



from the desk of

## President Anthony L. Jenkins, Ph.D.

February 22, 2021

Dear Eagle Nation:

Last week I wrote about the undisputable distrust by the black community in receiving coronavirus vaccinations during a pandemic that is disproportionately attacking the black community.

This week, for Black History Month, I want to acknowledge and honor Baltimore's Henrietta Lacks and the role of her cells in the development of COVID-19 vaccines, 70 years after her death. As you may know, Lacks died in 1951, a victim of cervical cancer. While a patient at John's Hopkins, Lacks's cancerous cells were extracted, without her family's knowledge, and would, eventually, be used for medical research. Those cells, known for their unprecedented ability to stay alive and reproduce more than any other normal human cells, are known as HeLa Immortal Cell Line.

Today, the HeLa cell line has contributed to many medical breakthroughs, from research on the effects of zero gravity in outer space and the development of the polio vaccine, to the study of leukemia, the AIDS virus, and cancer—helping to save, perhaps, millions of lives.

Recently, Columbia University virologist, Dr. Angela Rasmussen, credited the HeLa cell line for its use in the study of the effects of SARS-CoV-2 on humans, leading to the development of COVID-19 vaccines. SARS-CoV-2 is the virus that causes COVID-19.

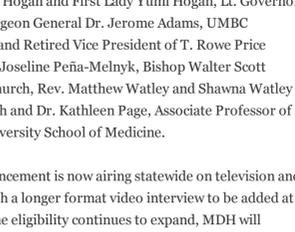
During this Black History Month, and as we press-on through a pandemic that has had a disproportionate impact on minority communities, I urge you to consider the contributions of African-Americans in the development and testing of the COVID-19 vaccine and other medical advancements. Make it a goal to protect yourself, your family, and your community by getting vaccinated, as soon as you are eligible.

### University Highlights

Coppin State University students, faculty, and staff continue to make differences in an array of areas, and I am pleased to share some campus highlights and things to look forward to:

#### Coach Dixon Named New MD GoVAX Ambassador

The Maryland Department of Health (MDH), last week, expanded the state's GoVAX campaign, launching new public service announcements featuring Coppin State's Men's Basketball Coach, and former NBA player, Juan Dixon.



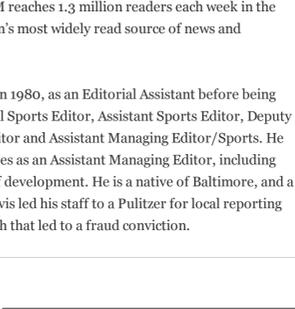
Click image to read more and watch Coach Dixon's message.

The GoVAX campaign encourages all Marylanders to protect themselves, their families, and communities by getting vaccinated against COVID-19, when they become eligible. Coach Dixon joins Maryland's distinguished list of GoVAX Ambassadors, including: Governor Hogan and First Lady Yumi Hogan, Lt. Governor Boyd K. Rutherford, 20th U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Jerome Adams, UMBC President Dr. Freeman Hrabowski and Retired Vice President of T. Rowe Price Jacqueline C. Hrabowski, Delegate Joseline Peña-Melnyk, Bishop Walter Scott Thomas of New Psalmist Baptist Church, Rev. Matthew Watley and Shawna Watley of Kingdom Fellowship AME Church and Dr. Kathleen Page, Associate Professor of Medicine at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine.

Coach Dixon's public service announcement is now airing statewide on television and will soon debut on social media, with a longer format video interview to be added at [covidLINK.maryland.gov](https://covidLINK.maryland.gov). As vaccine eligibility continues to expand, MDH will continue to add GoVAX Ambassadors who share their personal stories about getting vaccinated to encourage all Marylanders to do the same.

#### Baltimore Sun Editor to Guest Lecture for CSU Class, on Feb. 24

I am happy to share that CSU alumnus Sam Davis, managing editor of Baltimore Sun Media (BSM), will present a virtual guest lecture for a Coppin State University speech communications class, taught by Vanessa Russell, an adjunct professor and former journalist, on Feb. 24, at 8 a.m.



Sam Davis '83, managing editor of Baltimore Sun Media.

As managing editor, Davis directs coverage for BSM's websites and publications that cover news in the Baltimore metropolitan area. BSM, a Tribune Publishing company, publishes website and print editions of three dailies - The Baltimore Sun, The Capital, Carroll County Times and several community newspapers and magazines. In print and online, BSM reaches 1.3 million readers each week in the Baltimore area, making it the region's most widely read source of news and information.

Davis began his career at The Sun, in 1980, as an Editorial Assistant before being promoted to Sports Reporter, Local Sports Editor, Assistant Sports Editor, Deputy Sports Editor, Executive Sports Editor and Assistant Managing Editor/Sports. He has had various other responsibilities as an Assistant Managing Editor, including news, budget, recruitment and staff development. He is a native of Baltimore, and a 1983 graduate of CSU. In 2020, Davis led his staff to a Pulitzer for local reporting about former mayor Catherine Pugh that led to a fraud conviction.

#### Coppin Recognized for Two Top Degree Programs in the U.S.

Once again, CSU has been awarded top ranking status for two degree programs by Intelligent.com., a higher education resource guide that ranks institutions, annually.



CSU was ranked in the top 40 universities, nationwide, for its master's in adult and continuing education degree program (37th) and its business management degree program, with course offerings in small business (38th).

