



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Dec. 19, 2013

Commissioners Establish Allegany County Opportunity Scholarship

Benefits County Residents at Allegany College of Maryland, Frostburg State University

Allegany County Commissioners Michael W. McKay, Creade V. Brodie, Jr., and William R. Valentine at their Dec. 19, 2013, public business meeting voted to establish the Allegany County Opportunity Scholarship, designed to benefit Allegany County residents attending either Allegany College of Maryland or Frostburg State University.

Funds for the scholarship will be provided from a portion of Allegany County Government's share – 2.25 percent – of the annual gross revenue generated by the video lottery machines at Rocky Gap Casino Resort. The county receives revenue on a monthly basis from the state.

Fewer than one in five Allegany County residents, 16.3 percent, have earned a bachelor's degree or higher. The county ranks 22 of 24 of Maryland's 23 counties and Baltimore City. The commissioners intend to use a portion of these funds for the Allegany County Opportunity Scholarship for ACM and FSU students, understanding the impact of ACM and FSU on the education and career preparation and career advancement opportunities the two institutions provide to members of this community.

"The commissioners want and need to educate our youth at the collegiate level right here in Allegany County. The Allegany County Opportunity Scholarship is a

positive step to help accomplish many goals,” Commissioner Valentine emphasized. “This encourages population retention and growth, enhances the quality of the local workforce for current and prospective employers and supports economic development and the associated prosperity it creates.”

The commissioners have determined that the future well-being of Allegany County depends on having an educated and skilled workforce. However, many county residents face financial barriers to pursuing post-secondary education. Funding through the Allegany County Opportunity Scholarship will provide additional financial resources to increase educational opportunities, enhance economic development and support the continued well-being of the community.

The scholarships will be administered through ACM’s and FSU’s respective nonprofit foundations, Allegany College of Maryland, Foundation, Inc., and the Frostburg State University Foundation, Inc. Specific criteria will be determined by each institution. The first awards are scheduled to be made for the fall 2014 semester.

“The Allegany County Opportunity Scholarship reflects the genuine commitment of the Allegany County Commissioners to enhance the quality of life and economic opportunity for our citizens and community through expanded access to higher education, “ said ACM President Cynthia Bambara. “We commend the Commissioners for their insight to the needs of our community and for enhancing the onramp to higher education that will transform the lives of our residents.”

“We applaud the Allegany County Commissioners for this unique, forward-thinking plan that recognizes the importance of education to our citizens and to the county’s economic development,” said FSU President Jonathan Gibraltar. “Their keen vision and true leadership will create wonderful possibilities for our local students, and we congratulate them for their wisdom.”

ACM enrolls more than 1,700 credit and over 5,000 continuing education workforce development and professional development students from Allegany County

per academic year. Of FSU's 5,474 total students (fall 2013), 738 undergraduate students and 183 graduate students are Allegany County residents.

Allegany College of Maryland, a county-supported institution, meets wide-ranging needs in the communities it serves through credit program offerings in career and transfer areas and courses and training programs in continuing education workforce development. More information can be obtained at www.allegany.edu, the college website, or by calling 301-784-5005.

Frostburg State University is one of the 12 institutions of the University System of Maryland. FSU is a comprehensive, residential regional university and serves as an educational and cultural center for Western Maryland. For more information, visit www.frostburg.edu or facebook.com/frostburgstateuniversity. Follow FSU on Twitter [@frostburgstate](https://twitter.com/frostburgstate).

For more information, contact:

Allegany County Government:

Bretta Reinhard, Public Information Officer
301-777-2526 X124, breinhard@alconet.org

Allegany College of Maryland:

Shauna McQuade, Public Relations and Marketing
301-784-5154, smcquade@allegany.edu

Frostburg State University:

Liz Medcalf, News and Media Services
301-687-4751, emedcalf@frostburg.edu