Introduction

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND is “an institution with sweep and impact, where new ideas and ways of thinking make a difference.”1 University of Maryland Extension (UME), the statewide, non-formal education system within the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources at University of Maryland, College Park (UMD) and the University of Maryland Eastern Shore (UMES), is also focused on sweep, impact, and making a difference through outcomes that benefit Maryland’s youth and adults.

In 2014, the 100th anniversary of the Smith-Lever Act that established the Cooperative Extension Service at land grant universities will be celebrated across the United States. For 100 years, University of Maryland Extension has functioned as UMD’s and UMES’s “front door” for the diverse residents of Maryland. UME is proud of its long tradition of youth and adult outreach and remains committed to the land grant mission. Through exemplary teaching, internationally renowned research, and outstanding engagement, quality of life continues to improve in Maryland and beyond.

University of Maryland Extension is committed to serving the needs of the diverse population of the State. Throughout this plan the term ‘Maryland residents’ refers to all people living in Maryland. UME is also committed to creating and fostering a culture of diversity and inclusion within the organization. UME embraces the State’s diversity and does not discriminate against anyone because of race, age, sex, color, sexual orientation, physical and mental disabilities, religion, ancestry, national origin, marital status, genetic information, political affiliation, and gender identity or expression.

The 2014–2019 University of Maryland Extension Strategic Plan carries forward the land grant university mission, the goals of the University of Maryland, College Park, the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, and the University of Maryland Eastern Shore; and the spirit of the Smith-Lever Act.

Foundation of the Plan

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND EXTENSION commits itself to serving diverse audiences as it strives to build strong and resilient businesses, leaders, communities, individuals, youth, and families in an equal opportunity environment.

Building on University of Maryland Extension’s strong programmatic foundation, the UME Strategic Planning Committee (Appendix B) conducted extensive data collection in 2013 that reached out to all stakeholder groups: faculty and staff, clientele, and partnering organizations. Based on the data, specific goals, objectives, and strategies in four major areas were identified: Identity, Innovation, Infrastructure, Marketing & Visibility.

The programmatic foundation for the 2014–2019 Strategic Plan builds on the four impact areas from the 2009–2014 Strategic Plan: Agriculture and Food Systems,2 Environment and Natural Resources, Healthy Living,3 and Resilient Communities and Youth Development.4 Programming to address these areas will be developed in the traditional disciplines of 4-H Youth Development; Agriculture; Family and Consumer Sciences; and Natural Resources and Sea Grant. Faculty will continue to work in impact teams and program clusters to assess community needs and develop and implement critical programming that adapts to meet current and anticipated demographic shifts (e.g., increases in older residents, immigrants and children of immigrants, urban/metro residents, and minority populations) at both the local and state levels. The field offices in the organization will continue to be managed through the Area Extension Director model (See Appendix D).

Development of the Plan

THE UME STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE, with the support of consultants from the University of Maryland’s Center for Leadership & Organizational Change (CLOC), designed a strategic planning process built upon the vision, mission, and values of the organization and upon the experience and knowledge of field-based Extension Educators, Extension Specialists, Extension Administrative Support professionals, and Extension Administrators. The process also included an extensive data gathering and analysis effort to obtain input from our diverse external clientele and partnering organizations and an environmental scan to identify the major issues facing Maryland in the coming years (Appendix C).

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1 https://umd.edu/strat_plan/stratplan.cfm. Page 12
2 Formerly called “Local Food and Agriculture Systems”
3 Formerly called “Resilient Communities”
4 Formerly called “Youth Development”
Messages from Leadership

IT IS THROUGH EXTENSION THAT UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND FULFILLS ITS LAND GRANT MISSION. University of Maryland Extension is the University’s doorway to the citizens of the State of Maryland. Although Cooperative Extension was instituted 100 years ago through the Smith-Lever Act, its mission is as relevant today as it was then: to take scientific knowledge out to all Maryland citizens of all ages and help them improve their economic stability, their quality of life and community, and the environment in which they live.

