



UMBC



LINKING ENVIRONMENTAL AND ACADEMIC PROGRAMS  
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

BETWEEN

UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
MID-ATLANTIC REGION

AND

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND, BALTIMORE COUNTY

AND

UNITED STATES GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

2023

## **Memorandum of Understanding**

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## **I. Purpose and Goals**

The purpose and goal of this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is to formalize and strengthen the partnership between the Mid-Atlantic Region of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), and University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC), hereinafter referred to jointly as “the Parties” or singularly as “Party,” to enhance research, teaching, outreach, career development and stewardship in environmental sciences and engineering to promote:

- A seamless pipeline to bring environmentally literate and technologically capable candidates to the workforce;
- Increased representation of underrepresented/underserved communities with careers in environmental science and engineering and related fields;
- An environmental stewardship ethic in students at all educational levels;
- Innovative teaching and a commitment to community engagement; and
- A partnership which strengthens connections between staff and students at a Minority Serving Institution (MSI) with federal agencies.

The Environmental Protection Agency was established in 1970 with the mission to protect human health and the environment. The EPA ensures that all Americans are protected from significant risks from air and water pollution, toxic chemicals, and hazardous waste where they live, learn, and work. EPA is also responsible for coordinating federal, state, local government and nongovernment efforts including restoration, conservation, and research aimed at restoring the Chesapeake Bay. EPA carries out its mission with a highly educated and technically trained staff, more than half of whom are engineers, scientists, and environmental protection specialists and a large number of employees serving in the legal, public affairs, financial, and information technology areas. This diverse workforce works with the nation’s various stakeholder groups – States and local governments, non-governmental organizations, commercial and industrial sector entities, and the international community – to fulfill its mission.

Created by an act of Congress in 1879, the U.S. Geological Survey is the science arm of the U.S. Department of the Interior. The USGS provides science about the natural hazards that threaten lives and livelihoods, the water, energy, minerals, and other natural resources including the health of our ecosystems and environment, and the impacts of climate and land-use change. USGS scientists develop new methods and tools to enable timely, relevant, and useful information about the Earth and its processes and serve the Nation by providing reliable scientific information to describe and understand the Earth; minimize loss of life and property from natural disasters; manage water, biological, energy, and mineral resources; and enhance and protect our quality of life. The mission of the USGS is limited to scientific activities and as such the USGS has almost no regulatory authority. One of the core values of the USGS is the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion in its science and workforce.

Founded in 1966, University of Maryland Baltimore County is a dynamic public research university integrating teaching, research and service to benefit the citizens of Maryland. As an Honors University, the campus offers academically talented students a strong undergraduate liberal arts foundation that prepares them for graduate and professional study, entry into the workforce, community service, and leadership. UMBC emphasizes science, engineering, information technology, human services and public policy at the graduate level. UMBC contributes to the economic development of the State and the region through entrepreneurial initiatives, workforce training, K-16 partnerships, and technology commercialization in collaboration with public agencies and the corporate community. UMBC is dedicated to cultural and ethnic diversity, social responsibility and lifelong learning.

## **II. Authority**

This MOU implements Section 102(2)(G) of the National Environmental Policy Act, 42 U.S.C. 4332(2)(G). This Section authorizes Federal agencies, including EPA to “make available...advice and information useful in restoring, maintaining, and enhancing the quality of the environment.”

The authority of the USGS to enter into this MOU is 43 U.S.C. 36c, which authorizes the USGS to “prosecute projects in cooperation with other agencies, Federal, state, or private.”

## **III. Objectives**

Through this MOU, the Parties intend to work together to enhance cooperation over the next five (5) years. The Parties recognize that efforts through the MOU are to meaningfully support efforts focused on diversity, equity, inclusion and justice. There are many possible areas in which enhanced collaboration could be beneficial. These areas may include, but are not limited to:

1. Support and promote student recruitment, service learning, internships, career development, and employment in environmental science, engineering, and related fields;
2. Enhance UMBC faculty, EPA employee, and USGS employee professional development in environmental science, engineering, and related fields;
3. Support the enhancement of UMBC’s environmental science and engineering curricula;
4. Support community development and engagement opportunities for UMBC students, partnerships with regional communities, and potential career opportunities with surrounding communities on environmental, health, and economic issues;
5. Support capacity building efforts to increase UMBC’s participation in federal programs at EPA and USGS;
6. Increase the capacity to support and accomplish USGS and EPA science through UMBC faculty and students while providing them meaningful and purposeful work; and

7. Cooperate on potential joint projects between the EPA and/or USGS and UMBC that create opportunities for UMBC students to collaborate with their surrounding communities on environmental, health, and economic issues.

