Entrepreneurship

The next signpost along the path to prominence is entrepreneurship. The Clark School of Engineering’s recently launched VentureAccelerator program is a perfect example. The Maryland Industrial Partnerships program was selected for the U.S. Small Business Administration’s national "Best Practice" award for technology transfer.

In addition, a report on the progress of the University’s Research Park, known as M Square One, is in order here. It consists of 128 acres of land adjacent to the College Park/University of Maryland Metro station. A partnership agreement with Corporate Office Properties Trust (a NYSE-listed REIT headquartered in Columbia) and Manekin (a regional developer) has been signed.

Milestones in Research Park, M Square One:

- Ground for the Research Park was broken in October 2004. Guests at the ceremony included U.S. Senator Paul Sarbanes, Governor Ehrlich and Congressman Steny Hoyer.
- The Center for the Advanced Study of Language (CASL), our first anchor at M Square, will be opening next month. This 128,000 ft² facility, a long-term partnership with the federal government, will house the University’s first University Affiliated Research Center. $17 million of renovations (paid for by the federal government) have transformed this former Litton manufacturing building into a state-of-the-art research facility.
- Grading and infrastructure work by our partners is underway on the first phase of M Square, which will include NOAA. Over $2 million of infrastructure work has been completed to date.
- NOAA has selected a developer for its National Center for Weather and Climate Prediction, a 300,000 GSF facility at M Square. This building will be a "Green" building, signifying NOAA's and the University's intent to provide excellence in environmental design and conservation.
- Our private sector partners have also committed to "green building" design standards for their buildings at M Square.
- A Detailed Site Plan for the first 120,000 ft² speculative building is being submitted for County approval. Occupancy for this building is scheduled for late 2006. Letters of Intent for approximately 75,000 ft² are being negotiated with research users.
- With CASL and NOAA as anchors, and with the FDA's Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition already in place adjacent to M Square, these three "clusters of excellence" are poised to highlight some of our research strengths: language, linguistics and culture; meteorology and computer science; and food safety and security.

In another example of entrepreneurship, the Division of Research has created the University of Maryland Network for Entrepreneurs (UM-NET). This group includes representatives from across the campus, meets monthly, and is charged with promoting the sharing of knowledge and best practices among the various organizations and programs on campus that
are engaged in entrepreneurship activities. It will present a unified web entry into the entrepreneurship activities of the University for internal and external audiences, and will encourage improved collaboration for enhancing and expanding diverse entrepreneurship programs and resources on campus.

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