

"Nearly everyone I meet is either a Hood alum or friends of a Hood alum. It is an unshakable bond between folks in Frederick who have graduated from Hood—a common core of values that support and care for our community."

—Kristopher Fair '13, executive director, The Frederick Center

Working

An aerial photograph of a university campus during a vibrant sunset. The sky is filled with orange and yellow clouds, with the sun low on the horizon. The campus features several large, multi-story red brick buildings with white trim and dormer windows. The buildings are surrounded by lush green trees and well-maintained lawns. In the foreground, there is a large parking lot with white lines. The overall scene is peaceful and scenic.



HOOD COLLEGE AND FREDERICK, MARYLAND

Together for Community Success

By Scott Grove

Brick and mortar projects first come to mind when considering the milestones of an institution. But equally important can be the advancements that are born from purpose and ignited by innovation and collaboration. Hood has, in recent years, taken the initiative to build community partnerships that have resulted in new curriculum, expanded student services, academic resources and more—amenities that have been extended to a wide cross-section of the Frederick community.



Establishing Roots in Frederick's Downtown District

The Martha E. Church Center for Community and Civic Engagement was established in 2017, to allow Hood to more fully meet the educational needs of its students through increased internships, research opportunities and civic participation. Lisa Littlefield P'25, Ph.D., dean of the Center for Experiential Education and Career Development, along with her team, launched the Church Center's operation, increasing the experiential opportunities for Hood students in the businesses and nonprofit sectors.

In fall 2020, Katherine Robiadek, Ph.D., was hired as its director. "For much of the past year I've been meeting with campus and community members to introduce myself and promote the Center," says Robiadek, who also serves as an assistant professor of political science. "The Center has the potential to support an exciting program of study for Hood students."


Giving the Church Center great prominence is its location in the Frederick County-owned ROOT building, which houses the

County's Office of Economic Development, the Frederick County Chamber of Commerce and the Frederick Innovative Technology Center, Inc. (FITCI), a business and technology incubator. "The County was thrilled when President Chapdelaine inquired about partnering in our ROOT building," said Frederick County Executive Jan Gardner, noting the County's longtime partnership with Hood College. "When FITCI launched, it was housed on Hood's campus to connect students and start-up businesses for a range of opportunities. Having higher education partners in ROOT makes sense for our business community and the other tenants in the building. Education is the key to developing our work force."

President Chapdelaine announced the founding of the Church Center in September 2017 as part of the College's 125th anniversary. "You can't talk about the past 125 years without talking about how Frederick has helped shape and sustain the College," she said.



Katherine Robiadek, Ph.D., director, Martha E. Church Center at Root, downtown Frederick.

When asked what prompted the founding of the Church Center, President Chapdelaine responded, "The initiative to build community relationships came from the Board of Trustees. They felt that one of the unique attributes of Hood was its location within a great community and wanted the relationships initiated by Martha Church H'95 and Ron Volpe H'15 to be expanded upon." 

“Having a built-in network here in the community can provide some easily accessible real-world experience that might otherwise be difficult to obtain.”

—Melissa Joseph Muntz '12, former marketing and communications manager, Visit Frederick



President Chapdelaine had a long history of civic engagement—both in her own courses as an educator and her later role as provost and vice president for academic affairs at Albright College in Reading, Pennsylvania. Her selection as president was, she said, “a combination of what the board was looking for and my own particular passions.”

In response to this goal, six months after her arrival, President Chapdelaine accepted an invitation to join the Board of Directors of the Frederick County Chamber of Commerce. “I thought it would be a great way to meet business leaders and create opportunities that I could bring back to the College—and it certainly has.” In 2019, she was asked to serve as chair of the Chamber’s executive board, a role she agreed to extend for an additional year following the COVID-19 outbreak.

“She was our chair through the pandemic,” said Rick Weldon, president and CEO of the Chamber. “I simply cannot imagine any other person better able to lead our board, staff and membership from a volunteer executive capacity. She is the perfect sounding board for me in this role.”

A Public Good



Weldon spoke with Chapdelaine about his ambitions for Leadership Frederick, the highly successful, Chamber-sponsored program that introduces professionals to a wide array of business, civic and environmental-related subjects specific to the County. Weldon expressed his desire to increase the academic depth of leadership training in the program. Hood had recently launched its first doctoral program in organizational leadership in 2018. President Chapdelaine suggested incorporating some curriculum taught by Hood’s faculty into the monthly program.

“While we introduce all of the County’s academic institutions through our ‘Education Day’ programming, this is the first time we’ve aligned with an education partner in such a targeted way,” said Weldon. “Hood’s doctoral program in organizational leadership gives us the highest quality academic component to supplement our existing programming.”


