



— 41<sup>st</sup> ANNUAL —

# FACULTY & STAFF CONVOCATION

2024 – 2025

SEPT  
18



TWO  
O'CLOCK

MEMORIAL  
CHAPEL

The word **CONVOCATION** is taken from the Latin words *com* (meaning together) and *vocare* (to call). In an academic setting, a convocation is a time for the university community to gather and officially usher in the academic year and to celebrate achievements across the campus.

Academic and service honorees, selected by their peers, wear robes and caps befitting the formal tone of the occasion, as would professors during commencement ceremonies.

At Maryland, convocations were held during President Wilson H. Elkins' term (1954–78), and perhaps before his time. It is not clear why and when they ceased. Chancellor John B. Slaughter, however, reinstated convocations in 1983 with a focus on faculty and staff accomplishments.

## 2024 PROGRAM

### PROCESSIONAL

#### OPENING REMARKS

Jordan Sly, *Chair, University Senate*

#### RECOGNITION OF PRESIDENT'S DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD RECIPIENTS

Carlo Colella, *Vice President and Chief Administrative Officer*

#### RECOGNITION OF THE SHARON LA VOY DATA IMPACT AWARD

Jennifer King Rice, *Senior Vice President and Provost*

#### RECOGNITION OF PROVOST'S EXCELLENCE AWARDS FOR PROFESSIONAL TRACK FACULTY

Jennifer King Rice

#### RECOGNITION OF DISTINGUISHED SCHOLAR-TEACHERS

Jennifer King Rice

#### RECOGNITION OF DISTINGUISHED UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS

Jennifer King Rice

#### AWARDING OF THE KIRWAN PRIZES

William "Brit" Kirwan, *Chancellor Emeritus, University System of Maryland, and Professor Emeritus, University of Maryland*

#### AWARDING OF THE PRESIDENT'S MEDAL

Darryll J. Pines, *President*

#### CLOSING REMARKS

Darryll J. Pines

### RECESSIONAL

## PRESIDENT'S DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

*The President's Distinguished Service Awards recognize exceptional performance, leadership and service by members of the university staff.*

*The recipients of this award have a record of exemplary performance and distinctive contributions to the operation of an administrative, academic, research or service unit on campus.*



### Anne Reese Carswell

*Office of Diversity and Inclusion*

For more than four decades, Anne Reese Carswell has been a tireless leader at the Nyumburu Cultural Center, creating a safe, dedicated space for Black students to gather, express themselves and find support.

“In every sense of the term, Anne Reese Carswell IS Nyumburu,” says Nacie Grigsby, associate program director of Academic Achievement Programs in the Office of Undergraduate Studies. “Selfless and steadfast...she is instrumental to the upkeep and logistical mechanics of its day-to-day operations and embodies that ‘home away from home’ atmosphere commonly attributed to the center.”

From her start as a student worker through her current role as the center's associate director, Carswell has run longstanding programs like Juke Joint during Homecoming, Black History Month activities, New Student Welcome, Camp Shule for K-12 students and more. She has advised a dozen groups across campus,

including the Black Student Union (BSU), the African Student Association and the Black Student Ministries Church and Worship Program.

“There are few individuals who leave an indelible mark on your life, and Ms. Carswell is one of those few for me,” says Naima Stevenson Starks '98, a former BSU president. “As a mentor and adviser, she has encouraged my growth as a leader, community advocate and active alumnus. Ms. Carswell personifies steadfast advocacy.”

Carswell has an open-door policy and is regularly on campus from early morning to late in the evening, doing everything from reviewing budgets and assisting fundraising efforts for student groups to setting up chairs and tables for events.

“Ms. Carswell takes collective work, responsibility and cooperative economics to a whole new level,” says University of Maryland Police Department Capt. August D. Kenner, even when faced with budget shortfalls or other seemingly insurmountable challenges. “She always finds creative ways to meet (student) needs.”

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### Nina Harris

*School of Public Policy*

For 25 years, Nina Harris has combined her academic and student affairs expertise to help develop young leaders by supporting students in the School of Public Policy (SPP) and beyond.

The school's associate dean for academic and student affairs was instrumental in creating the public policy major in 2016—one of many noteworthy accomplishments. She took charge of logistical planning, chairing working groups and seeking advice from associate deans across campus.

“The success of this program can be seen in its rapid growth, student success and satisfaction, and devoted staff who have been here since the launch,” says SPP Dean Robert C. Orr.

Harris earned her B.A., M.A. and Ed.D. degrees at the University of Delaware and joined UMD in 1999 in the Office of the Associate Provost for Academic Affairs and Dean for Undergraduate Studies. She became special assistant to the associate vice president for academic affairs in 2002, working to revise outdated policies on academic probation and dismissal. From 2003-07, she mentored students as faculty director of College Park Scholars' Public Leadership Program and was assistant director of SPP's James MacGregor Burns Academy of Leadership.

She began directing all undergraduate public policy initiatives in 2007 and assumed her current role in 2021. She also launched the nine-credit Rawlings Undergraduate Leadership Fellows Program, which focuses on leadership in a pluralistic society.

Harris has served as her school's diversity officer, a representative of the Maryland Black Faculty and Staff Association, an adviser to the Black Students in Public Policy organization and a mentor in the C.D. Mote, Jr. Incentive Awards Program.

“She welcomes the opportunity to discuss questions and issues pertaining to equity in education,” says Lisa Kiely, Office of Undergraduate Studies associate dean and undergraduate student ombudsperson. “She has always been a strong and committed advocate for our students and has made a significant impact on UMD's campus.”

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### Curtis Shade

*Division of Student Affairs*

Known as “the heart of the Stamp,” the “reliable and trustworthy ‘fun uncle’” and a “cherished colleague,” Curtis Shade is a dedicated staff member of 20 years at the Adele H. Stamp Student Union, where he serves as loading dock manager.

“Curtis is truly a jack of all trades,” says Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs James McShay. “With his warm and encouraging smile, Curtis is ever so adept at uplifting and inspiring those around him to bring their best selves to work each day.”

Shade first joined UMD as part of the house-keeping and maintenance staff at the Stamp, leading a team to ensure cleanliness and smooth operations for the 15,000 people who come through the building each day. After six years, he was promoted to oversee the loading dock, a challenging shift that starts at 6 a.m., along with managing trash, recy-

cling and compost. He brings a personal touch to his work, greeting everyone from semi-truck drivers to students and staff by name as he delivers packages throughout the building.

“His tasks aren’t the jobs that typically get the glory. They are the critical tasks that are behind the scenes, making things happen for others,” a Stamp staff member told Director Marsha Guenzler-Stevens.

Shade goes above and beyond his role, from building Homecoming floats to serving as the grill master during staff picnics. During COVID-19 campus lockdowns, he regularly stopped by to check in on the building despite being on administrative leave, ensuring packages were secured, leaks were found and doors were locked.

“The University of Maryland is simply a better place because he chose to work here,” says Paul Jacobus, assistant director of facilities and maintenance at the Stamp. “He enriches the day of anyone he encounters.”

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## Stacy Sims

*University Human Resources*

For almost 30 years, Stacy Sims has been an invaluable resource on human resource benefits, using her vast knowledge of state, University System of Maryland and UMD policies to assist constituents across campus.

She earned a bachelor’s degree from the University of Pittsburgh and Master of Public Administration degree at American University and had 12 years of experience in benefits when she became a coordinator in University Human

Resources. There, she educates and counsels employees on retirement and benefits; organizes workshops, training seminars and informational fairs; and works with state agencies and retirement and health insurance vendors to resolve questions.

She volunteers at Family Weekend each fall, even though her unit doesn’t lead that effort, and families are drawn to her, says Chandra Bisnath, a coordinator in the Division of Student Affairs.

“Stacy has that welcoming vibe that makes each and every family she comes into contact feels relief knowing that their new student will be taken care of,” she says.

Colleagues and other members of the UMD community say she is dedicated and compassionate and frequently goes above and beyond to solve problems. She actively listens and generously offers guidance and support in both personal and professional matters, even during holidays or her own time away.

“There is no job too big or small that she will not take care for you with a willing smile on her face,” says Julia John, a business service specialist in the School of Public Policy. “You can rest assured that whatever the situation, you can count on her to have it resolved for the employee.”