The College of Agriculture and Natural Resources will strive to employ Extension agents and staff with strong credentials to provide quality programs to meet the needs of the communities. It is also important that we partner with the Governor of Maryland and the Departments of Agriculture, Environment, Natural Resources, etc. to respond to the agricultural and environmental issues of our State.

Cheng Yi Wei, Ph.D., Dean & Director, Agricultural Experiment Station & University of Maryland Extension, College of Agriculture and Natural Resources

ON MAY 8, 1914, THE SMITH-LEVER ACT OFFICIALLY ESTABLISHED THE COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE. This momentous act extended the benefits of federal assistance to colleges established under the Morrill Act of 1862 and 1890 that created both the University of Maryland College Park and the University of Maryland Eastern Shore as land-grant institutions. The purpose of the 1914 Smith-Lever Act was “to aid in diffusing among the people of the United States useful and practical information on subjects relating to agriculture and home economics, and to encourage the application of the same.” By agreement, our two great Maryland land-grants partnered to form University of Maryland Extension (UME). Since UME’s inception, we have proudly been the conveyer of practical and non-biased information that is used to improve the economic stability, quality of life and community, and the environment of Maryland citizens.

Our strategic plan development could not have come at a better time – during the 100 year anniversary of the Cooperative Extension Service. Our strategic plan process, incorporating the “appreciative inquiry” approach, encouraged both internal and external assessments for enhancing the effectiveness of our organization. It is because of these efforts that UME will continue to provide the residents of Maryland with the highest quality of public service, distinguished educational programming, and cutting-edge research that addresses their needs.

It is with great appreciation that I thank all those who worked tirelessly to make our strategic plan a roadmap for positive organizational innovation and change. Thank you!

Stephen E. Wright, Ph.D., Associate Dean and Associate Director, University of Maryland Extension

DEFINING OUR FUTURE

VISON: The ideal future state
MISSION: The purpose of the organization
VALUES: Concepts or principles that guide the organization’s work
STRATEGIC GOALS: Broad statements that describe the organization’s focus of energy for the duration of the strategic plan
OBJECTIVES: Tangible areas of emphasis that allow for progress each year of the plan
STRATEGIES: Tactics to advance the Objectives

HALLMARKS OF SUCCESS: Descriptions of organizational change and development

ON BEHALF OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING STEERING COMMITTEE, we would like to thank you, our colleagues, for your support of our work. We believe the 2014-2015 Strategic Plan demonstrates a solid investment in our organization which will guide our work in UME over the next five years. Your engagement, participation, and contribution of resources throughout the process has ensured that this is a plan with a strong stakeholder foundation.

We would like to extend a special thank you to the Steering Committee and Adrienne Hamcke Wicker, Martha Baer, and Patrick Masterson from CLOC for all of their hard work and dedication over the past 18 months. This planning effort would never have been so successful without your tremendous efforts!

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This strategic plan is the culmination of a wide consultation which has hopefully captured the priorities and aspirations of our clientele. The ultimate goal is to provide an exceptional, responsive and effective service that is highly impactful in addressing critical needs in Maryland. We believe that this plan provides a clear road map that will guide all aspects of the delivery of Extension services. Critically, the plan also identifies specific metrics with which we will measure how we are doing. As with all such plans, this is an organic plan that will continue evolving in order to respond to changing circumstances. We look forward with anticipation and excitement as the plan is operationalized.

Messes Kaira, Ph.D., Dean, School of Agricultural and Natural Sciences, UMES

Definition of Strategic Planning Terms

LAND GRANT COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY: A land-grant college or university is an institution that has been designated by its state legislature or Congress to receive the benefits of the Morrill Acts of 1862 and 1890. The original mission of these institutions was to teach agriculture, military tactics, and the mechanic arts as well as classical studies so that members of the working classes could obtain a liberal, practical education.

