Montgomery Hall was originally constructed during the 1970s, and has gone nearly 50 years without significant renovations. Moreover, the building cannot accommodate existing programmatic space needs to meet student demand and requires extensive upgrades to meet current building code and accessibility compliance requirements.