Sims also shows exceptional sensitivity to employees and families facing bereavement or emergencies, says Rhonda L. Smith, director of payroll and personnel: “Her exceptional leadership skills have not only inspired other benefits coordinators at the university but also set a benchmark for others.”

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## Erin Rooney-Eckel

*University Career Center and the President’s Promise*

During more than 30 years on campus, Erin Rooney-Eckel has shaped the programming and operations of the University Career Center (UCC), including creating a new model that has expanded services across campus and opened new opportunities for UMD’s students.

As senior associate director of academic partnerships, career education and exposure at UCC, Rooney-Eckel developed an embedded program director model in which a staff member is deployed to a partner college to integrate career-related activities. This has allowed greater integration of career preparation and academic studies; seven schools and colleges have participated.

“Erin has dedicated her professional career to building systems, programs and relationships that support students’ equitable access to high-impact practices, such as internships, which have had positive effects on student retention, academic success and post-graduation success,” says Allynn Powell, director of the University Career Center and the President’s Promise.

Rooney-Eckel earned a bachelor’s degree in psychology from Albright College and a master’s degree in counseling and personnel services from UMD. She began working at UMD in 1992 as an academic counselor in the A. James Clark School of Engineering, then became the founding director of undergraduate advising and academic support within the school before moving to UCC.

Rooney-Eckel has dedicated her career to broadening experiential learning opportunities and

access for students across campus. She has helped support international internships in partnership with the Global Learning Initiatives and Education Abroad, annually administered the distribution of more than \$40,000 in awards to undergraduates through the Bright Futures Unpaid Internship Scholarship Fund and created the Internship Coordinator Network, which shares best practices for academic internships.

“Erin is the kind of leader and campus citizen that helps an organization thrive,” says Audran Downing, associate dean for academic affairs in the College of Arts and Humanities. “She does this work selflessly, quietly—yet with a mighty impact.”

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## Julie O’Donnell Wright

*College of Arts and Humanities*

Julie O’Donnell Wright has been an essential contributor to the university’s operations for nearly 40 years, developing and implementing new financial systems, refining procurement processes, training staff in new administrative software and more.

Wright, now the assistant dean for finance and administration in the College of Arts and Humanities (ARHU), is “indispensable to the operations of the college,” says Dean Stephanie Shonekan. “She is literally the go-to person on virtually every question of finance and administration. Across all of the college’s operations, Julie offers cogent advice and consistent wisdom to every query she faces.”

Wright graduated with a bachelor’s degree in business administration from Boston College and

earned an MBA from the George Washington University. She came to UMD in 1987, working first in the comptroller's office under the vice president for administration before joining ARHU in 2007.

One of Wright's key successes has been in designing and enacting improved budgeting systems. She was a critical part of teams that developed innovative online transaction and reporting processes that streamlined complicated departmental finances. As a college business officer, she also serves on committees that address human resource issues, administrative process improvements and research regulations.

Wright is also a charter member of the College Budget Officer Advising Committee, where she advises senior leadership across the university on new policies and procedures that impact faculty affairs. She's developed and conducted many training workshops and financial presentations, and since 2021 she's served as a lecturer for UNIV362, a course that helps students plan their transition out of college. She also represents UMD in the Big Ten Academic Alliance.

"Julie Wright was and is a pivotal contributor to college administration and planning," says Bonnie Thornton Dill, former ARHU dean. "She is a significant positive force for progress and development in administration and finance on campus."

## THE SHARON A. LA VOY DATA IMPACT AWARD

*The Sharon A. La Voy Data Impact Award recognizes faculty or staff members who have made exceptional contributions to the University of Maryland community through effective utilization of institutional data.*



### Megan C. Masters

*Division of Information Technology*

Whether evaluating the impact of academic technologies or tracking student and instructor perspectives, Megan C. Masters consistently provides nuanced interpretations of data to inform and guide the university's strategic initiatives.

As the inaugural director of academic technology experience, she built and leads a team of data scientists, engineers and analysts who provide evidence-based insights and recommendations concerning student experiences and learning analytics.

"The stellar work that she has accomplished is likely to have already changed our campus forever," says Marcio Oliveira, assistant vice president for academic technology and innovation.

Masters earned a bachelor's degree in Spanish and secondary education from Providence College, then master's and doctoral degrees in second language acquisition at UMD, with her dissertation focused on measuring the development of foreign language proficiency over time.

She joined the university's staff in 2004 as senior project manager and researcher for what is now the Applied Research Lab for Intelligence and Security (ARLIS), and in 2016 moved to DIT.

There, Masters leads initiatives with partners across campus to evaluate UMD's test-optional admission policy, the use of technology in the classroom and, most recently, student and faculty academic uses of generative artificial intelligence. She also played a pivotal role in capturing the campus community's views on the shift to remote learning during COVID-19, with the creation of systematic academic technology reporting.

"Her deep understanding of system metrics and survey results allows her to uncover patterns and trends that might otherwise go unnoticed in a sea of data tables," says Senior Associate Provost Elizabeth Beise.

Masters is an affiliate faculty member with the College of Arts and Humanities and a lecturer in the College of Education, where she teaches quantitative research methods. Inspired by her late UMD mentor, Steven J. Ross, she has co-authored one book and written five book chapters, published six refereed journal articles and presented at over two dozen conferences.

"In a world where data, especially IT data, can be dull, Dr. Masters stands out as a consummate storyteller who uses data to motivate and inspire," says Jeff Hollingsworth, vice president for information technology and chief technology officer.

## PROVOST'S EXCELLENCE AWARD FOR PROFESSIONAL TRACK FACULTY

*The Provost's Excellence Awards for Professional Track Faculty honor consistently excellent contributions from full-time faculty who have served for at least five years and do not have nor are eligible for tenure.*

*Honorees are recognized in one of the three core areas of academic activity: teaching, research or service.*



### Bonnie Dixon

*Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry*

Over her nearly two decades at the University of Maryland, Bonnie Dixon has demonstrated both a deep knowledge of the chemistry of living processes and an unwavering dedication to helping students understand the subject.

As principal lecturer, she is the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry's only faculty member who teaches every course in its introductory sequence—challenging classes that represent a “high-stakes gateway” for students pursuing life science majors or medical school, says Professor and Chair Janice Reutt-Robey.

“Bonnie stands out to me not for her teaching of the individual courses, which is uniformly excellent, but for teaching students in ways that make this gauntlet disappear,” she says.

On top of generous office hours, which resemble wide-open peer-to-peer tutoring sessions, Dixon established what she calls CAN (Chemistry at Night),

making herself available to students in the evening on Zoom to review material and work on practice problems. Her commitment to supporting students has earned her Philip Merrill Presidential Scholars Faculty Mentor honors three times.

“Bonnie has a profound way of reaching each and every student even in a 200-student lecture,” says Lenea H. Stocker, senior lecturer in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry.

Dixon received her bachelor's degree in chemistry from the University of New Hampshire, her doctoral degree in biochemistry from Vermont Medical College and her master's degree in higher education administration from the University of Pennsylvania. She joined the University of Maryland as a lecturer in 2005, was promoted to senior lecturer in 2016 and assumed her current role in 2020.

In addition to teaching, she is a key member of the department's curriculum committee, helping to introduce the new chemistry Bachelor of Arts degree and enhance majors advising. She also serves on the College of Computer, Mathematical, and

Natural Sciences' STEM Equity Learning Community, which is working to understand institutional barriers to student success and build capacity for inclusion.

“Her name has become synonymous with excellence, encouragement, concern and investment,” says Wendy R. Loughlin, assistant dean and director of the Reed-Yorke Health Professions Advising Office.

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### Paul Goeringer

*Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics*

As a leader in Maryland's first Agriculture Law Education Initiative, Paul Goeringer has transformed the way farmers and policymakers understand and act on critical legal issues.

Over the last decade, the UMD Extension principal faculty specialist has developed programming and outreach on estate planning, right-to-farm provisions, solar energy, pesticide litigation and bankruptcy, as well as emerging issues like hemp cultivation.

“Paul's ability to determine stakeholders' needs and provide the service needed to address these needs and challenges has been outstanding,” says Professor Loretta Lynch, past chair of the Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics.