UMD: University of Maryland, College Park
UMES: University of Maryland, Eastern Shore
USM: University System of Maryland

IMPACT AREAS: Four major focus areas through which UME accomplishes its mission: Agriculture and Food Systems; Environment and Natural Resources; Healthy Living; and Resilient Communities and Youth Development

PROGRAM AREAS: 4-H Youth Development; Agriculture; Family and Consumer Sciences; Natural Resources and Sea Grant

Definiton of University of Maryland (UMD) Terms

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Strategic Plan Core Elements

VISON: University of Maryland Extension will be the preeminent Extension organization in the nation by providing the residents of Maryland with the highest quality of public service, distinguished educational programming, and cutting-edge research that addresses their needs.

MISSION: Enhancing the quality of life for people and communities by disseminating unbiased research-based educational information.

VALUES: Helping people; Diversity of programs and people; Intellectual freedom and creativity; Excellence in educational programs; Lifelong learning; Truth, ethical and professional conduct, and integrity

IMPACT AREAS: Agriculture and Food Systems; Environment and Natural Resources; Healthy Living; Resilient Communities and Youth Development

^ext.wsu.edu/documents/landgrant.pdf

4 UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND EXTENSION

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IDENTITY
Solidify UME’s identity as the provider of excellent research-based educational programs in defined priority areas that meet the needs of Maryland’s diverse population and are consistent with organizational capacity.

LAND-GRAFT MISSION
Objective 1.1 Engage collectively in discussion and action to recognize tradition and innovation within the land grant mission of UME.

Strategy 1.1.1 Value and support the traditional program base and meet emerging needs across impact areas to be globally relevant for youth and adults.

Strategy 1.1.2 Attend to and align programming and marketing for current and anticipated demographic shifts (e.g., increases in older residents, immigrants and children of immigrants, urban/metro residents, minority populations).

Strategy 1.1.3 Address emerging needs in both the rural and urban sectors, in order to develop and implement research-based programs that meet the needs and interests of diverse audiences in the four impact areas.

Strategy 1.1.4 Integrate urban programs into the fabric of the organization and support programs that link urban, suburban, and rural youth and adult audiences.

PRIORITIZATION
Objective 1.2 Orient the organization toward relevance, efficiency, and effectiveness as a basis for program development and delivery.

Strategy 1.2.1 Conduct comprehensive assessment of the need for and impact of current UME programs.

Strategy 1.2.2 Use assessment results to initiate, expand, or phase out programs as needed.

Strategy 1.2.3 Support impact teams in developing signature programming.

ONGOING EVALUATION
Objective 1.3 Develop, implement, and support a transparent process for regular and ongoing evaluation of the outcomes and impacts of UME programs.

Strategy 1.3.1 Create a process for prioritizing program development based on demonstrated needs and emerging issues.

Strategy 1.3.2 Fully implement the Program Assessment Tool, the Curriculum Assessment Tool, and the Materials Assessment Tool.

Strategy 1.3.3 Widely distribute highlights of the impact and value of UME programs to constituents, partners, elected officials, and funders.

IDENTITY HALLMARKS OF SUCCESS INCREASES AND IMPROVEMENTS IN:
• Awareness of UME’s identity as the provider of excellent research-based educational programs
• Use of standardized assessment to determine curriculum and program relevance
• Awareness of UME’s mission and vision.

INNOVATION
Create and foster a culture of innovation that anticipates and responds to current and emerging needs of the organization and Maryland residents.

NIMBLE ORGANIZATION
Objective 2.1 Examine and retool existing structures, processes, and mechanisms to position the organization to respond quickly and appropriately to emerging issues and needs.

Strategy 2.1.1 Designate time in faculty IEP or staff PRD for identification of emerging needs or addressing unanticipated issues in the State.

Strategy 2.1.2 Use technology to solidify UME’s competitive advantage as source of trusted research-based information.

PARTNERSHIPS AND FUNDING
Objective 2.2 Strengthen existing and establish new partnerships and funding streams to maximize achievement of UME’s mission and vision.

Strategy 2.2.1 Foster partnerships with government agencies, not-for-profit organizations, other state Extension services, and faculty and staff from UMD, UMES, and other USM institutions to increase multidisciplinary programs.

Strategy 2.2.2 Diversify revenue sources including fee-based programming, cost recovery, endowments, and new public funding.

