Case for Support:  
A State-of-the-Art Teaching and Learning Environment to Transform Lives  

Prince George’s Community College: Transforming Lives

Community colleges play an important role in American higher education. They enroll almost half of all U.S. undergraduate students and are essential for work force training and retraining. Indeed, community colleges have been cited by the White House as an integral part of a national strategy to regain global leadership in the production of college graduates. On the state level, Maryland community colleges have signed “A Promise to Act,” with the goal of increasing substantially the number of Marylanders with postsecondary credentials by 2025. Of late, increasing numbers of “traditional” students have turned to community colleges for their educational needs during the current economic downturn, rendering even more significant the contribution that these institutions make to the communities they serve.

To remain competitive, however, community colleges must respond to the changing landscape in higher education. This means remaining responsive to the new markets of learners of all ages, motivated by career changes, personal interests, and personal development. Today's learners demand that education be individually customized rather than provided in lockstep with students of varying preparation, learning style preference, and expectation. They expect the time, place, and pace of education to be at the convenience of the learner, not the provider, to facilitate balancing work, family, and personal demands with learning. They are also less concerned about mastering a predetermined volume of content, much of which will soon be obsolete as new content is generated, than they are about acquiring work-related skills that will decidedly improve their employment and earning prospects, and learning how to work collaboratively, find needed information, think critically and, of great importance, use technology to facilitate and enhance their work.

Prince George’s Community College has been referred to as “the best kept secret in the county. Aside from the fact that a visit to the campus is evocative of a four year institution, the college has distinguished itself in myriad ways. Among them are the following:

- Opened the first middle college in the state of Maryland, in partnership with the Prince George’s County Public Schools – The Academy of Health Sciences at Prince George’s Community College.
- The College and its president, Dr. Charlene M. Dukes, were named as White House Champions of Change in 2011 for their commitment to improving completion rates, especially among disadvantaged students, and for their sector-based partnerships.

In 2011, Prince George’s Community College and the Prince George’s Community College Foundation, Inc. launched Purpose, People, Possibilities, a campaign that seeks to engage all stakeholders in a collaborative effort to sustain the level of excellence it has achieved by raising $25 million to support three institutional priorities:
• **Scholarships and services** that maximize access for a broad range of students with diverse needs;
• **Academic and workforce development programs** that prepare students for high-demand jobs;
• **Technology, equipment, and furnishings** to support state-of-the-art teaching and learning.

The campaign has generated tremendous momentum for the college, particularly in the first two areas, having eclipsed the $20 million mark. The college has now re-focused the campaign to meet its goal to raise **$7 million** for technology, equipment and furnishings to support state-of-the-art teaching and learning. This critical need must be met if the college is to maintain its history of competitive excellence. In particular, the college has redoubled its fundraising efforts in four targeted areas, as part of an overall effort to create a sustaining technology environment to facilitate teaching and learning in the digital age:

**Envision Success: the Student Completion Agenda**  
$3,000,000

The college serves more than 42,000 students each year, 93% of whom reside in Prince George’s County. It also enjoys the distinction of being among the top 25 associates degree producers among African American students nationally. The objective of this important initiative is to ensure that students complete degrees, certificates, and preparation courses for certifications and licensures. It reflects both national and statewide efforts to substantially increase the number of community college graduates, in acknowledgement of the vital role that two-year institutions now play. This initiative will facilitate knowledge navigation, networking and mobile computing, all of which are essential to the teaching and learning modalities, not of the future, but of today. The college has targeted a number of technology related projects designed specifically to achieve this objective. Among these are:

• **Laptop/Tablet Program with eBooks** to save student costs for devices and for conventional textbooks.
• **Student Advisement Scheduling System** that would enable students to schedule appointments from remote access.
• **Mobile App Project** that would improve student access to information about their course work, academic information, student services information, and college activities.
• **Student Copy Center** to provide students with a more convenient, less expensive alternative to commercial off-campus copying services.
• **Assistive Student Learning Systems** to provide technological devices and software to improve access for students with disabilities (the college serves nearly 1,000 students with various disabilities).
• **Tablet Program for Faculty** to augment classroom instruction and improve the teaching process.