#### **IV. Implementation**

The Parties agree to focus efforts on the following objectives:

##### **Objective 1 - Support and promote student recruitment, service learning, internships, career development, and employment in environmental science, engineering, and related fields**

- UMBC may work with its students to promote EPA's and USGS's competitive intern programs and/or volunteer programs in order to identify, coordinate, and place students.
- EPA and USGS may provide internship opportunities when available for students to the extent allowable by applicable laws, regulation, agency resources, and internal policy.
- UMBC may publicize internship opportunities and provide students with information about EPA, USGS, and other federal and state agencies and partners in the mid-Atlantic Region.
- EPA and USGS may participate in UMBC job fairs.
- EPA and USGS may participate in department seminars and workshops sponsored by UMBC for the purpose of generating interest, and creating a forum for publicizing environmental missions and messages.
- EPA and USGS employees may serve as liaisons, in a non-voting, *ex officio* capacity, on UMBC's Departmental Advisory Committees to assist recommendations to better engage UMBC students in EPA and USGS opportunities.
- UMBC may encourage and promote outreach and collaboration between EPA, USGS, and students enrolled at UMBC for the purpose of informing the students of the value of career opportunities at EPA and USGS, specifically relating to environmental science, engineering, and related fields.

##### **Objective 2 – Enhance UMBC faculty and EPA and USGS employee professional development in environmental science, engineering, and related fields**

- EPA and USGS may provide summer Faculty Fellowship opportunities for UMBC faculty to work with their technical staff and to gain first-hand knowledge and experience in various environmental protection and earth science activities.
- EPA, USGS, and UMBC may share expertise and collaborate in developing programs and projects in teaching, research and engagement in environmental science and engineering areas.
- EPA and USGS may provide visiting scientific and technical staff to UMBC to collaborate on teaching efforts and classroom instruction.

- UMBC may provide opportunities for EPA and USGS to complete mentor training to learn new skills and become better leaders.

**Objective 3 - Support the enhancement of UMBC's environmental science and engineering curricula**

- EPA and USGS may coordinate with UMBC to provide student participants with environmental science/engineering-based field and laboratory training as well as hands-on experience at UMBC.
- The Parties intend to support the development of research projects that incorporate science, education, and outreach components on various environmental issues.

**Objective 4 – Support community development and engagement opportunities for UMBC students, partnerships with regional communities, and potential career opportunities with the surrounding communities on environmental, health, and economic issues**

- The Parties may collaborate on sustainability projects to reduce the environmental footprint on UMBC's campus community and off-campus communities in the surrounding area.

**Objective 5 – Support capacity building efforts to increase UMBC's participation in federal programs at EPA and USGS**

- The Parties may work to strengthen UMBC staff and student connection to Chesapeake Bay, its tributaries, and its coastal resources through interaction with Chesapeake Bay Program partners for hands-on learning experiences.
- The Parties may work to strengthen UMBC student awareness of state voluntary efforts to address water pollution and to connect with the Chesapeake Bay, its tributaries, and its coastal resources.
- EPA and USGS may work with UMBC in an effort to support capacity building efforts to increase UMBC's participation in federal programs, including but not limited to: research and development, grants and contracting opportunities, and volunteer participation in Chesapeake Bay Program Goal Implementation Teams, Workgroups and Action Teams.

**Objective 6 – Increase the capacity to support and accomplish USGS and EPA science through UMBC faculty and students while providing them meaningful and purposeful work**

- The Parties may cooperate on joint projects that create opportunities for UMBC faculty and students to collaborate with EPA and USGS.
- UMBC may align or evolve current resources when applicable to address gaps in science
- UMBC may guide research direction when applicable to address gaps in science

- EPA and USGS may help UMBC faculty and students grow their science portfolio by contributing to science activities which substantially advance the well-being of the environment.

**Objective 7 – Cooperate on potential joint projects between the EPA and/or USGS and UMBC that create opportunities for UMBC students to partner with local entities on environmental, health, and economic issues**

- The Parties may identify opportunities to connect UMBC, EPA, USGS, and Baltimore City/Baltimore County or other parties of mutual interest to collaborate in building a cooperative working relationship in the areas of: environmental justice, water infrastructure, sustainability, health disparities, energy, public policy, environmental monitoring and remediation, socio-economic issues, sustainable food systems, and /or community development.
- The Parties may work to foster student involvement, service learning, and opportunities within surrounding communities that promote interdisciplinary approaches to environmental issues and concerns.
- The Parties may work to create new relationships with federal, regional, and local organizations to advance students’ opportunities to engage more robustly in civic engagement projects.