Strategy 2.2.3 Enhance relationships with national, state, and local elected officials.

CREATING CULTURE
Objective 2.3 Create and support a culture of innovation and calculated risk-taking in all areas and at all levels of the organization.

Strategy 2.3.1 Support faculty and staff innovation efforts through celebration of successes and lessons learned.

Strategy 2.3.2 Employ cutting-edge technologies and resources to promote, deliver, and evaluate programs and processes.

INNOVATION HALLMARKS OF SUCCESS INCREASES AND IMPROVEMENTS IN:
• Ability to respond nimbly to the needs of changing demographics and diverse audiences
• Use of technology as a teaching tool to reach more residents
• Administrative and programming structures that allow more time for content development, pre-testing, and delivery
• Number of organizations that partner with UME
• New revenue streams
• Relationships with elected officials to solidify UME’s funding

IMPROVEMENTS IN CAPABILITIES:
• Awareness of value of UME programming by constituents, partners, and funders
• Use of technology as a teaching tool to reach more residents
• Ability to respond nimbly to the needs of changing demographics and diverse audiences
• Use of technology as a teaching tool to reach more residents
• Administrative and programming structures that allow more time for content development, pre-testing, and delivery
• Number of organizations that partner with UME
• New revenue streams
• Relationships with elected officials to solidify UME’s funding
INFR ASTR UCTURE

Invest in human capital and organizational systems that foster a culture of inclusion, excellence, and engagement among faculty, staff, volunteers, and stakeholders.

ALIGNMENT FOR EFFECTIVENESS
Objective 3.1 Examine current organizational structures and practices within campuses (UMD and UMES), counties, RECs, programmatic units, clusters, program areas, and impact teams to eliminate redundancies and increase organizational effectiveness within fiscal constraints.

Strategy 3.1.1 Evaluate and modify organizational systems to maximize efficiencies in support of UME’s mission
Strategy 3.1.2 Adjust, align, and fully support all units to optimize achievement in UME’s impact areas
Strategy 3.1.3 Reduce administrative burden on impact team leaders to increase program capacity
Strategy 3.1.4 Allocate fiscal resources or realign staffing resources to support program development and grant writing
Strategy 3.1.5 Use a staffing plan to enhance current capacity and ensure that programming expectations are in balance with faculty and staff capacity
Strategy 3.1.6 Address the demand to enhance interactions between field and campus (UMD and UMES) faculty to improve exchange of information and opportunities for scholarship

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT
Objective 3.2 Invest in training, development, and mentoring for all UME faculty and staff, regardless of location.

Strategy 3.2.1 Create and implement a regular and comprehensive faculty and staff orientation
Strategy 3.2.2 Evaluate current UMD and UMES mentoring structures for tenure and non-tenure track faculty and staff and create a system that fosters individual growth and success
Strategy 3.2.3 Support and fund professional development in content areas, leadership/management training, diversity inclusion, and cultural competency for all faculty, administrative and support staff regardless of location

FACILITY AND TECHNOLOGY RENEWAL
Objective 3.3 Update physical facilities and technology to best serve constituents, facilitate the work of faculty and staff, and encourage innovation.

Strategy 3.3.1 Develop baseline facility standards and expectations for unit, county/city and Research and Education Center (REC) offices and update as needed to meet baseline
Strategy 3.3.2 Develop baseline technology standards and expectations for unit, county/city and REC offices and update as needed to meet baseline
Strategy 3.3.3 Promote and support innovative use of technology through dedicated funding, incentives, and training

INFR ASTR UCTURE HALLMARKS OF SUCCESS

INCREASES AND IMPROVEMENTS IN:
• Faculty and staff engagement in the efforts of the organization
• Efficiency at all levels
• Communication and collaboration across UME
• Physical facilities
• Use of mentoring programs
• Diversity inclusion throughout UME
• Internal promotions and achievement of tenure
• Resource allocation and dedicated funding to ensure that faculty can work efficiently and effectively
• Number of management, administrative, and support staff and faculty who participate in cultural competency training
• Active engagement by all UME faculty in impact teams
• Morale throughout UME
• Faculty and staff access to professional development opportunities
• Transparent evaluation process for all levels of the organization

MARKETING & VISIBILITY

Effectively communicate who we are; what we do; and the social, environmental, and economic importance of our work to clientele, volunteers, and stakeholders.