**Academic Programming on the Cutting Edge: Healthcare, STEM, and Cybersecurity**  
$325,000

The college has developed several centers of academic excellence, including those in the areas of healthcare, Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), as well as cybersecurity. For example, in addition to the accolades mentioned above, the college is home to CyberWatch, a national consortium of more than 80 institutions committed to advancing cybersecurity. Building on its academic
strengths, and responding to the needs of the labor market in these high demand disciplines, the college has targeted a number of projects in these critical areas, including the following:

- **Simulation, Animation and Digital Modeling Lab** that will allow the college to develop digital and animation training and certification offerings to meet local and regional workforce needs.
- **Electronic Medical Licenses** that will expand access for health sciences students to software at the bedside and not just in the computer lab.
- **STEM Lab Laptop Upgrade** in physics and engineering courses to ensure that students are trained on the latest technology.

**Creating the Labor Force of the Future: Workforce Development Programs** $250,000

Forty-seven percent of the jobs available in Maryland are considered “middle skill” jobs -- those that require education beyond high school, but not a bachelor’s degree. The college is perfectly situated to address this need, and boasts a remarkable record in doing so. In 2011, the college opened the Westphalia Training Center in Upper Marlboro to educate and train workers for in-demand jobs; and over the last five years, the college has increased by 25 percent enrollments in workforce development and continuing education. The college intends to sustain its leadership in producing a highly skilled workforce that is well equipped to meet the needs of the business community both locally and regionally.

- **TV Studio and Field Production Equipment** to expand to students for firsthand experience in use of equipment.
- A number of the aforementioned projects also fall into this category, particularly those involving mid-skill healthcare jobs like those in nursing, radiography respiratory therapy, nuclear medicine and health information management.

**Sustainable Infrastructure: Facilities Modernization and Upgrade** $3,425,000

The college has expanded in recent years and now has facilities in seven locations -- a move that was made to enable it to better serve the community. The college has targeted several projects designed to establish a comprehensive teaching and learning environment, ensure a capable and reliable computing environment, and improve emergency preparedness and campus security throughout all contracted space, including the main campus in Largo and its six satellite campuses. This initiative would also facilitate networking, knowledge navigation, and communication.

- **Rennie Forum Upgrade** to provide a modern small arena environment to conduct both internal and external community activities.
- **Chesapeake Hall Classroom Upgrade** to create an enriched, stimulating learning environment.
- **Laurel College Center Network** to allow students and staff to have improved performance of internal systems, improving their ability to complete assignments.
- **University Town Center Infrastructure and Equipment/Software Upgrades** to provide maximum opportunity to offer and support modern programs.
- **Video Surveillance System** and other technology infrastructure designed to expand emergency preparedness and bolster campus security.
- **Digital Signage System** and other technology infrastructure designed to improve campus communications.
• **Lab Desktop and Laptop Refresh** to maintain modern and usable equipment in academic labs and staff offices.
• **Data Warehouse System** to establish a knowledge database to improve college decision making.

**Transforming the Community: An Investment with Expected Yields**

Taken together, the vision for these projects is to provide the college with a sustainable infrastructure that will enable it to sustain its leadership and competitiveness as a nationally recognized institution of higher learning. A gift to the college is an investment in the future of Prince George’s County. For every dollar invested in the college, students receive a cumulative $5.70 in higher future income. Higher earning generated by the college expands the state’s tax base by $67.7 million annually. ¹ A gift to the *Purpose, People, Possibilities* campaign is an investment with expected yields.

¹ Source: “The Economic Contribution of Prince George’s Community College to the State of Maryland; EMSI, November 2012.”