Goeringer's unique background, holding both a B.S. and M.S. in agricultural economics as well as a J.D. from the University of Oklahoma and an LLM from the University of Arkansas, makes him an important asset.

“Being raised on a farm in Oklahoma, he connected well with the agricultural community

and spent significant time working with Maryland farmers,” says Darren Jarboe, assistant director and program leader for the extension's Agriculture and Food Systems program.

Goeringer also helps farmers understand and purchase new crop insurance products through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Targeted States Grant, and served as a co-project director for CONSERVE: A Center of Excellence at the Nexus of Sustainable Water Reuse, Food, and Health, which explored how reclaimed wastewater can be used to irrigate food crops.

His outreach ideas are “new and innovative,” says extension Principal Agent Jennifer L. Rhodes, including creating the Maryland Risk Management Education Blog—packed with almost 350 articles—and podcast.

He also teaches AREC430, “Introduction to Agricultural and Resource Law,” serves as faculty adviser for the UMD agricultural fraternity Alpha Gamma Rho and has led Summer Opportunities in Agricultural Research and the Environment, which aims to increase the number of underrepresented students pursuing graduate study.

“Paul has contributed immensely to the university's service mission,” says Lynch. “It is such a pleasure to have someone who provides quality programs, a cooperative spirit and support for young faculty.”



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## Deborah Goldberg

*Fischell Department of Bioengineering*

Through innovative, student-centered courses and a consistent focus on enhancing her teaching methods, Deborah Goldberg has established herself as an exemplary educator and caring mentor.

The senior lecturer in the Fischell Department of Bioengineering brings her experience in research and development for the biopharmaceutical company AstraZeneca into the classroom to help students understand the manufacturing process.

She ensures they feel supported in her courses, whether by establishing “learning communities” to guide them through homework problems, encouraging positive academic habits through reflection assignments or introducing peer mentoring programs.

“Her welcoming nature and her concern for student well-being enable students to freely discuss their problems with her,” says Ganesh Sriram, associate and Keystone Professor in the Department of Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering. “She had the unique expertise to give career advice to a large number of students in the department.”

Goldberg joined UMD as an undergraduate, earning her bachelor’s degree in chemical engineering and her doctoral degree in bioengineering. After six years at AstraZeneca, she was hired as a lecturer in chemical and biomolecular engineering in 2016 and joined bioengineering last year.

She has demonstrated a consistent commitment to student mental health, including co-publishing “Strategies for Supporting Engineering Student Mental Health” in the journal *Chemical Engineering Education* in 2023. She also served on her department’s

diversity, equity and inclusion committee and helped implement programs to make research and postgraduate placement more accessible.

“Beyond ensuring that students have an inclusive and inviting environment, she maintains rigorous academic standards that prepare today’s students to be tomorrow’s engineers,” seven former students write in a joint statement.

In addition, Goldberg has received two grants from UMD’s Teaching and Learning Transformation Center. She has conducted three Institutional Review Board-approved studies to better understand how new teaching practices influence her students’ perceptions and behaviors, presenting the findings at academic conferences.

“This pedagogical research is above and beyond her role as a senior lecturer, and her willingness to share insights and knowledge benefits our institution and the broader educational landscape,” says John P. Fisher, Fischell Family Distinguished Professor and bioengineering chair.

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## Nicole Nguyen

*Department of Hearing and Speech Sciences*

As associate clinical professor and director of clinical education and the audiology program, Nicole Nguyen takes initiative and thinks outside of the box to make lasting impacts on students, patients and systems.

She received bachelor’s degrees in hearing and speech sciences and psychology as well as her clinical doctorate in audiology from UMD, and spent seven years at the University of Maryland Medical Center while serving as an adjunct instructor at

UMD before joining the faculty in 2016.

Since then, says department Chair and Professor Rochelle Newman, “she has become one of my ‘go-to’ people as chair, since I know she can be counted on to both willingly take on new responsibilities and to do so in a way that ensures their success.”

For example, during the pandemic, she and a colleague received a Teaching Innovation Grant to purchase the tech equipment necessary for socially distanced clinical education. Nguyen also developed the plan to allow the audiology clinic to resume providing in-person services; it became the basis for research reopening plans throughout the College of Behavioral and Social Sciences (BSOS).

Nguyen also expanded the clinic’s services and took on the monumental task of shifting the clinic to accepting insurance. “This step greatly increased the number of patients that visit the clinic,” says Samira Anderson, professor and associate chair. “The students now experience a well-rounded exposure to clinic services.”

In addition, Nguyen is a founding member of the Maryland Center of Excellence in Cochlear Implants, where she established a popular summer camp for children who are deaf and hard of hearing.

She is active in a half-dozen department committees, including one focused on diversity, equity and inclusion, helping to lead an overhaul of courses and enhanced mechanisms for reporting bias incidents.

Nguyen also serves on the BSOS College Council, where she successfully advocated for greater PTK faculty representation. “Her approach was, without exaggeration, a model for how representatives on bodies like the College Council

can be most effective,” says Aaron Tobiason, past council chair and assistant director of administrative services in the Department of Sociology.

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## Gregory Payne

*Institute for Bioscience and Biotechnology Research*

Research Professor Gregory Payne is a world-renowned expert in measuring oxidation processes and has developed game-changing techniques to measure oxidative stress imbalances linked to schizophrenia and related diseases, opening new possibilities for understanding and treating one of the most devastating mental illnesses.

Payne’s research at the interface of measurement sciences and biomaterials has employed electrochemical methods to induce or observe oxidation processes. He has created electrical techniques to induce the polysaccharide chitosan to self-assemble for the creation of “biosensors” and to measure oxidative stresses resulting from an imbalance of free radicals and antioxidants in the human body. His work has shown that high levels of oxidative stress are linked to schizophrenia and that exposure to psychological stressors increases oxidative stress, while some dietary interventions can lower it and improve psychiatric symptoms.

“Dr. Payne has been a visionary who has launched entirely new areas of research through his work,” says Srinivasa R. Raghavan, Patrick and Marguerite Sung Chair of the Department of Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering at UMD. “He is the quintessential scientist who thrives at the interface between disciplines.”

Payne earned bachelor's and master's degrees in chemical engineering at Cornell University and a Ph.D. in chemical engineering at the University of Michigan. He was a tenured professor at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County and also at UMD until 2018 when he transferred to a research professor position at what is now the Institute for Bioscience and Biotechnology Research.

He has authored one book and edited another, and has written scores of journal articles and book chapters. He has been awarded more than \$22 million in research funding from sources including the National Science Foundation, the U.S. Department of Energy and the National Institutes of Health. He also holds 10 patents.

"Dr. Payne is a special collaborator and colleague," says Deanna L. Kelly, MPower Professor in the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Maryland School of Medicine. "My discussions with him are always very interesting because he is very smart, has deep knowledge, is intrinsically curious and enjoys working across disciplines."

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## Sarah Sohns

*Department of Hearing and Speech Sciences*

Sarah Sohns shows an exemplary dedication to her dual roles as assistant clinical professor and clinical supervisor, earning her students' respect and admiration for both teaching and professional training.

She earned her M.A. and Doctor of Audiology degrees at the University of Pittsburgh and her B.A. in communication sciences and disorders from the University of Connecticut, arriving at UMD in

2017 after working at Temple University and the University of Virginia and in the private sector.

She is known throughout the department as a superb instructor who incorporates real-world examples into her teaching, encourages student engagement and is responsive to their concerns. Along with her enthusiasm for the material, she brings warmth in the form of snacks during exams, fun Kahoot! quizzes and personal feedback on students' weekly written reflections. All are in service of preparing students to apply course content and critical thinking skills in the field.

Students give Sohns exceptional rankings, with one undergraduate writing: "Her passion about audiology is clear and makes all of us excited about it too. I loved the learning checks, the history behind the science, and how her case studies were always themed. She accepts all questions without judgment and wants us all to truly learn." A graduate student says, "She is the clinician I hope to one day be."

Rochelle Newman, professor and chair of the Department of Hearing and Speech Sciences, notes: "The high ratings are not because students find her courses easy, but rather because she makes the material relevant and accessible despite its difficulty, and cares about ensuring student success."

Sohns' contributions extend to improving teaching throughout the department. She helped redesign the curriculum to strengthen the scope of diversity and equity content. She also arranged for peer evaluations of clinical instructors, helping them to improve their classes and opening opportunities for advancement.

