Academic excellence, one of Stevenson’s core values and one clearly essential to our students’ success, has seen an expanded focus this past year.

Changes to existing spaces and the addition of academic facilities are readily evident across campus. We are proud of this progress that we are making on our students’ behalf.

Dramatic changes truly began in 2004 with the start and subsequent completion of our residential campus in Owings Mills. Although the residence halls and athletics facilities were integral to our growth, at first thought, they might not seem to add to our academic accomplishments. Yet activities associated with these buildings are routinely incorporated into learning excellence at Stevenson.

The President’s Cabinet made a conscious decision to focus on the overall academic exercise with changes to the curriculum, faculty, and facilities for our now-seven Schools. We purchased the nearby Shire Pharmaceuticals property several years ago, creating the Owings Mills North campus, now home to the School of Design. Currently we are completing major modifications to the second of the two buildings on that site to create a transformational facility in terms of academic excellence: the new Academic Center.

A distinctive building, the former warehouse will be retrofitted to contain approximately 200,000 square feet of classrooms, offices, and laboratories, and will house the School of the Sciences, the newly announced School of Health Professions, and additional space for the adjacent School of Design. We expect to complete and occupy the new academic building in the summer of 2016. A lighted boardwalk is anticipated to connect the two Owings Mills campuses, and our environmental students and the nearby Irvine Nature Center will incorporate educational experiences for those using the boardwalk.

To enhance our faculty focus for students and visitors, we recently created and dedicated the highly visible Lynn W. Duncan Center for Excellence in Teaching in the Rockland Center on the Owings Mills campus. Duncan was a dedicated and revered accounting professor before her retirement a few years ago. We were pleased to have former Academic Dean Rose Dawson join us for the Center’s formal dedication ceremony and see the curated photo displays of all of our annual award-winning full- and part-time faculty honorees for teaching excellence as well as videos and digital elements.

In every way, Stevenson’s faculty are special. They are available to our students both in and out of the classroom, and each takes time to treat students as individuals. As a university, it is through teaching and learning that we help our students grow into solid citizens who can contribute to their future professions and the community.

With these new spaces and our focus on our students, there is and will continue to be an air of excitement at Stevenson around the learning environment. We recently invited the national consulting firm Credo to visit our campus and help us develop a formal and comprehensive student success retention program. Academic support services, advising, and the first-year experience will ultimately be incorporated into a centralized student success center.

It is clear that the future of Stevenson University and its success will involve continued and thoughtful academic emphasis. With the addition of new full-time faculty and relevant academic programs, combined with our Career Architecture® process and supporting facilities, our academic strength will continue to have far-reaching impacts for our graduates.

Kevin J. Manning, Ph.D.
President