

High Expectations, High Standards, Excellence

50th ANNIVERSARY



**ANNUAL UPDATE
2021-2022**



OFFICE OF
MULTI-ETHNIC
STUDENT EDUCATION

A Message from the Director



IT'S MY HONOR to present the Office of Multi-Ethnic Student Education (OMSE) annual update—a special publication celebrating both our progress in academic year 2021-22 and our 50th anniversary at the University of Maryland.

For five decades, OMSE has transformed the student experience through outreach, academic support and a culture that encourages self-empowerment. And every day since I started as director in 2007, I have watched students thrive as a result of our programs and services.

In this update, you'll meet several of the students who make OMSE proud, including Catherine Chua, a senior who just completed two successful summer internships thanks to her academic excellence and the skills she gained in our University Partners Program. You'll also meet alumni like Andrew "Drew" Tawiah, a College Success Scholars graduate who combined his passion for the law with his love of basketball, and four exceptional graduate assistants who are now leading programs they participated in as undergraduates.

We've come a long way since we launched in 1972, thanks to the ongoing support of our parents, donors and staff members. But there is still much work to be done.

Here's to another 50 years of OMSE and "High Expectations, High Standards, Excellence."

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dr. Christopher A. Lester".

Dr. Christopher A. Lester
Director, Office of Multi-Ethnic Student Education



ABOUT US

OMSE is an academic unit under the Office of Diversity and Inclusion at the University of Maryland. The office offers a variety of services and programs to enhance the learning experience and promote academic success of undergraduate students.

The majority of students served are American Indian, Asian American, Black, African American, Hispanic, LatinX and multi-racial. OMSE recognizes the value of multiple histories, beliefs, and ethnic backgrounds of its students and works with faculty and staff to support ethnic diversity and inclusion at the university.

OMSE MISSION

To serve undergraduate multi-ethnic students to increase rates of matriculation, retention, graduation, and overall GPA.

OFFICE OF MULTI-ETHNIC STUDENT EDUCATION
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MEET THE TEAM

DR. CHRISTOPHER LESTER, director
TUNJI SAWYER, assistant director
DR. MIRIAM OSBORNE ELLIOTT, assistant director
DUSTIN CHIN, business manager
RACHEL DOWNS, administrative assistant
HARITA PATEL, coordinator

GRADUATE ASSISTANTS:
Saul Flores, Tania Martinez-Equizabal, Jovany Joya, Maxwell Morris, Zam Mozumder, Jordan Purcell, Urshilah Senthilnathan, Nhaya Vaidya, Moaqing Wang, Nan Wang, Emmanuel Wanjala, Nichelle Rahming-Williams, Vivian Zohery

COVER: TOP PHOTO BY NICK WASS, CENTER PHOTO BY RANDALL ROBERTS, BOTH *DIAMONDBACK*; THIS PAGE: BOTTOM PHOTO BY STEPHANIE S. CORDLE; UNCREDITED PHOTOS HERE AND ON ALL OTHER PAGES BY OMSE STAFF

Alumni Spotlight

LAURA DINEEN '22

Throughout her life, Laura Dineen has helped others.

She founded Able to Achieve, a nonprofit organization that made physical activity more accessible for people with disabilities. She advanced awareness of disabilities while a finalist in the Miss Maryland competition. And as a medical assistant, she cares for patients of all ages who are receiving plastic and reconstructive surgery.

So it's no surprise that as an undergraduate, Dineen tutored dozens of fellow students for free through OMSE's tutoring program.

"During my first year as a transfer student, I struggled with General Chemistry," said Dineen, a former kinesiology major. "I ended up paying out of pocket for tutoring, and that was a huge burden for me."

During the initial days of the COVID-19 pandemic, Dineen learned OMSE was increasing its tutoring services through a new Service Learning Certificate Program. She immediately volunteered to help.

"When I heard about the program, it really spoke to me," she said. "I was already a member of OMSE's Academic Excellence Society, so I knew this organization had a long history of supporting students and giving them what they need to be successful."

Dineen tutored students virtually in anatomy and physiology, and during her senior year, became the inaugural president of the Service Learning Certificate Program Executive Board.

In the near future, Dineen plans to earn her graduate degree and become a physician assistant. She credits OMSE and the skills she learned as a tutor for her personal and professional success.