**V. Program Administration**

The Parties have established a Steering Committee composed of appropriate representatives from each of the three colleges at UMBC, the EPA, and the USGS to manage the implementation of this MOU. The Steering Committee is expected to meet at least three times each year, alternating meeting locations between UMBC, EPA, and USGS unless agreed otherwise.

The following individuals are designated to administer this MOU on behalf of the Parties:

UMBC	EPA	USGS
<b>Dr. Valerie Sheares Ashby,</b> President University of Maryland, Baltimore County 1000 Hilltop Circle Baltimore, MD 21250 Email: president@umbc.edu Phone: 410-455-2274	<b>Adam Ortiz</b> Regional Administrator U. S. Environmental Protection Agency Mid-Atlantic Region 3 Office Four Penn Center 1600 John F. Kennedy Blvd. Philadelphia, PA 19103  Email: ortiz.adam@epa.gov Phone: 215-814-2900	<b>Michael Tupper</b> Regional Director for the Northeast Region U.S. Geological Survey North Atlantic Appalachian, Interior Region One 12201 Sunrise Valley Dr, Reston, VA 20192 Email: mtupper@usgs.gov Phone: 703-648-6660
<b>Dr. Antonio Moreira</b> Vice Provost for Academic Affairs	<b>Dr. Kandis Boyd</b> Director Chesapeake Bay Program Office	<b>Mary Kay Foley</b> Center Director U.S. Geological Survey

<p>University of Maryland, Baltimore County 1000 Hilltop Circle Baltimore, MD 21250 Email: <a href="mailto:moreira@umbc.edu">moreira@umbc.edu</a> Phone: 410-455-6576</p>	<p>U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 3 1750 Forest Drive Annapolis MD 21403 Email: <a href="mailto:Shimkin.martha@epa.gov">Shimkin.martha@epa.gov</a> Phone: (410) 267-9850</p>	<p>MD-DE-DC Water Science Center 5522 Research Park Drive Baltimore, MD 21228  Email: <a href="mailto:mkfoley@usgs.gov">mkfoley@usgs.gov</a> Phone: 443-498-5501</p>
<p><b>Dr. Claire Welty</b> Professor of Chemical, Biochemical, and Environmental Engineering and Director, Center for Urban Environmental Research and Education University of Maryland, Baltimore County 1000 Hilltop Circle Baltimore, MD 21250 email: <a href="mailto:weltyc@umbc.edu">weltyc@umbc.edu</a> phone: 410-455-1766</p>	<p><b>Brittany Clark</b> Minority Serving Institutions Coordinator U. S. Environmental Protection Agency Mid-Atlantic Region 3 Office Four Penn Center 1600 John F. Kennedy Blvd. Philadelphia, PA 19103  Email: <a href="mailto:clark.brittany@epa.gov">clark.brittany@epa.gov</a> Phone: (215) 814-5776</p>	<p><b>Breck Sullivan</b> Physical Scientist Scientific, Technical Assessment and Reporting (STAR) Coordinator/Ecosystem Analyst U.S. Geological Survey Chesapeake Bay Program Office 1750 Forest Dr, Annapolis MD, Email: <a href="mailto:bsullivan@chesapeakebay.net">bsullivan@chesapeakebay.net</a> Phone: 410-267-5788</p>
<p><b>Dr. Tamra Mendelson</b> Professor Biological Sciences University of Maryland, Baltimore County 1000 Hilltop Circle Baltimore, MD 21250 Email: <a href="mailto:tamram@umbc.edu">tamram@umbc.edu</a> Phone: +1 410 455 2267</p>	<p><b>Carin Bisland (Acting Project Manager)</b> Branch Chief Partnerships and Accountability Chesapeake Bay Program Office U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Mid-Atlantic Region 3 1750 Forest Drive Annapolis MD 21403 Email: <a href="mailto:bisland.carin@epa.gov">bisland.carin@epa.gov</a> Phone: (410)267-5732</p>	<p><b>Peter Claggett</b> Research Geographer U.S. Geological Survey Chesapeake Bay Program Office 1750 Forest Dr, Annapolis MD, Email: <a href="mailto:pclaggett@usgs.gov">pclaggett@usgs.gov</a></p>
<p><b>Dr. Matthew Baker</b> Professor of Geography &amp; Environmental Systems (GES), Associate Dean, College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences University of Maryland, Baltimore County 1000 Hilltop Circle Baltimore, MD 21250 Email: <a href="mailto:mbaker@umbc.edu">mbaker@umbc.edu</a> Phone: 410 - 455 - 2169</p>	<p><b>TBD</b> EPA UMBC MOU Project Manager U. S. Environmental Protection Agency Suite 130 Chesapeake Bay Program Office 1750 Forest Dr, Annapolis MD, Email: TBD Phone: TBD</p>	
<p><b>Student Appointee TBD</b></p>		