When asked how this served the College, President Chapdelaine replied, “I don’t always approach these things from the perspective of direct benefit to Hood. As an institution of higher education, we have an obligation to share our resources for the betterment of the community. These are the future leaders of Frederick and providing them with a solid Hood education will benefit the entire community.” 

PHOTO: Frederick County Executive Jan Gardner with President Chapdelaine

“I got a job right after receiving my undergraduate degree, as well as during my master’s studies, due to connections/recommendations from my Hood mentors.”

—Ivana Shuck ’16, MBA’21, business operations manager, FITCI



Healthy Synergy

In spring 2017, President Chapdelaine had growing concerns about Hood’s on-campus health services’ ability to provide for Hood’s growing enrollment. “We had one full-time nurse, one full-time counselor and a physician who would come in one or two days a week. We tried again and again to hire additional staff but there was such a shortage of health professionals,” she said. “Our students’ mental health needs were not being met and that was not okay with me.”

She reached out to Tom Kleinhanzl, president and CEO of Frederick Health, and now a member of Hood’s Board of Trustees. Kleinhanzl told her that Frederick Health was experiencing similar staff shortages. He shared with Chapdelaine internal discussions concerning the hospital’s desire to relocate its Urgent Care to the neighborhood which could provide synergies—but was unsure if there were the patient numbers needed to make counseling services viable.


“What if I give you 1,000 students,” President Chapdelaine remembered asking. “Will that make it work? Tom said something like, ‘we’ll try it—and make it work’ and Frederick Health did just that in time for the upcoming fall semester.”

Frederick Health Toll House Urgent Care and Hood College Health and Counseling Services are housed under one roof and provide for the needs of the general public and Hood students. Located across the street from the College on West 7th Street, the facility is open seven days a week, 10 to 12 hours a day, with services that include urgent care, lab work and concussion care.

Collaboration between the two entities resulted in a successful practical and financial synergy according to Kleinhanzl. “Combining Hood’s student health service needs and the urgent care needs within the community became a natural solution,” he says. “Hood received enhanced student health services at no additional cost, and Frederick Health could leverage provider and support staff to serve both Hood and the urgent care patients.”

“I can’t say enough about Frederick Health,” said President Chapdelaine. “The clinic enabled us to expand the services we previously offered our students. Furthermore, students and the public alike are benefiting from the availability of increased behavioral counseling staff. Students from Hood’s master’s in counseling program are earning their practicum hours at Toll House under the guidance of its licensed behavioral health care staff.”

Further conversations with Chapdelaine led to Kleinhanzl’s discovery that Hood was turning away prospective nursing students due to a shortage of classroom and lab space. Their discussions led to Hood’s leasing of the first floor of an empty Frederick Health-owned building across the street from Toll House that will allow the College to increase the number of nursing students. The new space, outfitted with Hood’s state-of-the-art medical equipment will also be available to Frederick Health nursing faculty for their employee trainings. Kleinhanzl said, “Frederick Health and Hood College have always been good corporate neighbors, finding winning synergies that align with the mission and needs of both organizations.”

President Chapdelaine envisions further collaboration between the entities. “Is there a future School of Behavioral and Health Sciences?” she pondered. “That would be huge for Frederick.” 



President Chapdelaine with Frederick Health President and CEO Tom Kleinhanzl



California-based biotech Kite, a Gilead Company, known worldwide for its innovations in treating cancer, is expected to open its new 20-acre site in Urbana at the end of 2021. Until then, its immediate operation—the training of 400 employees—is taking place on Hood’s campus.

In 2018, President Chapdelaine received a call from the Maryland State Department of Commerce inquiring as to whether the College would be willing to have a lab installed on campus to serve as a training site for a major pharmaceutical company—whose identity was undisclosed. “We really didn’t know who it was but we thought it could be good for the College and our students. So, we kept saying ‘yes, yes, yes’ in hopes of learning more,” she recalled.

Helen Propher, director of Frederick County Office of Economic Development, worked with the State in the negotiations with the biotech. “Early in our talks, Kite stated the importance of establishing a relationship with a local college for the purpose of employee training—making it clear that this was an imperative regarding the company’s ultimate site selection. After speaking with President Chapdelaine, the Kite representatives called us back and said, ‘She thinks like an entrepreneur and we really like that!’”

The lease agreement called for Hood to provide a 400-square-foot space and Kite to provide the lab equipment that Hood will retain for ongoing use. “The equipment will provide a unique learning opportunity for our students. It will be beneficial for them to be trained on these cutting-edge tools used in a very applied manner to develop and deliver personalized medicine,” said President Chapdelaine, who praised the biotech for its groundbreaking work in cancer treatment. “Kite has ensured that any of our graduating biology students will have the skillset needed to be hired.”