"There are a lot of different student groups on campus that are amazing, but OMSE was the one that made me specifically feel I had a place to thrive, a place where my identity was accepted," Dineen said. "It's just a guiding light on campus, and I absolutely love it."



OMSE POINTS OF PRIDE

The impact of OMSE programs stretched far and wide during the 2021-22 school year.

ENROLLMENT

726

Students enrolled in OMSE programs

SPRING GRADUATES

234

Multi-ethnic seniors recognized at spring graduation reception

TUTORING

889

Tutoring sessions provided by OMSE tutors

UNIVERSITY PARTNERS PROGRAM

124

Students who completed their University Partners Program (UPP) certificate requirements

UPP ATTENDEES

289

Students who attended UPP online workshops

GIVING DAY

\$78,502

Record number of donations during Giving Day 2022



Fostering a Legacy of High Expectations, High Standards, Excellence

Celebrating OMSE's 50th Anniversary

IN 1972, 20 years after the University of Maryland admitted its first African American undergraduate student, the Office of Minority Student Affairs was born.

Nestled in the Office for Academic Affairs, the new minority office formed with several goals in mind. Among them: to recruit and retain more Black students.

Fifty years and two name changes later, the Office of Multi-Ethnic Student Education (OMSE) has become a national leader in promoting the academic success of American Indian, Asian American, African American, LatinX and multi-racial students.

"The Office of Multi-Ethnic Student Education has grown over the years to provide outreach, academic support and a climate that encourages the self-empowerment of students," he said. "As a result, we reinforce the academic success, retention and graduation of our multi-ethnic students."

OMSE programs are instrumental in students' achievements. In academic year 2021-22:

- Students received nearly 900 hours of academic tutoring through OMSE.
- Black and Hispanic students in the College Success Scholars program graduated at a higher rate than the rest of the UMD Black and Hispanic male student population.
- More than 75 percent of students participated in summer internships or research experiences.

At the start of the 2022-23 academic year, OMSE also saw record enrollment in La Familia, a peer mentoring program

for first-year Latino students, and Sister to Sister, an academic excellence and leadership forum for multi-ethnic, undergraduate women.

"Students recognize that our programs have value – a value that continues even after they graduate," Dr. Lester said.

While the office and its students have made significant gains over the past five decades, Dr. Lester said there is still work to be done.

"Currently, multi-ethnic students constitute 45.8 percent of the overall undergraduate student body, so OMSE's mission is even more salient than ever," he said.

"From the beginning, OMSE has focused on the holistic student experience and the unique attributes of each student. As a result, students have flourished and grown beyond their own expectations, developing as scholars and leaders who are prepared for what comes next."

—VICE PRESIDENT FOR DIVERSITY & INCLUSION GEORGINA DODGE



1972
University establishes the Office of Minority Student Affairs

1973
Office of Minority Student Affairs names Dr. Andrew Goodrich as its first director, changes its name to Office of Minority Student Education (OMSE) to focus on programs that recruit and retain minority students



1975
OMSE begins offering peer tutoring services

1992
OMSE changes its name to the Office of Multi-Ethnic Student Education, expands services to include four ethnic minority groups: African Americans, Asian Americans, Latino/Hispanic Americans and Native Americans

College Success Scholars Program Commemorates 15 Years

WHEN HE LAUNCHED the College Success Scholars (CSS) program in 2007, Dr. Christopher Lester knew it would provide an academic roadmap to success for Black and Latino males.

What he didn't realize was just how effective the program would be.

Every single student in the first CSS cohort graduated from the University of Maryland.

"That's 100 percent," Lester said. "In this country, the majority of Black and Latino males who attend predominantly white institutions have graduation rates lower than 70 percent."

In the 2021-22 academic year, CSS marked 15 years of providing structured personal, academic, and professional support to Black and Latino males while encouraging their engagement in all aspects of university life. Retention and six-year graduation rates have remained high through the program's existence,

"The brotherhood and sense of community that the young men are able to build through CSS is invaluable as they transition to college life. ... All of the young men come to UMD with the ability to succeed, but the program really helps them achieve their goals and reach their potential."

—DUANE YOUNG, CSS SUPPORTER AND PARENT OF CAMERON YOUNG '23



consistently exceeding 90 percent.