CSU was listed among thousands of public institutions, in the nation. [Intelligent.com's](https://intelligent.com) comprehensive research guide is based on an assessment of 2,277 accredited colleges and universities. Each program is evaluated based on curriculum quality, graduation rate, reputation, and post-graduate employment.

Congratulations, to Dr. Sadie Gregory, Dean of the College of Business, Dr. Mary Owens-Southall, Dean of the College of Arts, Sciences and Education, and to the faculty and staff of those colleges. Keep up the great work!

### Legislative Updates

The Maryland Legislature continues its 2021 session, and I will include updates in this newsletter, highlighting a number of bills that are of interest to the Coppin State University community. I would like to express my gratitude to all of the Maryland Delegates and Senators working hard to help ensure that Coppin can continue its distinguished and important mission.

#### HB1/SB1

##### HBCU Funding (Speaker of the House, Adrienne Jones/Sen. Charles Sydnor)

House Bill 1/Senate Bill 1 is intended to allocate \$577 million, over 10 years, to be allocated amongst the four State HBCUs for funding scholarships and financial aid support services; faculty recruitment and development; expanding and improving existing academic programs; development and implementation of new academic programs, including online programs; academic support; and marketing.

##### Purpose

The bill is aimed to address decades of unequal treatment of Maryland's four HBCUs (Bowie State University, Coppin State University, Morgan State University and the University of Maryland Eastern Shore) relative to other state institutions of higher education. In 2006, a coalition of advocates and alumni filed a lawsuit, arguing that the state had underfunded its four historically Black institutions while allowing traditionally white universities to duplicate programs offered at HBCUs. In 2013, the U.S. District Court ruled that program duplication had, in effect, perpetuated segregation.

##### Status

The bills have passed both chambers, now they move to conference for reconciliation for consistent language. Once reconciled, the bills go back to both chambers for an approval vote.

#### SB858

##### Coppin State University Funding (Sen. Antonio Hayes)

This bill will provide an annual appropriation of \$3 million to CSU for fiscal years 2023 through 2026.

##### Purpose

To establish a new student union facility and two student residential facilities.

##### Status

A hearing is set for March 3rd before the Senate Budget & Taxation Committee.

#### SB688/HB869

**Sales and Use and Vehicle Excise Taxes** (Sen. Antonio Hayes/Del. Stephanie Smith) The House and Senate bills introduce Sales and Use and Vehicle Excise Taxes to peer-to-peer car sharing and short-term vehicle rentals.

##### Purpose

Redirect to state HBCUs, funding from certain vehicle excise tax proceeds received from commercial vehicle rentals.

##### Status

The bill is currently before the Senate Budget & Taxation Committee and the House Ways & Means Committee.

#### SB526

##### Legal Education Success Collaborative (Sen. Cory McCray)

##### Purpose

This is a legal education success collaborative proposed to establish scholarship funding at the Schools of Law for the University of Baltimore and University of Maryland that will be used for graduates of the State HBCUs that attend law school.

##### Status

A hearing is set for February 25th before the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee.

#### SB155/HB216

##### Tuition Exemption for Foster Care Recipients and Homeless Youth

(Sen. Mary Washington/ Del. Geraldine Valentino-Smith)

##### Purpose

To prioritize housing benefits for individuals under the age of 25 that have been determined to be either foster care recipients and/or homeless youths. By law, these individual already receive free tuition at all public state institutions of higher education.

##### Status

Passed the Senate with Amendments. A hearing before House Appropriations Committee is pending.

#### SB403/HB723

##### Incarcerated and Formerly Incarcerated Individuals – Academic and Employment Opportunities (Sen. Jill Carter/Del. Julian Ivey)

##### Purpose

Create a commission that offers information and outreach regarding opportunities to pursue higher education and employment opportunities for current and former incarcerated individuals that are participants in the Maryland Correctional Enterprises.

##### Status

A hearing is set for February 24th before House Appropriations Committee and for February 25th before House Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee.

#### SB637/HB943

##### Community Development Administration – Live Near Your School Program (Sen. Antonio Hayes/Del. Tony Bridges)

##### Purpose

To administer a home buyer assistance program that assists certain students with receiving certain low-interest mortgages for the purchase of homes near the students' schools.

##### Status

A hearing is set for February 23rd before the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee and is currently before the House Environment and Transportation Committee.

#### SB783/HB1293

##### West North Avenue Development Authority (Sen. Antonio Hayes/Del. Marlon Amprey)

##### Purpose

To establish the West North Avenue Development Authority in Baltimore City to coordinate and facilitate the development of a master plan for the economic development of the West North Avenue corridor.

##### Status

A hearing is set for March 16th before the Senate Finance Committee and is currently in discussion before the House Environment and Transportation Committee.

#### HB915

##### Workgroup on Black, Latino, and Other Underrepresented Mental Health Professionals (Del. Marlon Amprey)

##### Purpose

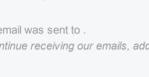
To establish a workgroup that will study and make recommendations regarding recruitment and training of certain mental health professionals and certain students in the state who are Black, Latino, or otherwise underrepresented in the mental health profession.

##### Status

A hearing is set for February 25th before the House Health and Government Operations Committee.

Lastly, thank you for continuing your commitment to keeping our campus safe during these challenging times. Our latest COVID-19 updates can be found [here](#).

Take care, be well, and Go Eagles!



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