



UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND EASTERN SHORE

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

Dear Hawk family:

As we begin this celebration of 125 years of service, let us reflect on how far we have come. The University of Maryland Eastern Shore (UMES) has much of which to be proud, and we must recognize and celebrate our past to fully appreciate our future.

In 1886, the Delaware Conference Academy (also known as Princess Anne Academy) was established by the Methodist Episcopal Church to educate freed blacks. The original site purchased for the school was the historic property known as "Olney," a former residence of prominent Princess Anne citizens. The academy survived a difficult beginning, as local residents questioned the fact that freed blacks were allowed to receive an education and that Olney was being used for that purpose. In 1890, with the passage of the Second Morrill Act, the academy became a land-grant institution, offering blacks the opportunity to develop skills in agriculture and technology.

By the mid-20th century, the school was known as Maryland State College, a division of the University of Maryland. On July 1, 1970, Maryland State became the University of Maryland Eastern Shore, and 10 years later it became one of the 11 campuses of the newly formed University of Maryland System. What began in one building with nine students today is home to 92 buildings, more than 700 acres of land, and over 4,000 students.

Recurring questions about our relevance, achievement, necessity and usefulness notwithstanding, UMES has, for 125 years, accepted young people with little more than hope and aspiration, and released them to the world as men and women of character – grounded in inquiry, thoughtfulness, taste and culture. If not UMES, then who would heed the clarion call of our founders to provide access to high-quality values-based educational experience to first-generation college students of all races, while emphasizing multicultural diversity and international perspectives?

Consistently rated one of America's best Historically Black Colleges and Universities, UMES attained a level of academic excellence, which sets it apart from other university campuses. While we have proudly achieved much, perseverance is our hallmark.

As we celebrate our history, let us be mindful that securing a bountiful future for the university includes vigilance in being the best. We must continue to build on our strengths; our programs must compete with the best of the best; our graduates must excel anywhere in the world; our research, basic and applied, must address critical human needs; and we must continue to contribute to economic growth and development by engaging our local, national and international communities. We must, Hawk family, continue to soar to heights not yet witnessed by mere mortals who question the power of Hawk Pride!

Please join with us in all our activities celebrating our 125th anniversary.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Mortimer H. Neufville". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "M".

Mortimer H. Neufville, Ph.D.
Interim President