Dr. Lester attributes the program's success to a curriculum centered around resiliency, agency, purpose and brotherhood and the Parents' Involvement Working Group – parents of current scholars who support the program through advocacy and fundraising initiatives.

"Over the last 15 years, we have been able to build on the program's foundation, and I'm proud that our growth has elevated our work in servicing the university and our students," Dr. Lester said.

ANDREW TAWIAH '18

Andrew "Drew" Tawiah arrived at the University of Maryland in 2015 to pursue a degree in political science and government while also pursuing his love of basketball.

Recognizing he needed a support system to achieve success, Tawiah joined the College Success Scholars program.

"Every semester, we had a check-in with our mentors about our progress, and we set goals to outline what we wanted to do academically, professionally and with extracurricular activities," he said.

Tawiah the value of goal setting and the importance of holding yourself accountable.

Over the next four years, Tawiah went on to reach and exceed his goals. He served as the president of the men's club basketball team and as a scout player for the women's basketball team. He founded a business to improve the social experience for minority students. He established an annual charity basketball game to raise funds for a Baltimore-based nonprofit organization. And after graduating, he went on to earn his law degree.

Now a New York City attorney who specializes in licensing and non-disclosure agreements, Tawiah credits the CSS program and OMSE for providing him with such a strong foundation.

"The CSS program pushed me to strive for bigger and better," he said. "The skills I learned and the support I received there will benefit me for years to come."



1995

OMSE creates permanent positions to develop programming and support systems for Asian, Hispanic and Native American students



2000

La Familia launches

2007

Dr. Cordell Black, associate provost for equity and diversity, appoints Dr. Christopher A. Lester as director of OMSE. | College Success Scholars launches



2008

OMSE adds a welcome area, walk-in computer lab, tutorial lab, study lab and conference room to its space in Hornbake Library | OMSE Academic Excellence Society launches

Providing Partners for Success

WHEN CATHERINE CHUA '23 enrolled at the University of Maryland, creating a resume was the last thing on her mind.

"As a freshman, it's intimidating to think about your resume, what job skills you have and how to market yourself to people," she said.

Enter the **University Partners Program (UPP)**—an OMSE program that helps students acquire professional development, leadership and diversity skills.

Each year, UPP offers a series of student workshops in partnership with the University Career Center, University Counseling Center, Education Abroad and University Libraries. In academic year 21-22, nearly 300 students participated in UPP workshops, with topics ranging from how to pay for study abroad to how to use critical citations in academic work.

During the spring of her freshman year, Chua attended a workshop on updating resumes.

"Seeing and talking with the people who work at the Career Center made the whole experience less intimidating," she said.

The workshop opened Chua's eyes to even more career services. In the years that followed, she visited the center several times for resume and internship guidance.

"I appreciate that I was able to join OMSE as a freshman and that they introduced me to the idea of professional development," she said. "I'm much more confident now, and that's helped me gain connections and mentors."

That confidence also helped her earn and complete summer consulting internships with an employee wellness startup and the First-Year Innovation & Research Experience (FIRE) program's Global Development & Design lab at UMD.

By creating a direct pathway to these valuable workshop partners, OMSE is helping students achieve academic, personal and professional success, said Sheryll-Ihna Famularcano, former UPP coordinator.

"Students often come onto this big campus, and even though there are resources in front of them, they often don't seek the help they need," she said. "We are bridging the gap."



Elevating the Student Experience

OMSE PROGRAMS and services increase rates of matriculation, retention, graduation and overall GPA. Here's how.

LA FAMILIA

A peer mentoring program, La Familia supports the college transition and retention of first-year Latino students. Qualified sophomores, juniors and seniors are paired with mentees to help facilitate their academic and personal growth through workshops, social gatherings and community service events.

OMSE ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE SOCIETY (OAES)

OAES is an honor society for undergraduate multi-ethnic students that recognizes, fosters and rewards academic excellence. Students accumulate points in professional development, social justice leadership, diversity awareness, community service and service to society.



SISTER TO SISTER

Sister to Sister was created to advocate, educate and connect academically and successful multi-ethnic, undergraduate women. Members serve as mentors and tutors to first-year women, providing them with leadership opportunities and academic and personal support.



SERVICE LEARNING CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

Through the Service Learning Certificate Program, students participate in peer tutoring, social justice development, awareness and competency, personal and professional development, social and civic responsibility and intellectual development.