STRATEGY
Objective 4.1 Develop, implement, and support a comprehensive marketing and visibility strategy.

Strategy 4.1.1 Hire marketing and branding professionals to work with formal UME advisory team to develop, and implement a comprehensive strategy
Strategy 4.1.2 Identify diverse youth and adult audiences not currently served by UME in the impact areas and intentionally market to those audiences
Strategy 4.1.3 Identify the appropriate marketing messages to use with specific youth and adult audience segments
Strategy 4.1.4 Develop, foster, and maintain relationships within UMD and UMES, and with elected officials, partners, and the media, to connect them with the work of UME

CAPACITY AND ACCESS
Objective 4.2 Build faculty and staff ability to market the organization and ensure that all units have access to marketing tools and materials.

Strategy 4.2.1 Develop capacities (personnel, resources, and skill sets) to provide leadership, expertise, and guidance for short- and long-term marketing and branding strategies
Strategy 4.2.2 Create marketing and branding tools and materials and distribute to all units
Strategy 4.2.3 Ensure all units have sufficient financial support from administration to utilize appropriate marketing and branding tools and materials

WE ARE ALL UME
Objective 4.3 Create and sponsor a culture of consistency and high-quality customer service within UME and with all who interact with the organization.

Strategy 4.3.1 Ensure consistency of message through development of guidelines and expectations for highest quality customer service
Strategy 4.3.2 Develop and maintain standards of professional conduct for the organization

MARKETING & VISIBILITY HALLMARKS OF SUCCESS

INCREASES AND IMPROVEMENTS IN:
• Awareness across the State of UME’s relevance and capabilities
• Understanding that marketing and visibility are the responsibility of all UME faculty and staff
• Diversity of audiences reached through marketing efforts
• Materials and funding for marketing and branding
• Internal and external customer service; Faculty and staff ability to articulate a consistent marketing message about the organization

IMPLEMENTATION NEXT STEPS
From the beginning, there has been consensus within the Strategic Planning Steering Committee that implementation of the 2014-2019 UME Strategic Plan requires an implementation team with timelines, a budget, and the full support of the administration team. The Committee has shared its ideas for an implementation team and looks forward to working with Dr. Wright and the administration to build a bridge between the development and implementation of the new Strategic Plan.
APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
Cheng-I Wei, Ph.D., Dean, College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, UMD
Juan Uriagereka, Ph.D., Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs, UMD
Moses Kaire, Ph.D., Dean, School of Agricultural and Natural Sciences, UMES
Stephen E. Wright, Ph.D., Associate Director and Associate Dean, University of Maryland Extension
Henry Brooks, Ph.D., Administrator and Associate Director; Associate Professor and Associate Director and Coordinator of UMES/UMD Agricultural Research
Earl F. "Buddy" Hance, Secretary, Maryland Department of Agriculture
Dan Kugler, Ph.D., former Acting Associate Director and Associate Dean, University of Maryland Extension
Teresa McCoy, University of Maryland Extension Assistant Director, Evaluation and Assessment

APPENDIX B: UME STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE
CO-CHAIRS
Jennifer Dindinger, Agent and Regional Watershed Restoration Specialist, Lower Shore Cluster
Aly Valentine, Area Extension Director–Cecil, Kent, and Queen Anne’s Counties

APPENDIX D: PLAN IN ACTION
DELIVERY OF PROGRAMMING & CONSISTENT EVALUATION
Faculty & staff deliver signature & other relevant programming to the clients at the local level. This work is evaluated for effectiveness & impacts. Short & long term impacts are monitored.

MARKETING AND VISIBILITY
Through a comprehensive strategy—faculty & staff market impacts to the stakeholders at the local, regional, state & national levels.

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND EXTENSION STRATEGIC PLAN
The Plan creates a strategic approach to programming and processes.

