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Sloop Institute. The Richard Sloop Institute held its annual leadership conference last weekend. Twenty-nine students participated and met with alums who spent Saturday as speakers and panelists. Congratulations to the students who participated. The alums were very complimentary of the Sloop students.

Giving Day. Our second Giving Day surpassed Advancement goals and the numbers from last year. We had 2,122 donors, compared with 1225 last year. The total amount raised was \$167,969 – up from \$145,305 last year. The Foundation Board members donated \$26,670 in the form of challenges throughout the day. Thank you to all who supported Giving Day and their favorite funds.

USMH Executive Director. USMH announced that Dr. Jacob Ashby will be the next Executive Director of USMH. Dr. Ashby is currently the Assistant Dean for Academic Assessment and Articulation at Frederick Community College. He is from Western Maryland, has roots in Hagerstown and is a graduate of Hagerstown Community College. He will begin as Executive Director in early April. Thanks to Dr. Travis and the committee members who served on the search committee. The Hagerstown community is very happy about the leadership Dr. Ashby will provide at USMH.

Athletics. Our student athletes continue to have a great year in 2023. Our swimming teams won their respective conference championships; for the women, it is the second consecutive year. Our women's basketball team participated in the MEC basketball championships in Wheeling, WV, winning their first game before losing to national champions, Glenville State. Emilee Weakley, a first-team conference player, was selected to the all-tournament team. Speaking of national champions, congratulations to our Men's Lacrosse team that ended the 25-game winning streak of reigning national champ and #1 nationally ranked University of Tampa. Our other spring sports, including but not limited to baseball, softball and acrobatics & tumbling, are off to great starts. Our undefeated Acro & Tumbling team will compete against #1 nationally ranked Baylor University in a couple of weeks. If you are looking for something to do as the weather improves, come out to support our student athletes.

Education & Health Science Center. Work continues on the EHSC. We continue to get requests from faculty to get a tour of the building. We *cannot* honor those requests – the building is a construction site where contractors are working to make up for lost time due to labor shortages and supply chain issues. For instance, two classrooms on the second floor are designed to have retractable glass walls. The company contracted to provide those walls (the largest company in that field) closed operations while the building was under construction. I have only been in the building once in the last four or so months – and that was to review a construction issue. When the building gets turned over to the university for occupancy, we will schedule some tours. Until then, it remains a construction site and is not conducive to tours. VP Donoway, Director of Facilities John Brewer and I have biweekly meetings with our project managers from College Park.

125 Years Ago (Frostburg Mining Journal):

Annapolis and Frostburg "Convictions." "The proposition to establish a State Normal School in Western Maryland does not appear to be in favor at Annapolis. This is partly due to the fight for its location being made by Cumberland, Frostburg and Oakland, but more to the conviction that Western Maryland does not need such an institution. The present State Normal School meets all requirements, and the money asked for could be used to much better advantage in other educational work." – *Baltimore News*. Some high school authorities differ with the "conviction" at Annapolis, among them the Board of School Commissioners of Allegany County. The same body's discovery and subsequent contentions are at variance also with the *News*' two notions set forth in its last sentence, especially that which suggests superior claims for money "in other educational work." This presumably includes the Johns Hopkins aristocratic levy upon State charity. But if that institution had shown ordinary financial acumen when Hon. A. P. Gorman advised it to dispose of holdings, since collapsed, it would not now be compelled to ask the members of its patrician faculty become high-pensioned mendicants at the castle-gates of the State treasury. The normal school claim is not based upon benevolent impulse, but upon the economic *dictum* which gave origin, life and utility to the public school system – an elementary education of the masses, leaving the classes to build thereon according to their tastes, bias, aspirations and ability. Hence, in the *Journal's* humble judgment, a single dollar given to promote educational purposes beyond those provided for by the spirit, not to say the letter of the public school law, is a dollar distinctly misappropriated.

They are Moving. "Williamsport and Boonsboro voters have declared in favor of the establishment of waterworks. The spirit of progress is abroad in Maryland towns." – *Baltimore News*. Yes – in "Williamsport and Boonsboro," as stated. In Cumberland, for the new normal school, less bad water, prospective factories for the town, and pulp mill denudation out of town. In Frostburg more of the best water in the state; hence, more of the best health, and the State Normal School No. 2. From this recital it is seen there is only one place – that a city, that seems to be going forward rapidly by making long steps backward.

Ronald Nowaczyk, PhD

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