2009
Sister to Sister launches

2017
University Partners Program launches

2019
OMSE Ambassadors launches

2020
Service Learning Certificate Program launches

2022
OMSE celebrates 50 years



Returning the Favor

GRADUATE ASSISTANTS are the backbone of OMSE. Whether they're recruiting new members, serving as mentors, staffing study rooms or just spending time with undergraduates, they provide invaluable guidance to hundreds of OMSE students each year.

This year, OMSE welcomed four familiar faces to its graduate assistant roster: Saul Junior Flores '22, Tania Martinez-Equizabal '21, Maxwell Morris '22, Nichelle Rahming-Williams '22. All four participated in OMSE programs as undergraduates.

Here, they share their thoughts on the OMSE experience and why staying involved is so important to them.

"I made some of my best friends in the program, so when I had the opportunity to attend grad school and become a graduate assistant, OMSE was my number one choice. I wanted to continue my experience with La Familia, but in a different role ... to help the students and the program evolve and grow."

—TANIA MARTINEZ-EQUIZABAL, GRADUATE ASSISTANT FOR LA FAMILIA

"I've been aided and helped by so many people at OMSE throughout the years, and I try to give back where I can. This assistantship is wonderful because it doesn't feel like I'm working or doing a job. I'm doing what I like to do, and that's encouraging people like me to continue and pursue higher education." —SAUL JUNIOR

FLORES, GRADUATE ASSISTANT FOR LA FAMILIA

"My time in (College Success Scholars) as a scholar, team leader and program coordinator definitely did a lot for me in terms of developing my leadership skills and taking my academics seriously. As a graduate assistant, I get to pass that knowledge on to others. I'm looking forward to seeing how much of an impact I can personally make." —MAXWELL MORRIS, GRADUATE ASSISTANT FOR COLLEGE SUCCESS SCHOLARS

"I decided to stay on as a graduate assistant with Sister to Sister because I feel really connected to this program. It helped me so much during my college experience. It's really all about giving back to the community and helping people succeed just like others did for me."

—NICHELLE RAHMING-WILLIAMS, GRADUATE ASSISTANT FOR SISTER TO SISTER

Celebrating Student Achievements

EVERY DAY, OMSE students demonstrate outstanding service, leadership and academic achievement. Congratulations to these students, who continually strive for excellence and make the entire university community proud.

Edward Aragon '23 —CSS, offered full-time positions with Mangan Group Architects and Deloitte Real Estate Department

Gloria Asante '23 —Sister2Sister, recipient of Episcopal Orphan House, Maryland Senatorial, Maryland Delegate and Community Foundation of Frederick County scholarships

Joshua Cooksey '23 —CSS, Department of Chemistry & Biochemistry's Bruce B. Jarvis Outstanding Junior Award

Rebeka Ewusie '23 —OAES, program assistant for Department of Resident Life

Mariel Gomez '24 —La Familia, Maryland Mentor Corps internship

Juliana A. Guerra '23 —La Familia, recipient of Theodore B. and Georgianna Miles Weiss Memorial Fund recipient, researcher for Summer Opportunities in Agricultural Research and the Environment (SOARE): Strategic Work in Applied Geosciences

Yulia Lim '23 —OAES, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries

Ijeoma Okoro '24 —Sister2Sister, National Institutes of Health internship

Krishna Patel '23 —Sister2Sister, study abroad at London School of Economics

Jeremiah Samuel '23 —CSS, offered a full-time position at J.P. Morgan

Jillian Wimbush '24 —OAES, Sister2Sister, First-Year Innovation and Research Experience (FIRE) internship in the sustainability analytics stream

Aaron Wright '24 —CSS, Baltimore Banner internship

Sharon Zhang '23 —OAES, Environmental Protection Agency internship



“Fifty years of OMSE here at Maryland means five decades of progress in our never-ending pursuit of inclusive excellence. Building on its network of dedicated individuals and record of accomplishment in academic success, we will continue our commitment to live our TerrapinSTRONG values for decades to come.” —PRESIDENT DARRYLL J. PINES



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HOW YOU CAN HELP

From volunteering and in-kind donations to fundraising and sponsorships, there are several ways to support OMSE programs and students. Visit omse.umd.edu to learn more.