A New Class of Students

Propher, a veteran in business recruitment, said Kite was the first prospect in her experience to identify higher ed as “priority criteria” in their site selection. “I’ve always promoted Frederick County’s wealth of colleges to business prospects—but will do so much earlier in the solicitation process,” she said. “Hood’s role was all important in Kite’s decision to locate in Frederick County.” 

“*My supervisor at the USDA was an adjunct at Hood and he hired me as a student; I’m still there 20 years later. With all the science research at Ft. Detrick, there are a plethora of opportunities for science majors.*”

—Melissa Carter '02, biological science technician, US Department of Agriculture





HOOD COLLEGE

THE GEORGE B. DELAPLAINE JR.
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS
Data Driven Frederick



David Gurzick M.S.'03, Ph.D. and Marlene Grossnickle Young '76, H'14, P'09

Ph.D., associate professor of management and chair of The George B. Delaplaine Jr. School of Business, who is overseeing the project.

DDF's repository of data will be derived from numerous government, academic and nonprofit sources. While important data is currently available, it is scattered among a

President Chapdelaine says that DDF was conceived by Gurzick in 2018 during early conversations about The Delaplaine School of Business programs and their ability to contribute to the economic and social prosperity of the community. "If a nonprofit organization is in need of data in order to apply for a grant or the Office of Economic Development requires data that can be help-

Driven to Service


Could "data" be redefined as infrastructure and prove to be one of Frederick County's most important assets in ensuring excellent quality of life? It's possible with the enactment of Data Driven Frederick (DDF), one of Hood's newest initiatives. DDF's mission is to collect, analyze and research reliable, high-quality, easily-accessible community data that can be shared with community leaders and organizations via a centralized website for the purpose of informing better decision making in Frederick County.

"Modeled after Data Driven Detroit, our center will provide high-quality data collection, curation and independent research-for-hire services," said David Gurzick M.S.'03,

number of sources, making it difficult to locate and use. "This initiative enables community organizations to collaborate with Hood's faculty and staff to gain the fullest potential from their data—and ultimately drive insightful and informed decision making."

"Post-COVID-19, Frederick represents a perfect example in which a data-driven approach could serve to hasten and ensure equity in our local recovery," said Gurzick. "With the help of our municipal and nonprofit partners, we would be able to identify gaps in the recovery and respond to them more effectively."

ful in persuading a business to locate here, we will have it," she said.

The Delaplaine Foundation, Inc., which supports a wide array of local and regional nonprofit organizations, was the primary philanthropic entity in the underwriting of the business school. Marlene Grossnickle Young '76, H'14, P'09, president and CEO of the Delaplaine Foundation, Inc. is particularly enthusiastic about the deployment of the database as "an essential source for nonprofit organizations and philanthropic funders." She said, "Its efficiencies will provide a powerful tool and resource for our nonprofit impact partners." 

“As a veterinarian proudly wearing my Hood Ring each and every day, I have met many Hood College alumni because they see my ring as I examine their pet. We always strike up a conversation about the College.”

—Ashley Norris Barthlow '92, P'22, DVM, Veterinarian, Heritage Animal Hospital



FREDERICK
JOIN THE STORY

Giving Back

President Chapdelaine doesn't underestimate the contribution the College has received from its many public and private sector partners in the community, some of whom include **city and county government, Frederick County Public Schools, Frederick National Laboratory for Cancer Research and Frederick Health.** "Truly, their support and endorsement have made an incredible difference in the experience we are able to offer students—in and outside the classroom." In acknowledgment of this, President Chapdelaine created a way to say "thank you" through the **Neighborhood Partners Program**, whereby partner employees, their spouses and dependents receive sizable discounts on annual tuition for graduate and undergraduate studies.

"In casual conversations with various partners, some would mention a child or spouse who was interested in attending Hood and were assessing the affordability," she said. "A president colleague had done something similar at her institution—so the idea just evolved."



Each day, the contributions of these and other partnerships increases the investment and relationship that Hood College has throughout the County. President Chapdelaine was pragmatic about it all. "Our destinies are intertwined, past, present and future. We love Frederick and Frederick loves us back."

"Our destinies are intertwined, past, present and future. We love Frederick and Frederick loves us back."

-President Chapdelaine



Since its launch in summer 2019, nearly 40 students have benefited from the program. "It is a way that we can give back to those organizations—as well as encourage Frederick residents to pursue their education locally—and hopefully stay here after graduation, creating a more educated workforce."

“*I always see alums within my profession as a social worker. We connect and are able to bring more back to our community since we have the foundation of the relationship or a common love for Hood!*”

—Jessica Lertora '04, Community Coordinator for Frederick County's Safe Babies Program, Zero to Three