In addition, Sohns co-led the development of practical comprehensive exams for doctoral students,

integrating theoretical knowledge with clinical diagnostic skills in the context of patient care. The assessment was so noteworthy, says UMD Clinical Professor Emerita Colleen Worthington, that Sohns and her colleague presented it at a national conference last fall.

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## Kirsten Stoebenau

*Department of Behavioral and Community Health*

Kirsten Stoebenau, an influential social and behavioral scientist, brings a comprehensive perspective to public health research designed to improve women's health and well-being across the globe.

Among her extensive work, the associate research professor in the Department of Behavioral and Community Health has examined how intimate relationships impact women's and children's health in sub-Saharan Africa. As part of that research, her investigation into the connection between transactional sex and women's HIV risk prompted improvements to the Demographic and Health Surveys administered in almost 100 low- and middle-income countries worldwide. She was also recently invited to refine survey questions for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Violence Against Children survey, administered every five years in more than 20 nations.

Her research has been funded by the CDC and National Institutes of Health and has been cited more than 1,300 times since 2019.

"Not only does she have an impressive command of the scholarship, but she has an enviable ability to identify critical research gaps and innovative

approaches to filling them," says Sangeetha Madhavan, professor and chair of African American studies and professor of sociology.

Stoebenau received her bachelor's degree in anthropology from Emory University and her doctoral degree in population and family health sciences from Johns Hopkins University. She held research positions at the University of Ottawa, the International Center for Research on Women and American University before joining UMD in 2017. She is also a faculty associate at UMD's Maryland Population Research Center and an adjunct assistant professor of epidemiology and public health at the University of Maryland, Baltimore.

She has also volunteered to lead innovative human-subject research training for students, ensures that they receive visibility through presentations and publications, and developed more advanced research tools and methodologies to assist her colleagues.

"I have found her research impactful, compelling and timely and her commitment to enhancing others' research careers—whether students or other faculty—exemplary," says Robin Puett, professor and associate dean for research in the School of Public Health.

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## Alyssa Whitcraft

*Department of Geographical Sciences*

Alyssa Whitcraft is an internationally recognized expert in innovations in satellite remote sensing for agriculture and food security.

A research professor in the Department of Geographical Sciences, she was instrumental in the



development and implementation of NASA Harvest, a UMD-led consortium that advances the adoption of satellite Earth observations to benefit food security and agriculture worldwide. As deputy director and program manager, Whitcraft helped develop NASA Harvest from the ground up.

“Alyssa’s organizational and management skills contributed significantly to making the Harvest project an outstanding success,” says Chris Justice, Distinguished University Professor in geographical sciences. “As a result of its accomplishments, the Harvest project was renewed by NASA in 2022 without competition, which is highly unusual.”

Whitcraft also spearheaded the related NASA Acres Consortium, which aims to bridge the gap between cutting-edge space technology and practical applications in U.S. agriculture. Her work founding and directing the Harvest Sustainable and Regenerative Agriculture Initiative has built a critical mass of stakeholders to develop an evidence base for wide-scale implementation of agricultural management practices.

She earned her bachelor’s degree in geography/environmental studies and international development studies at the University of California, Los Angeles before receiving her doctoral degree in geographical sciences at UMD in 2014. She joined the department as a research associate that year and was promoted to research professor in 2023.

In addition to her research, Whitcraft has a distinguished international service career, leading the G20 Group on Earth Observations Global Agricultural Monitoring Programme’s Earth Observation Data Coordination Team since 2012 and advocating for agriculture’s prioritization within the world’s space agencies. She has also been a member of her

department’s Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Anti-Black Racism Committee, its Unlearning Racism in Geoscience pod and the College of Behavioral and Social Sciences’ Anti-Black Racism Initiative.

“Her commitment to fostering interdisciplinary collaborations and mentoring the next generation of scientists has had a profound impact on our department, the university community and the field of geographical sciences in general,” says Tatiana Loboda, professor and chair of the Department of Geographical Sciences.

## DISTINGUISHED SCHOLAR-TEACHER

*Winners of the Distinguished Scholar-Teacher awards represent a broad range of academic excellence. The program honors tenured faculty members who have demonstrated outstanding accomplishments as educators.*

*The following honorees are being recognized for such notable achievements as mentorship and publication in their respective fields.*

*Each scholar will present a lecture during the school year.*



### Matthew Goupell

*Department of Hearing and Speech Sciences*

Professor Matthew Goupell leads one of the world’s top labs investigating how people with normal hearing and those with cochlear implants (CI) receive information, even as he nurtures undergraduates and clinical audiology students through thoughtful—and humorous—teaching.

He earned his B.S. at Hope College and graduate degrees at Michigan State, all in physics, and came to UMD in 2011. Goupell soon emerged as a research dynamo on how degraded auditory systems respond in challenging listening situations, like conversations in noisy environments, how advanced age affects auditory processes and how CI signal processing can be improved.

He’s published 110 articles in peer-reviewed journals and five book chapters, as well as one co-edited volume—an average of over 10 publications annually in recent years.

“This demonstrates an exceptionally high level of research productivity, particularly given that much of this work is with individuals with a cochlear implant, a small population that requires significant time and effort (and local area networking) to recruit,” say department chair and Professor Rochelle Newman and Professor Emerita Sandra Gordon-Salant.

He was also one of the youngest researchers elected a fellow of the Acoustical Society of America and serves as associate editor of its journal.

Goupell is principal investigator on five projects funded by \$8.5 million in grants, including UMD-REACH (Research Equity and Access in Communication and Hearing), to enhance research training and professional development opportunities for undergraduates from groups underrepresented in the field.

A devoted teacher and adviser, Goupell directs the department’s doctoral program and co-directs its undergraduate honors program. He’s mentored or co-mentored six Ph.D. students, more than 25 Au.D.

students and seven postdoctoral research associates, providing tremendous insight and guidance while encouraging their research pursuits.

In between his joke of the day, his nicknaming of his “Basis of Hearing Science” course as “Herring Science” and his classroom zombie-themed role-playing game, Goupell brings a light touch to conveying knowledge.

“What I found most admirable is his ability to provide direction without stifling a sense of free thought and individualism,” says doctoral student Anhelina Bilokon. “His psychoacoustics course sparked more lightbulb moments for me than the entire curriculum combined.”

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## Brooke Fisher Liu

*Department of Communication*

Brooke Fisher Liu has dedicated her career to creating a deeper understanding of how communication can make a tangible impact on people affected by large-scale disasters, while serving as a mentor and guide for her students.

Liu joined UMD in 2009, and has worked throughout her academic life to build communities that are resilient in the face of pandemics and other health crises, weather and environmental disasters or human-caused catastrophes like terrorist attacks.

“Dr. Liu does important research that has moved the body of public relations research into new and important domains as it broadened a disciplinary focus, particularly within crisis communication,” says Elizabeth Avery Foster, professor and director of the Tombras School of Advertising and Public Relations

at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville. “Her scholarship is not only theoretically advanced and heuristic but also of significant applied value.”

Liu earned her bachelor’s degree in anthropology and Spanish from Washington University in St. Louis, a master’s in journalism from the University of Missouri-Columbia and a Ph.D. in mass communication from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. She is co-editor of “Handbook of Risk, Crisis, and Disaster Communication,” has written 20 book chapters and has published 73 articles in refereed journals. Liu was recently elected a fellow of the International Communication Association.

She has led or co-led research supported by more than \$5 million in funding from the Centers for Disease Control, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Department of Homeland Security, the National Science Foundation and the Food and Drug Administration.

Teaching and mentoring are central to Liu’s work at UMD. She has taught five different courses over the last five years at both the undergraduate and graduate levels and has served as primary adviser to 12 Ph.D. students and three master’s students.

“Choosing to study with Dr. Liu has been the best professional decision of my life,” says Tyler G. Page Ph.D. ’18, an assistant professor of communication at the University of Connecticut. “She spends a very high proportion of her institutional power to help others navigate and succeed in the challenging academic ecosystem.”

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## Gottlieb S. Oehrlein

*Department of Materials Science and Engineering*

As the world’s leading expert on plasma etching and a top researcher in the broader field of ambient temperature plasma science and technology, Gottlieb S. Oehrlein has helped build the foundations of nanofabrication, enabling broad-scale manufacturing of the semiconductor circuits so crucial in the information age.

