

Dear Faculty and Staff,

I am writing to share an important update regarding the recent agreement between Governor Moore and AFSCME.

For FY 2027, qualifying AFSCME members will receive a 2.5% merit increase, retroactive to July 1, 2026, and a \$500 flat wage increase effective Jan. 1, 2027. They can expect to see the back pay and new pay rate starting with the paycheck dated Oct. 7, 2026.

These increases were not included in our FY27 budget, so to cover the cost this year, USM has authorized one-time use of our fund balance. While this allows us to honor these commitments in FY27, the governor's office has agreed to fund the AFSCME increases in our FY28 base budget, however it is unclear if that funding will result in additional state funding beyond our current level, potentially increasing the strain on the University's budget.

As we navigate these financial challenges, we have a responsibility to be good stewards of the University's resources as we support the many talented faculty and staff who make this institution so special. These are challenging times across higher education, and I am grateful for the dedication and professionalism you continue to show. We will work through these challenges with transparency and with a shared vision that focuses on the future of Frostburg State University.

Thank you for all that you do every day. I look forward to building the next chapter of Frostburg's story as one university community.

Sincerely,

Shadow JQ Robinson, PhD
President