

ACM Family,

As we wrap up the week, thank you for your hard work and dedication to ACM. I am pleased to share the following updates:

**Welcome to ACM:** Please join me in welcoming several new members to the ACM family:

- Dalton Dolly, Security, Willowbrook Woods
- Beth Little, Chief Advancement and Community Relations Officer
- Shawn O'Rourke, Director of Western Maryland Works
- Allison Wolfe, Café and Catering Production Assistant

**Budget:**

There remains significant uncertainty at both the State and County levels regarding the FY26 budget. As you may have heard, Allegany County is facing a projected revenue loss of over \$5 million from the State. Additionally, the State itself is grappling with potential budget cuts of up to \$500 million, driven in part by actions at the federal level. [Read more here.](#)

I am committed to transparency and will keep the ACM community informed as this situation develops. Given the potential funding shortfall, the impact will likely extend across the County and affect the agencies it supports, including ACM. I will continue to advocate for ACM at the County and State level, monitor developments, and provide updates as more information becomes available.

**Professor Emerita Recognition:** I am very pleased to share that Cherie Snyder was approved as Professor Emerita by the Board of Trustees earlier this week. This honor is earned through meritorious service and follows the approved nomination and selection process. Congratulations Cherie.

**PhageHunters:** The two phages that Biology 102/PhageHunter students annotated in Spring 2024 have been peer-reviewed and published in GenBank. They are the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> such publications. These two phages are the first two that went through the process, from discovering the phage to DNA extraction to annotation to publication.

Phage Oaklynn, discovered by Elizabeth M. Honsaker using dirt from Keyser , annotated by Elizabeth M. Honsaker, Jessica Tran, and Jaymielynn Williams. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/nuccore/2866465080>

Phage Benry, discovered by Daniel R. Pressman, from dirt collected at the bottom of a tree by the NE corner of the Science building, annotated by Brandon P. Thomas, Stephanie M. Arata, Leah A. McMillan, Bailee M. Raines, Daniel R. Pressman, and Taylor M. Ryan. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/nuccore/PQ559673>

Thanks to Professors Michele Barmoy and Steven Heninger and Science Lab Coordinator, Joy Freidenbloom, for working with ACM students on this exciting initiative.

**Great Colleges to Work For:** Allegany College of Maryland is once again participating in the *Great Colleges to Work For* program. This survey provides valuable data to inform decision-making and support our strategic plan as we work to create the best workplace possible. On March 3, 2025, a random selection of employees will receive an invitation from ModernThink LLC to participate. For questions, contact Scott Harrah ([sharrah@allegany.edu](mailto:sharrah@allegany.edu)) or visit [www.ChronicleGreatColleges.com](http://www.ChronicleGreatColleges.com).

**Apprenticeships Work:** We are grateful to the Maryland Department of Labor for supporting the College's Hospitality Management Registered Apprenticeship program through a generous grant. I encourage you to learn more about this exciting program, including a recent feature on apprentice Mike Fazenbaker: [Read the story here](#).

**Stay Informed - President's Advisory Team (PAT):** The President's Advisory Team (PAT) meets monthly to 1) provide advice and counsel to the President regarding the overall operation of the College; 2) assist the President in developing the College calendar; 3) collaborate with the President on creating and implementing strategic plans for the College; 4) recommend funding patterns and priorities to the President; and 5) develop the agenda for All-College Assembly staff meetings. The next meeting is scheduled for March 6<sup>th</sup>, starting at 3:30 pm. I encourage you to stay engaged by attending PAT meetings, contacting your affinity group representatives for updates, sharing ideas, and asking questions. Your input is invaluable to shaping the future of our College.

**Building for a Brighter Tomorrow:** Requests for Proposals (RFPs) are being prepared and will be advertised soon for several projects over the summer months using a variety of grants and State & County funding:

- Campus restroom renovations for the College Center, Allied Health and Humanities buildings
- Tennis court repairs/restoration, including new drainage and completely new surfaces for tennis and pickleball courts, plus possibly new lights
- New baseball field dugouts
- Ventilation equipment for the welding and wood shop areas of Western Maryland Works
- Pool conversion to fitness center
- College Center chiller replacement
- Design for the CE/Workforce Training & Development building renovation

**Sign the Vision:** A heartfelt thank you to the hundreds of faculty and staff who signed the ACM Vision Statement, reaffirming our shared commitment to transforming lives, strengthening communities, and placing learners at the center of everything we do. Earlier this week, the Board of Trustees also signed the Vision, where we captured a photo of the Board, constituency group representatives, and the President's staff (included at the end of this message). Thank you for your collective dedication to this important mission.

**On a Personal Note:** A favorite way to clear my mind and recharge is by taking an early morning walk. Fresh air brings clarity, inspiration, and a renewed sense of focus. I encourage you to take a break, move, and see where the next step leads.

Thank you for all that you do to support our students and our college.

David