Each of his nearly 300 journal articles (with more than 17,000 citations) is designed as a teaching tool; they consist of a self-contained tutorial presenting his experimental data and a step-by-step analysis leading the reader to his scholarly findings.

“He has mentored his students in the same way; and many of them now hold influential positions in industry with substantial societal impact,” say A. James Clark School of Engineering colleagues Professor Robert M. Briber, associate dean for research, and Ji-Cheng (JC) Zhao, former chair of the Department of Materials Science and Engineering.

One former student, Pingshan Luan Ph.D. ’18, a principal process engineer at Tokyo Electron Limited, says, “Professor Oehrlein taught me not only the knowledge needed to excel professionally, but also a set of principles that I operate daily as a person.”

An accomplished teacher, Oehrlein developed a number of undergraduate and graduate courses at UMD, and his course evaluations are consistently above the average in his department.

Oehrlein earned his German undergraduate degree in physics at Würzburg University and his M.S. and Ph.D. in physics at the University at Albany-State University of New York. He became a researcher at IBM and then a physics professor

at UAlbany before coming to UMD in 2000. A recipient of many accolades throughout his career, Oehrlein is a fellow of the International Plasma Chemistry Society, the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry and AVS. He holds 14 issued patents.

“The impact of Gottlieb Oehrlein’s work on the industrial processing of semiconductors (and etching processes, in particular), and the recognition he has received from colleagues worldwide, attest to his stature in plasma-surface interactions,” says J. Gary Eden, Intel Alumni Endowed Chair in Electrical and Computer Engineering at the University of Illinois. “Professor Oehrlein has profoundly impacted the semiconductor device industry.”

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## Linda Steiner

*Philip Merrill College of Journalism*

Linda Steiner is a globally respected expert on the role of women in the media as well as a generous teacher and mentor.

Her research has provided insights about how and when gender makes a difference in the newsroom while considering broader social, political and economic contexts. She has also embraced the study of media ethics, journalism history and emerging movements including citizen journalism. Recent projects analyzed the framing of race in Baltimore and women’s responses to harassment on social media.

Her body of work, including 11 authored or edited books, more than 80 refereed articles and chapters, and dozens of conference papers—together cited more than 4,000 times—is crucial to the field of gender media studies.

“She makes interpretations that others have not thought of and challenges us to question our own assumptions about women and their experiences,” says Dafna Lemish, interim dean and distinguished professor of communication and information at Rutgers University.

In addition to her research, Steiner has been editor-in-chief of *Journalism & Communication Monographs* and *Critical Studies in Media Communication* and serves on the editorial boards of several other prominent journals.

“She is the rare editor who engages on both a macro and micro level, helping authors to articulate a bigger point while also paying close attention to the prose,” says Carolyn Kitch, Laura H. Carnell Professor of journalism at Temple University.

Steiner earned her bachelor’s degree at the University of Pennsylvania and her doctoral degree at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. She was a professor at Rutgers University before joining UMD in 2006. She taught at Columbia University and has lectured worldwide, including in China, Taiwan and Portugal. Since 2023, she has also served as the Philip Merrill College of Journalism’s associate dean for faculty affairs and DEI.

She has designed and taught numerous undergraduate and graduate courses, with her students consistently lauding her professionalism, passion and thoughtfulness.

“I am in awe of Dr. Steiner’s level of care and commitment to her students,” says Alison Burns Ph.D. ’23, a UMD journalism lecturer and former student of Steiner’s. “No request or inquiry is insignificant to her.”

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## Gregory Sullivan

*Department of Physics*

Along with making major contributions to three landmark physics experiments that expanded understanding of the universe, Gregory Sullivan has offered up-and-coming scientists outstanding teaching and caring mentorship.

Before his 1995 arrival at UMD, Sullivan worked on the Collider Detector at Fermilab that discovered the top quark, the most massive observed subatomic particle; as a Maryland assistant professor, he joined the Super-Kamiokonde project in Japan that proved that the lightest subatomic particle—neutrinos—have mass; later, he helped plan and lead the IceCube neutrino detector deep in the Antarctic ice that has made numerous astrophysical discoveries.

Sullivan’s involvement in the three historic scientific investigations “reflects his superlative scholarship, his taste for physics, and the talent to deliver results,” says Vilas Research Professor and Gregory Breit Professor Francis Halzen of the University of Wisconsin, IceCube’s principal investigator. “In a field of extreme specialization, Greg stands out indeed as a true scholar and a leader in the field.”

Sullivan received his B.S. in physics from Southern Illinois University and Ph.D. from the University of Illinois. He was a postdoctoral researcher and senior research associate at the University of Chicago prior to UMD, where he was promoted to full professor in 2006.

As a teacher, Sullivan turns his own hunger for answers to scientific mysteries into motivation for his students. He works “to inspire curiosity and confidence, to provide infinite patience and support, and to

simultaneously foster both a strong spirit of collaboration and intellectual independence—no easy feat!” says physics Professor and Chair Steve Rolston.

Students provide enthusiastic reviews of his courses—“This class was so freaking awesome, and you were the dopest professor to teach it. I loved the kind of mile-wide, foot-deep approach because this opened my eyes to so much cool physics,” writes one.

A former doctoral student says Sullivan helped her fight through challenges with her data and self-doubt to find success.

“Dr. Sullivan was more than just an advisor; he was a beacon of support,” says Elim Thompson Ph.D. ’18. “As an educator and scholar, he not only provided academic guidance but also offered emotional support, reassurance and a vision of the future.”

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## Vijaya Venkataramani

*Department of Management and Organization*

Vijaya Venkataramani, Dean’s Professor of Leadership and Innovation, has established a global reputation as a top organizational behavior scholar, one whose research illuminates her teaching.

She’s spent her career at UMD, arriving in 2008 after completing degrees at Delhi University, the Management Development Institute in India and Purdue University; today she also holds honorary appointments as a research fellow at the University of Cambridge and University College, London.

Venkataramani studies how employees can lead bottom-up change in their organizations by challenging the status quo and leveraging their social networks to mobilize support for change initiatives—critical

topics for researchers and managers.

“It is not an overstatement to say that Professor Venkataramani’s work challenges many of our assumptions about what we know about traditional areas of study with a deeply rooted history, e.g., delegation, leadership, creativity and innovation,” says Michelle K. Duffy, Vernon Heath Chair at the University of Minnesota.

Venkataramani is highly productive, having published 21 papers in major journals; she has several working papers in the pipeline. She has served as associate editor of the *Journal of Applied Psychology* and sits on its editorial board as well as on the board of the *Academy of Management Journal*.

Her research informs her teaching at all levels in organizational behavior, negotiations and social network analyses. In one graduate course, for example, she uses her findings to persuade students that negotiation is not an art or a skill, but a science with a system of rules and teachable skills.

She has served on 20 dissertation committees, and her students have gone on to teach at institutions including the University of North Carolina, Tsinghua University and Hong Kong University. One former advisee, Tom Taiyi Yan Ph.D. ’20, assistant professor at University College, London, calls Venkataramani “the most wonderful role model one could ask for.”

“She is fearless in asking the most difficult questions we face in organizations and society, unrelenting in pursuing knowledge no matter how daunting the challenge, and deeply passionate about creating collaboration and spurring intellectual discoveries,” he says.

## DISTINGUISHED UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR

*The highest honor the university bestows, this title is conferred in recognition of extraordinary achievement as a teacher, scholar and public servant.*

### John P. Fisher

*Fischell Department of Bioengineering*

Through innovative research and organizational leadership, John P. Fisher has established himself as a global authority in remedying injury and disease with 3D bioprinting of cell-laden biomaterials, with a particular focus on orthopedic, cardiovascular and dermal tissues.

Fisher received his B.S. in biomedical engineering at Johns Hopkins University, an M.S. in chemical engineering at the University of Cincinnati and his Ph.D. in bioengineering at Rice University. He came to UMD in 2003 and helped inaugurate the Fischell Department of Bioengineering in 2006. Fisher became a full professor in 2012, department chair in 2016, and an MPower Professor in 2022. With National Institutes of Health support, Fisher established the Center for Engineering Complex Tissue at UMD in 2016 to help broaden the 3D bioprinting research community.