IMPACT AREAS
Agriculture and Food Systems; Environment & Natural Resources; Healthy Living; Resilient Communities & Youth Development.

PROGRAMMING/DISCIPLINE AREAS
Agriculture; Family & Consumer Sciences; 4-H Youth Development; Natural Resources & Sea Grant.

UME STRATEGIC PLAN IN ACTION

STAFF
At the local level, faculty are supported through the work of program and/or administrative assistants. Staff play a critical role in engaging with the clientele & providing information & assistance. The work of the staff is directed by the Performance, Review & Development Process (PRD).

ADMINISTRATION
The Program Leader and the City Area Extension Directors support the work of the individual faculty members.

FIELD FACULTY
Yearly, the work of the faculty member is evaluated and implemented through an individualized Extension Plan (IEP). Progress is evaluated through the CV process. Campus-based faculty with Extension appointments are important contributors to Extension programming.

ACTION TEAMS
An outcome of the TEP process—faculty create small programming teams to address relevant issues, with the intent to develop signature programming.

IMPACT FOCUS AREAS & TEAMS
Guide the work of faculty in creating alignment between impact areas and program areas through the development of Team Extension Plans (TEP). Campus-based faculty with Extension appointments are important contributors to Impact Team planning and programming.

APPENDIX C: Supporting Documentation Committee reports are available to all University of Maryland Extension faculty and staff at https://wiki.moo.umd.edu/login.action.

Back cover graphic art by Adrienne Hamcke Wicker, Center for Leadership and Organizational Change consultant

APPENDIX D:

Teresa McCoy, University of Maryland Extension Assistant Director
Andrew Lazur, Ph.D., Principal Agent and Acting Assistant Director, Natural Resources and Sea Grant
Center for Leadership and Organizational Change consultants—Adrienne Hamcke Wicker, Ph.D., Martha Baer, and Patrick Masterson

Delmarva Farmer
And, a special thank you to all faculty, staff, partners, and clients who gave their time and energy to participate in this process!

APPENDIX E: CONTRIBUTING MEMBERS

Christie Balch, former University of Maryland Extension Program Coordinator, Center for Educational Partnership
Virginia Lee Brown, Ph.D., Agent, Family and Consumer Sciences Healthy Living Educator, Northern Cluster
Manami Brown, Senior Agent, 4-H Youth Development and Baltimore City Extension Director
Shannon Dill, Principal Agent, Agriculture and Natural Resources, Talbot County
Enrique Nelson Esocbar, Ph.D., Interim Associate Extension Administrator-1890 Program
Patsy Ezell, Ph.D., Senior Agent and Assistant Director, Family and Consumer Sciences
Nia Imani Fields, Senior Agent, 4-H Youth Development, Baltimore County
David Gordon, Faculty Extension Assistant, 4-H Youth Development/ Agriculture and Natural Resources, Montgomery County
Jeff Howard, Ph.D., Senior Agent and Assistant Director, University of Maryland Extension and State 4-H Leader
Janna Howley, Faculty Extension Assistant and Extension Specialist, Agricultural Marketing, Prince George’s County
Robert Kratovil, Ph.D., Associate Professor and Extension Specialist, Agronomic Crop Production
Brad Paleg, Distance Learning Specialist, Information and Education Technology
Jon Traunfeld, Principal Agent and State Master Gardener Coordinator and Director, HGIC and Extension Specialist

CONTRIBUTING MEMBERS

Dale Johnson, Principal Agent and Regional Extension Specialist, Farm Management
Bonnie Braun, Ph.D., former Professor and Extension Specialist, Family Policy and Faculty Scholar, Herschel S. Horowitz Health Literacy, retired

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

APPENDIX A:

Associate Dean, University of Maryland Extension of Agriculture
Earl F. “Buddy” Hance, Secretary, Maryland Department of Agriculture
Teresa McCoy, University of Maryland Extension Assistant Director, Evaluation and Assessment

APPENDIX C:

Marylanders) and internal (through science-based programming available and relevant to all sizes that UME’s focus is both external & Organizational Change.

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