

# Baltimore Developer Gives \$10 Million for New, Signature UMD Building

## *Edward St. John Gift Will Help Meet Most-Pressing Campus Educational Needs*

COLLEGE PARK, Md. - A landmark gift of \$10 million from Baltimore developer and philanthropist Edward St. John will help create a long-sought, world-class learning and teaching center at the University of Maryland: a high-tech classroom facility serving students campus-wide, and the first of its kind in a half-century at Maryland, officials say.

The gift represents a vital step toward bringing the *Edward St. John Learning and Teaching Center* to fruition. Gov. O'Malley and the legislature still have to approve state funding before the project can proceed.



"This signature building is destined to be one of the most popular and heavily-used on campus, and it is a dramatic step forward educationally," says University of Maryland President Wallace D. Loh. "This is one of our most needed facilities. Up to 10,000 students per day from across campus will learn there. It will give students every educational advantage that you'd expect from a world-class university. Without Mr. St. John's vision and generosity this educational center might well have languished for many more years."

The proposed \$63 million Center will be the first new building on campus in 50 years dedicated solely to classroom-use and the fundamental teaching and learning enterprise at the University.

University officials have lobbied for a facility of this kind for decades. For example, the Center will replace current lecture halls fashioned from a Cold War-era rifle range. These offer only the most rudimentary instructional technology.

"What worked in the past isn't adequate today," Loh adds. "This new capacity will foster a more active style of learning, transform students' educational experience, and fundamentally strengthen the University. Mr. St. John and I envision this as one of the nation's finest teaching buildings."

"I strongly believe that education has the power to transform lives and strengthen communities, and know that this center will benefit University of Maryland students for decades to come," says Edward St. John, a Maryland alum who graduated in 1961 with an engineering degree. He went on to found St. John Properties, a commercial real estate development firm, 40 years ago.

"As a proud alum, I am keenly aware of how my education has continued to pay dividends throughout my career, and provided me with a solid foundation for success. It also has afforded me the ability to give back to my State and my *Alma Mater*. I am honored to make this personal

pledge of \$10 million to build and name the *Edward St. John Learning and Teaching Center* at Maryland."

## EDUCATIONAL IMPACT

The proposed Center will house large lecture halls and a series of classrooms, offering seating for nearly 2,000 students. More than a third of the undergraduate student body will attend classes there on a daily basis. All these spaces will be equipped with the latest classroom technologies, managed from a centralized technical service unit.

The facility will be a particular boon to freshman and sophomores, for example, who take a heavy load of courses with large-enrollments, such as those included in the new, general education curriculum.

The Center represents an infusion of resources focused entirely on optimizing students' classroom experiences, University officials explain.

- The University currently has a 70,000 square-foot classroom space deficit, based on State calculations, and this new facility addresses a major portion of that shortage; also it will free-up space in other buildings to enhance high-level courses;
- Current space is poorly configured to provide latest technological and interactive electronics that can enhance learning; these spaces can't be efficiently retro-fitted;
- Centralizing large classes will make the delivery of technological support services far more efficient, avoiding delays that can eat up as much as one-third of a class period.



The Center is to be located in the highlighted area. The McKeldin Mall is to the left and Campus Drive to the right.

## CENTRAL LOCATION

The proposed 47,900 square-foot building will be constructed at a central location on campus, the site of the current Holzapel Hall along McKeldin Mall, plus the area behind it extending to Campus Drive. The building will blend new construction and adaptive re-use of the historic structure. To maintain the Mall's architectural integrity, the plans call for keeping the facade of Holzapel. The area behind it, though, will be cleared, to make room for the new, combined structure. The State of Maryland Historical Trust supports the project.

## **BUILDING THE ST. JOHN LEARNING AND TEACHING CENTER**

Last year, Maryland Gov. Martin O'Malley included the Learning and Teaching Center in the State's Capital Improvement Plan, slated for nearly \$48 million - provided the university could raise the remainder privately. The Governor still must re-evaluate and finalize the 2013 capital budget request in coming months, and the legislature must approve it, before it becomes law.

"We are thrilled that Mr. St. John has made such a generous gift to his Alma Mater, and such an important investment in the State's flagship university," says Governor Martin O'Malley. "The impact of his leadership and vision will span decades and directly affect the day-to-day learning experiences of Maryland students. In difficult economic times, innovative approaches that bring the public and private sectors together enable the State to build on its strengths. The citizens of Maryland thank Mr. St. John for this wonderful gift."

"This top priority building project has been a dream of the University of Maryland for twenty years. Thanks to Mr. St. John, this dream is on the verge of becoming a reality, one that will benefit all of our students and the State for decades," says Harvey Sanders, Chair of the Board of Trustees of the University of Maryland College Park Foundation. "Mr. St. John's gift provides a powerful incentive to the State to move ahead with this project."

The *Edward St. John Learning and Teaching Center*, Sanders adds, will serve as a magnet for the highest achieving students from Maryland and around the world. "I can guarantee you that it will be one of the first stops on the tour for prospective students," he says. "This is a gift with tremendous educational impact. It will greatly enrich our learning environment."

## **EDWARD ST. JOHN**

St. John is chairman of St. John Properties, a company he founded in 1971. For 40 years, he served as the company's president and chief executive officer. It has developed, constructed, and maintained ownership of over 15,000,000 square feet of office, research & development/flex, industrial and retail space. The company serves business space requirements in Maryland, Colorado, Wisconsin, Virginia, and Louisiana. In addition, St. John Properties has developed residential and leisure projects in Louisiana.

St. John has been active in Maryland civic life and philanthropy. Through his Edward St. John Foundation, he actively supports education throughout Maryland and the Baltimore-Washington corridor.

## **UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND**

The University of Maryland, the region's largest public research university, provides education and research services statewide, supporting Maryland's economic and social well-being. As the flagship campus of the University System of Maryland, UMD serves as a window for the State to the nation and the world.