“Dr. Fisher is clearly a leader in our field, with great expertise in 3D bioprinting and regenerative medicine. Moreover, he has the great ability to bring a diversity of people together to deliver a superb multidisciplinary program,” says Professor Molly Shoichet, Canada Research Chair in Tissue Engineering at the University of Toronto.

Fisher has advanced the science of regenerating bone and cardiovascular tissue and pioneered a new type of perfusion bioreactor for dynamic cell culture. His scholarly articles, book chapters and conference proceedings total more than 225 works cited over 17,500 times. He holds 12 completed and several pending patents.

His department more than doubled yearly research expenditures on his watch while boosting female faculty representation, says Laurie Locascio, director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology and former UMD vice president for research.

“I could see that these remarkable results were due to a combination of his hard work, his clear and consistent message, his tremendous ability to work effectively with his faculty, and his strength in building teams and doing collaborative research,” she says.

Fisher is editor-in-chief of his field’s top journal, *Tissue Engineering*, is a fellow of the American Institute of Medical Biological Engineering, the Biomedical Engineering Society and the International Union of Societies for Biomaterials Science and Engineering. He was also elected the 2025 Chair of the Council of Chairs, a global assembly of biomedical engineering and bioengineering department chairs.

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### John Harty

*Department of Philosophy*

Philosophy Professor John Harty is one of his discipline’s leading thinkers in the field of logic, pioneering its applications in artificial intelligence, ethics and law.

In his work, he has developed logical tools to approach ethical choices by understanding how multiple reasons come together to influence what choice individuals—or courts, or machine learning algorithms—should make.

“As a scholar of logic, ethics, epistemology and the philosophy of law, Dr. Harty has made a meaningful difference in the conversations in those areas of philosophical concern; moreover, Dr. Harty has translated this experience for the newly emerging area of artificial intelligence, becoming a leading (perhaps the leading) philosophical expert on AI and its ethical consequences for individuals and society,” says Stephanie Shonekan, dean of the College of Arts and Humanities.

Harty earned a bachelor’s degree in philosophy and classics from Oberlin College, and a Ph.D. in philosophy from the University of Pittsburgh. He came to Maryland in 1990 and holds affiliate appointments in the Institute for Advanced Computer Studies and the Computer Science Department. He served as chair of philosophy from 2009 to 2012.

Harty has authored four books, including “Reasons as Defaults” and “The Logic of Precedent: Constraint, Freedom, and Common Law Reasoning,” (forthcoming from Cambridge University Press), as well as papers on a variety of topics in logic, philos-

ophy, law and computer science. His work has been supported by three fellowships from the National Endowment for Humanities and several grants from the National Science Foundation, by visiting fellowships at the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Studies and the Center for Advanced Studies in Behavioral Sciences at Stanford University and more recently, by a Humboldt Research Award.

“His scholarship has shaped the area of philosophy in which he works, and it has also had very significant influence outside of philosophy, both on legal scholarship and in real-world applications,” says Sarah B. Lawsky, Vice Dean and Stanford Clinton Sr. and Zylpha Kilbride Clinton Research Professor of Law at Northwestern University’s Pritzker School of Law. “Professor Harty is, in my view, the single most important and influential scholar working at the intersection of logic and law.”

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### Alan Jay Kaufman

*Department of Geology*

A world leader in geobiology, Alan Jay Kaufman has played a key role in establishing the field of Precambrian chemostratigraphy, which helps explain how environmental conditions influenced the rise of life on Earth—and how the evolution of life helped shape the planet.

Kaufman received bachelor’s degrees in geology and English at Louisiana State University and his M.S. and Ph.D. in geology at Indiana University. After serving as a postdoctoral researcher and research associate at Harvard University, he came to UMD in 1997 and was promoted to full professor in 2009.

“Without the scientific contributions of Professor Kaufman, key evidence that underpins the deep-time connections between biological innovation and climate/greenhouse connections to environmental change throughout Earth’s earliest eons would be lacking,” says Distinguished University Professor and Geology Chair James Farquhar.

Through his 140 published papers, many of them in high-profile journals including *Science*, *Nature* and *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, Kaufman “has directly shaped how we investigate and interpret the geological record of life on Earth,” says Marc Laflamme, a professor of Earth science at the University of Toronto Mississauga. “I can attest firsthand of the influence his research has had on our community.”

Kaufman’s research papers have been cited more than 26,000 times; it’s impossible to work on aspects of Earth’s early environmental history and not be conversant with his scientific findings, says Professor Simon Poulton, chair of biogeochemistry and Earth history at the University of Leeds: “He is a major, and widely respected, force in isotopic research pertaining to the evolution of Earth’s environment.”

Alongside his foundational scientific studies, Kaufman is a leading educator in the College of Computer, Mathematical, and Natural Sciences. In addition to his active involvement in the development of undergraduate courses, he has mentored seven doctoral candidates, eight master’s students and well over 70 undergraduate students and laboratory assistants, demonstrating his commitment to student success and nurturing diversity in geology. He is also an elected fellow of the Geological Society of America and was a Fulbright Foundation Global Scholar.

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## Melanie Killen

*Department of Human Development and Quantitative Methodology*

In her three decades at UMD, Melanie Killen has revolutionized developmental scientists’ understanding of how moral and social reasoning emerge and develop in childhood and adolescence. Her research has shown that prejudice in childhood often reflects a lack of recognition about how biases contribute to social inequalities and unfair treatment of others.

Killen’s work focuses on reducing prejudice by enabling young people to challenge stereotype-informed expectations, even when it might not be easy to do. She has developed methodologies and interventions to enhance children’s capacity for inclusive social decision-making by providing peer experiences that reveal shared identities and values.

“Dr. Killen’s research, leadership and mentorship will continue to have an enduring impact on what we know and how we aim to support youth in their development, as well as our collective efforts to advance a more just and equitable society,” says Kimberly A. Griffin, dean of the College of Education.

Killen earned a bachelor’s degree in psychology from Clark University and a Ph.D. in developmental psychology from the University of California, Berkeley. She joined UMD in 1994 and is an honorary professor of psychology at the University of Kent in the U.K., a fellow of the Association for Psychological Science and the American Psychological Association, and a member of the National Academy of Education.

Killen has authored two books and co-edited seven others. She’s written nearly 50 book chapters,

over 160 journal articles and 36 other publications. Killen has also received more than \$8 million in funding from sources including the National Science Foundation and the National Institutes of Health. Her work has been featured in *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *USA Today*, *CNN* and *CBS News*. In addition, Killen has served as primary adviser for 26 doctoral students.

“Dr. Killen is an internationally renowned scholar whose research and writing are at the forefront of the field of developmental psychology,” says Susan A. Gelman, Heinz Werner Distinguished University Professor of psychology and linguistics at the University of Michigan. “Her research has a profound influence, not only within psychology and education, but also across the cognitive sciences more broadly.”

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## Howard Milchberg

*Department of Physics  
Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering*

During his career at UMD, Howard Milchberg has made pioneering contributions in the field of experimental and theoretical nonlinear optics and plasma physics, while his internationally prominent research in the field of intense laser-matter interactions has brought scientific as well as popular acclaim—for example, a *Wired* magazine article entitled “Physicists Clear the Air With a Sweet Frickin’ Laser Beam.”

Milchberg has most notably advanced the use of lasers that compress their power into a few femtoseconds (or million-billionths of a second) for exploring otherwise indiscernible properties of matter or

(as the *Wired* article discusses) clearing “tunnels” through the atmosphere with one laser beam to help keep another laser pulse focused on its path.

“Howard has continually advanced the field of optical guiding of high-intensity laser pulses,” says University of Waterloo Professor Donna Strickland, a 2018 Nobel laureate in physics.

Milchberg received his bachelor’s degree in engineering physics at McMaster University and a Ph.D. in astrophysics from Princeton University, then worked as a postdoctoral researcher at Bell Laboratories before arriving at UMD in 1988; he was promoted to professor in 1995. Among his accolades are fellowships in the American Physical Society (APS) and Optica, the 2005 APS John Dawson Research Excellence Award in Plasma Physics and the 2024 APS Arthur L. Schawlow Prize in Laser Science. His 179 published papers have been cited more than 13,000 times.

