

**UFC Report  
February 2026  
College of Business (COB)  
University of Mary Washington**

**Strengthening Regional Impact Through Student–City Collaboration**

Our Marketing Strategy students recently delivered comprehensive, actionable marketing strategy plans to the City of Fredericksburg’s Economic Development Authority, demonstrating exceptional creativity, collaboration, and technology-driven problem-solving. This project exemplifies our college’s commitment to experiential learning and community partnership, ensuring students graduate workforce-ready and capable of adding value immediately. Professor Lance Gentry showed outstanding mentorship and leadership in guiding this engagement. This collaboration reflects the meaningful regional impact and professional relevance we continue to build into our academic programs.

**Student Innovation and Industry-Relevant Problem Solving**

In December 2025, University of Mary Washington College of Business seniors competed in the biannual Blate-Schneibolk Strategy Case Competition, “Reel Choices: The Crossroads of a Movie Studio’s Destiny,” where teams applied strategic management concepts to solve real-world challenges facing a major film studio. Five student teams presented professional, data-driven analyses to a panel of alumni and industry judges, with seniors Karla Bonilla Lizama and Evelyn Centellas earning first place for their polished, impactful plan and a \$1,500 award; second and third place teams also received cash prizes. This ninth-year competition provided students with valuable experiential learning that enhances their readiness for complex business problem-solving in the workplace and reflects the College’s commitment to high-impact, applied education.

**Eagle Egg Innovation Fund**

The Eagle Egg Innovation Fund is a newly launched initiative of the College of Business, established to create a structured, sustainable pathway for undergraduate innovation and entrepreneurship. The Fund supports student ideas from early concept through venture validation and is open to all full-time UMW students across disciplines. Individuals or teams of up to five submit a short pitch deck during the Idea Submission phase (Jan–Feb 2026), from which four teams will be selected to receive \$500 Concept Awards, faculty and industry mentorship, and the opportunity to present at Eagle Innovation Pitch Day. The program emphasizes cross-disciplinary collaboration, team formation, and experiential learning, supported by coordinated outreach across faculty, student organizations, marketing channels, and research partnerships

The initiative was launched with a \$25,000 founding gift from an alumnus and advisory board member, Bryan Eckle, with the shared vision that the fund will continue to grow as additional supporters join the effort.

Teams are evaluated using criteria of innovation, feasibility, market impact, and execution, and must meet milestone-based progress requirements to advance. Following the concept phase, two teams may move toward prototype development, and one team ultimately receives a \$10,000 seed investment. Finalists will showcase their work at UMW Research and Creativity Day for investors, alumni, students, and faculty. Operating on an annual cycle with plans for expansion, rolling submissions, and a standing review board, the Eagle Egg Innovation Fund reflects the new College of Business's commitment to embedding entrepreneurship, innovation, and experiential learning as a permanent and scalable pillar of the College's academic and engagement mission.