## **VI. Program Planning and Evaluation**

The Parties intend to collaborate on an annual accomplishments report. This report will include commitments for the coming year.

## **VII. Limitations**

Each Party will bear its own costs for activities undertaken in furtherance of this MOU. All commitments that UMBC, EPA and USGS make under this MOU are subject to the availability of appropriated funds. Nothing in this MOU obligates any Party to expend appropriations or to enter into any contract, assistance agreement, interagency agreement, or incur other financial obligations. This MOU does not create any exemptions from federal policies and/or regulations relating to public involvement, employment, and competition for grants and contracts. UMBC agrees not to submit a claim for compensation for services rendered to EPA or USGS in connection with any activities it carries out in furtherance of this MOU. Any transaction involving reimbursement or contribution of funds between the parties to this MOU will be handled in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, and procedures under separate written agreements.

If any Party finds that an activity undertaken pursuant to this MOU may result in the creation of intellectual property or may require the sharing of proprietary information, the Parties agree to negotiate separate agreements to address those matters. No Party shall construe any part of this MOU as an endorsement of the products or services of the other. Nothing in this MOU shall be construed as an endorsement of the fundraising activities of any Party. None of the Parties shall make statements pursuant to this MOU that imply such endorsements. The EPA and USGS seals, displayed on the cover page of this MOU, may only be used for official agency purposes, including identifying EPA and USGS as parties to this MOU. Any other use of the EPA or USGS seal is prohibited.

This MOU is a voluntary agreement that expresses the good-faith intentions of the Parties. The MOU is not intended to be legally binding, does not create any contractual obligations, and is not enforceable by any Party. It is not intended to result in any legal obligations on the part of UMBC, EPA, or USGS. This MOU does not create any right or benefit, enforceable by law or equity, against UMBC, EPA, or USGS, their officers or employees, or any other person. This MOU does not apply to any other person outside of UMBC, EPA, or USGS. UMBC, EPA, and USGS agree that this MOU is entered on a non-preferential basis, and any Party may undertake similar MOUs with other entities on a non-preferential basis.

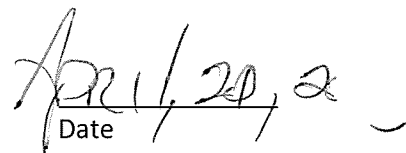
**VIII. Commencement/Duration/Modification/Termination**

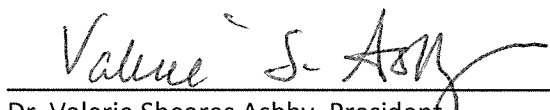
This MOU is to take effect upon the signature of the Parties and remain in effect for a period of five (5) years. This MOU may be extended or modified at any time per the mutual written consent of the parties. Additionally, a Party may terminate its participation in this MOU at any time by providing written notice to the other Parties, at least thirty (30) days in advance of the desired termination date.

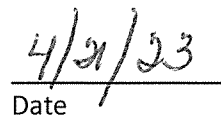
Representatives of EPA, USGS, and UMBC sign below in recognition of the terms set forth herein.

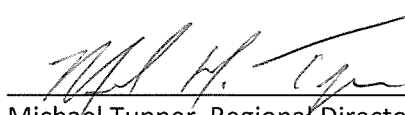
Signed:

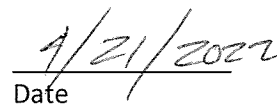
  
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Adam Ortiz, Regional Administrator  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 3

  
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Date

  
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Dr. Valerie Sheares Ashby, President  
University of Maryland, Baltimore County

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

  
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Michael Tupper, Regional Director, Northeast Region  
U.S. Geological Survey

  
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Date