“His discoveries have advanced the field,” says Philip H. Bucksbaum, Marguerite Blake Wilbur Professor in Natural Science at Stanford University. “His seminal work on plasma-channel laser light guides is widely recognized as a major accomplishment in plasma physics.”

Milchberg has also helped advance the science careers of numerous students, advising 28 Ph.D. graduates and dozens of undergraduates. Additionally, three students from his lab have won APS’ Marshall Rosenbluth Award for the best Ph.D. thesis research in plasma physics.

“Besides the influence Howard’s work has had on the scientific community, it has an even greater impact on the education of his students,” says Louis F. DiMauro, Hagenlocker Chair and professor of physics at the Ohio State University.



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## Min Wu

*Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering*

From stopping digital piracy to protecting classified government documents and forging novel ways to track heart health, Min Wu's research offers solutions for some of society's biggest challenges.

"Professor Wu has made extraordinary contributions to the field of multimedia signal processing, security and forensics, and has had major impact in real-world applications," says Shih-Fu Chang, dean of Columbia University's School of Engineering and Applied Science.

The Christine Kim Eminent Professor of Information Technology, Wu has a joint appointment at the Institute for Advanced Computer Studies and serves as the A. James Clark School of Engineering's associate dean for graduate programs. She joined UMD in 2001 after receiving her Ph.D. from Princeton University and bachelor's degrees in electrical engineering and economics from Tsinghua University in Beijing.

Her pioneering work focuses on digital fingerprinting: embedding a unique ID into multimedia such as maps and videos to enable users to track leaked data and detect tampering. Her research extends into improving video communications over resource-limited wireless networks, as well as "physiological forensics" tracking heart rate and blood oxygen levels without wearing or touching sensors. Her journal articles and conference papers have been cited more than 15,000 times.

Wu is an award-winning educator who supports graduate and undergraduate students, offering

professional development opportunities and group mentoring. As an ADVANCE professor and faculty fellow, she recruits and supports junior and mid-career faculty members, especially those from underrepresented populations and women.

"I have not only been impressed with her leadership in the Clark School, but also within her academic community," says Clark School Dean Samuel Graham, Jr.

Wu's leadership roles include serving as president of the Signal Processing Society of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers—the first woman of color to lead this international professional organization of over 23,000 members. She has also been elected to the American Association for the Advancement of Science and—with 47 patents issued or pending—the National Academy of Inventors.

She is "one of the most accomplished and visible faculty members on the world stage," says retired Distinguished University Professor K.J. Ray Liu. "She is a quintessential role model for women in engineering."





## KIRWAN FACULTY RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP PRIZE

*This prize is presented annually to a member of the faculty in recognition of a highly significant work of research, scholarship or artistic creativity that has been achieved within the past three years.*

### Andrew Childs

*Department of Computer Science  
Institute for Advanced Computer Studies*

A leading scientist in the field of quantum algorithms, researcher Andrew Childs has helped develop both theoretical foundations and practical applications for quantum computers, which have the potential to address problems that are beyond the reach of traditional computational methods.

Childs earned his B.S. in physics at the California Institute of Technology and his Ph.D. in the same field at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). After serving on the faculty at the University of Waterloo, he arrived at UMD in 2014 and became a full professor in computer science and the Institute for Advanced Computer Studies with a joint appointment in physics in 2017.

From 2014–24, Childs co-directed the Joint Center for Quantum Information and Computer Science, and he has directed the NSF Quantum Leap Challenge Institute for Robust Quantum Simulation (RQS) since 2021. At RQS, founded with a \$25 million grant from the National Science Foundation, he is helping to apply quantum computing to the study of physical phenomena, with profound implications for both basic science and technology development in chemistry, physics, materials science and more.

Two recent papers written with Childs' former Ph.D. student Yuan Su and other coauthors—"Nearly Optimal Lattice Simulation by Product Formulas," published in *Physical Review Letters* in 2019 and "Theory of Trotter Error with Commutator Scaling," published in *Physical Review X* in 2021—developed techniques to reduce the resources required for quantum computers to simulate and study quantum systems. His 97 other papers have collectively been cited more than 15,000 times.

"This work represents a crucial advancement in the field, addressing challenges that have long hindered progress and has influenced many members of the scientific community that, like me, are working on that field," writes physicist Ignacio Cirac of the Max Planck Institute of Quantum Optics.

Although the practical deployment of quantum computers has been an arduous process, Childs' colleagues say, his theoretical work has left a deep impression on the field.

"When the day comes that quantum computers fulfill hopes of contributing to solutions for broad societal problems, such as energy needs and climate change, I have no doubt that the success will have been made possible in large part due to the insights and innovations created by Andrew Childs," says Isaac Chuang, a professor in MIT's physics and electrical engineering and computer science departments.

## KIRWAN UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION AWARD

*This prize is presented annually in recognition of the faculty or staff member who has made exceptional contributions to the quality of undergraduate education at the university.*

### Katerina Thompson

*College of Computer, Mathematical, and Natural Sciences*

Over more than 30 years at UMD, Katerina "Kaci" Thompson has demonstrated exemplary commitment to improving student outcomes in STEM majors and enhancing science teaching and learning.

A crown jewel of her work is the BioFIRE living and learning program, which debuted in 2015. As founding director, Thompson, instructor and assistant dean for science education initiatives in the College of Computer, Mathematical, and Natural Sciences (CMNS), has helped provide research opportunities, mentoring and community activities to chemical and life sciences students who are first-generation, from under-resourced neighborhoods or from racial and ethnic minorities.

"Dr. Thompson is a visionary who saw the need for students underrepresented in STEM fields to have a strong academic community at a large institution," says Manuella Djomaleu '20, a former student of Thompson's who went on to medical school at the University of California, San Francisco.

She also created the Catalyst seminar to encourage earlier engagement of students in individually mentored research, and for 20 years directed a competitive undergraduate research fellows program. Her efforts have received more than \$11 million in funding.

Thompson earned her bachelor's degree in biology and her master's degree in zoology from Virginia Tech. After receiving her Ph.D. in zoology at UMD, she joined the faculty as a lecturer in 1993. She has served as an instructor of biological sciences, including an upper-level mammalogy class, and assumed her current role in 2017.

She participates in several STEM access and support initiatives, including the CMNS faculty advisory board for the Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program, the steering committee for the first-generation college student initiative and her college's diversity, equity and inclusion council. Since 2007, she has also served on the faculty advisory committee on course evaluations.

In addition, Thompson strives to support her fellow faculty members. She secured grant funding in 2006 for a disciplinary teaching and learning center that has expanded to all 10 CMNS departments. The early work of the center included the creation of faculty learning communities, consulting and mentoring programs, and courses to enhance pedagogy skills for graduate teaching assistants.

"Few campuses have people that have made such extensive contributions to undergraduate education," says Marco Molinaro, executive director for educational effectiveness and analytics in the Teaching and Learning Transformation Center. "We, and the undergraduate STEM students at UMD, are very fortunate to have Kaci."

## PRESIDENT'S MEDAL

*The President's Medal is the highest honor bestowed upon a member of the university community. It is intended to recognize extraordinary contributions to the intellectual, social and cultural life of Maryland.*



### Robert Infantino Jr.

*College of Computer, Mathematical, and Natural Sciences*

From elevating the University of Maryland on the global stage to supporting more than 20% of the undergraduate majors on campus, Robert “Bob” Infantino Jr. has been an energetic and innovative campus leader at the College of Computer, Mathematical, and Natural Sciences (CMNS) for three decades.

“The entire campus has benefited immensely from his service, which has improved the university’s visibility, reputation and student opportunities and experiences,” says CMNS Dean Amitabh Varshney.

As associate dean for undergraduate education, Infantino is responsible for more than 7,000 CMNS students, including those in two of UMD’s three biggest majors: computer science and the biological sciences (he began his leadership career as director of undergraduate studies in the Department of Biology). Since 2010, the college’s four-year graduation rate has risen nine points to 83%. This includes significant increases for both women and those in underrepresented populations, thanks to his emphasis

on and support for inclusive excellence. His experienced leadership team supports CMNS students and all campus students pursuing postgraduate study in health professions.

He has supported the creation of more than 10 majors and specializations, five minors and unique initiatives like the BioFIRE program; he has also focused on broadening inclusion, mentoring and undergraduate research, and helping to develop the biological sciences program at Shady Grove. Infantino also assisted in the launch of two Honors College programs—Integrated Life Sciences and the Advanced Cybersecurity Experience for Students—enrolling some of the nation’s most talented high school students at UMD.

Described as gregarious, empathetic and warm, Infantino is “a tactical administrative genius” who works with colleagues in many units to make an impact beyond CMNS, say Vice President for Research Gregory Ball and College of Behavioral and Social Sciences Associate Dean Katherine Russell.

As the university’s representative for the Goldwater Scholarship since 2001, Infantino has successfully

nominated 63 students for the prestigious award honoring STEM excellence, placing UMD second only to Stanford University in the last 15 years. This has had a ripple effect as some have gone on to earn other internationally recognized awards, such as the Churchill and Rhodes scholarships.

In addition, he has served on 50 university committees addressing critical issues, including the Mental Health Task Force, the Veterans Affairs Steering Committee, the Accessibility and Disability Services Advisory Board and the Facilities Advisory Committee. He helped develop and implement the campus policies for review of sexual misconduct cases. “It would be difficult to find another person on our campus to serve in such a role with the same level of respect for human dignity that Bob exhibits,” says Andrea Goodwin, assistant vice president and dean of students.

Despite his many administrative responsibilities, Infantino makes time for students. He opens his door to CMNS undergrads as well others across campus, from veterans looking for career advice to freshmen struggling with mental health or adjustment challenges. He has also mentored underrepresented

students in the C.D. Mote, Jr. Incentive Awards Program since 2006.

A biologist who earned his bachelor’s degree from the University of San Diego and a doctorate in zoology from the University of Massachusetts Amherst, Infantino is “a natural scientist who is, in all senses, a humanist with a big heart,” says William Cohen, associate provost and dean for undergraduate studies.

Adele H. Stamp Student Union Director Marsha Guenzler-Stevens says he is “an extraordinary colleague, university citizen, teacher and mentor, trailblazer and champion of all things that enhance education, and friend.”

**PAST RECIPIENTS OF  
THE PRESIDENT’S MEDAL**

**1985**

**Paul P. Traver**

*Professor, Department of Music and Director, University of Maryland Chorus*

**1986**

**Donald Maley**

*Professor Emeritus and Former Chair, Department of Industrial, Technological and Occupational Education*

**1987**

**Richard H. Jaquith**

*Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs and Professor Emeritus, Department of Chemistry*

**1988**

**J. Robert Dorfman**

*Former Dean, College of Computer, Mathematical, and Physical Sciences*

**1988**

**Thomas M. Magoon**

*Director of the Counseling Center and Professor, Departments of Education and Psychology*

**1989**

**Craciela Nemes**

*Professor Emerita, Department of Spanish and Portuguese Languages and Literatures*

**1990**

**Jacob K. Goldhaber**

*Acting Dean, Graduate Studies and Research, and Professor, Department of Mathematics*

**1991**

**Dudley Dillard**

*Professor Emeritus and Former Chair, Department of Economics (Awarded Posthumously)*

**1992**

**Don C. Piper**

*Professor, Department of Government and Politics*

**1993**

**Margaret Bridwell**

*Director, University Health Center*

**1993**

**Eugenie Clark**

*Professor Emerita, Department of Zoology*

**1994**

**George H. Callcott**

*Professor Emeritus, Department of History*

**1996**

**Robert L. Gluckstern**

*Professor, Department of Physics*

**1996**

**Jack Minker**

*Professor, Department of Computer Science*

**1997**

**David Driskell**

*Distinguished University Professor, Department of Art*

**1998**

**Marie Smith Davidson**

*Chief of Staff, Office of the President*

**1998**

**Rudolph P. Lamone**

*Dean, Robert H. Smith School of Business*

**1999**

**Ira Berlin**

*Distinguished University Professor, Department of History*

**2000**

**William L. Thomas Jr.**

*Vice President for Student Affairs*

**2001**

**Irwin L. Goldstein**

*Dean, College of Behavioral and Social Sciences*

**2002**

**Charles F. Sturtz**

*Vice President for Administrative Affairs*

**2003**

**Ralph D. Bennett Jr.**

*Professor, School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation*

**2004**

**George Dieter**

*Professor Emeritus, Department of Mechanical Engineering*

**2005**

**Gerald R. Miller**

*Professor, Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry*

**2006**

**William Fourney**

*Professor and Chair, Department of Aerospace Engineering*

**2007**

**Victor Korenman**

*Associate Provost for Academic Planning and Programs (Retired), and Professor Emeritus, Department of Physics*

**2008**

**Susan L. Bayly, Esq.**

*General Counsel, President’s Office of Legal Affairs*

**2009**

**Jordan A. Goodman**

*Professor, Department of Physics*

**2010**

**Herbert Rabin**

*Professor, Senior Associate Dean and Director, Maryland Technology Enterprise Institute (Mtech)*

**2011**

**Charles F. Wellford**

*Professor, Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice*

**2012**

**Robert S. Gold**

*Founding Dean, School of Public Health, and Professor, Department of Public and Community Health*

**2013**

**James A. Yorke**

*Professor, Departments of Mathematics and Physics, and Institute for Physical Science and Technology*

**2014**

**Ann G. Wylie**

*Professor, Department of Geology*

**2015**

**Donna B. Hamilton**

*Associate Provost, Division of Academic Affairs, and Professor, Department of English*

**2016**

**S. James Gates Jr.**

*Distinguished University Professor, Department of Physics*

**2017**

**Jerry L. Lewis**

*Executive Director, Academic Achievement Programs, Office of Undergraduate Studies*

**2018**

**Darryll J. Pines**

*Professor, Department of Aerospace Engineering, and Dean, A. James Clark School of Engineering*

**2019**

**Linda M. Clement**

*Vice President, Division of Student Affairs*

**2020**

**Marcio A. Oliveira**

*Assistant Vice President of Academic Technology and Innovation, Division of Information Technology and Division of Academic Affairs*

**2021**

**Ritu Agarwal**

*Distinguished University Professor and Dean’s Chair of Information Systems*

**2022**

**Warren L. Kelley**

*Senior Associate Vice President, Division of Student Affairs*

**2023**

**Gloria Aparicio Blackwell**

*Director, Office of Community Engagement, Division of Administration*

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*Philip Merrill College of Journalism*

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**Daniel L. Conway**  
*School of Theatre, Dance, and Performance Studies*

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**James H. Duncan**  
*Department of Mechanical Engineering*

**Karol W. Dyson (2023)**  
*University of Maryland Extension*

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*University of Maryland Extension*

**Robert Gibson**  
*School of Music*

**Sidney L. “Denny” Gulick**  
*Department of Mathematics*

**Mark Hill**  
*School of Music*

**Joseph F. JaJa**  
*Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering  
Institute for Advanced Computer Studies*

**Eugenia E. Kalnay (2023)**  
*Department of Atmospheric and Oceanic Science*

**Frauke Kreuter**  
*Joint Program in Survey Methodology*

**Gary D. LaFree**  
*Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice*

**Zhongchi Liu**  
*Department of Cell Biology and Molecular Genetics*

**Christopher J. Lobb**  
*Department of Physics*

**Wanda Yvette MacLachlan (2023)**  
*University of Maryland Extension*

**C. D. “Dan” Mote, Jr.**  
*Department of Mechanical Engineering*

**Maria Polinsky**  
*Department of Linguistics*

**Hernán Sánchez Martínez de Pinillos**  
*School of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures*

**Katherine H. Murdock**  
*School of Music*

**Dana S. Nau**  
*Department of Computer Science*

**Sandra Crouse Quinn**  
*Department of Family Science*

**Marjorie Lindquist Reaka**  
*Department of Biology*

**Ann Carroll Sherrard (2023)**  
*University of Maryland Extension*

**Paul J. Smith (2023)**  
*Department of Mathematics*

**Allen Stairs**  
*Department of Philosophy*

**Nathaniel L. Tablante**  
*Department of Veterinary Medicine*

**Jacqueline Urban Takacs**  
*University of Maryland Extension*

**Stuart N. Vogel (2023)**  
*Department of Astronomy*

**Patrick R. Warfield**  
*School of Music*



