Colleges in the Baltimore region create more than $17 billion in economic activity and help support more than 163,000 jobs.

For more than a decade the Baltimore Collegetown Network has helped colleges work together to improve academic, professional, and social opportunities for Baltimore’s 120,000 college students. We attract students to the region by articulating the message that this is a vibrant and welcoming city in our publications and website; engage current students through volunteer, transportation, and social programs; and encourage students to stay after graduation by helping them find internships and make other connections in our region.

Over the last nine years we have conducted triennial surveys to learn about students’ perceptions of Baltimore. Why did they come here? What do they do while here? Are they planning to stay? As you’ll see in this summary report, there are trends around what attracts, engages, and retains students. We hope this information will be useful to education, business, and government leaders as we work to grow our region and develop our next generation of citizens and leaders.

About the Survey
• Conducted online, March 30 – May 29, 2012
• 2,809 students from 16 colleges
• 86% full-time students
• 73% undergraduate students
• 58% from Maryland
• 5% international students

Attracting college students to Baltimore is critical to fueling a huge economic engine. In addition to billions in economic activity, our region’s 120,000 students bring diversity, energy, and ideas and are key to the metropolitan area’s growth.

Would you recommend the Baltimore region to a friend to:
- go to school? 74%
- visit? 72%
- live? 52%

What We Found

Why did you select your school? (top four answers)

1. Program Quality
2. Financial Aid
3. Job Opportunities
4. Location In/Near Baltimore

What words would you use to describe Baltimore? (top four answers)

1. Accessible (56%)
2. Dangerous (54%)
3. Vibrant (51%)
4. Friendly (45%)

What It Means
• Students like going to school here and it’s clear colleges must have funding to invest in programs and financial aid to continue attracting them.
• Three years ago, students listed “dangerous” as the top word to describe Baltimore. Perceptions are changing.

What Collegetown Is Doing
More than 1 million copies of Collegetown publications have been distributed over the last nine years telling students (and their parents) that Baltimore is a great college town. More than 3 million visitors have received the same information on our website.
Engaging students in the community supplements their classroom learning through volunteering, completing internships, and exploring art and culture, and supports Baltimore businesses, nonprofits, and neighborhoods.

**What We Found**

Do you volunteer in the area?

**YES**

36%

**What do you like best about Baltimore? (top three answers)**

1. **Activities** (music, restaurants, nightlife, and art) (32%)

2. Inner Harbor/Waterfront (13%)

3. People/Community (11%)

**Places where students like to go in Baltimore: (top five answers)**

1. **Inner Harbor** (81%)

2. Towson Town Center (63%)

3. Art Museums/Galleries (55%)

4. Fell’s Point (55%)

5. Movies (49%)

**Why It’s Important**

Survey results point to the need to maintain a vibrant downtown waterfront and illustrate how students strengthen our communities.

**What Collegetown Is Doing**

- The Collegetown LeaderShape program and our annual service-learning conference help students get involved with the community.
- Collegetown’s partnership with the Greater Baltimore Cultural Alliance brings students half-price tickets to arts events every week.
- Our Welcome to Baltimore event for graduate and professional students provides a fun introduction to neighborhoods and activities.
- The Collegetown website has thousands of ideas about what to do in Baltimore – and attracted more than 233,000 online visitors last year.
**Why It’s Important**

Baltimore’s relatively strong job market means that many students can find employment here following graduation, but jobs are just one reason students say they might stay or go. Partnerships between education, government, and business leaders can help create more reasons for students to stay to grow our workforce, population, and economy.

**What We Found**

**How likely are you to stay in Baltimore after you graduate?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Definitely/Likely</th>
<th>37.7% in 2012</th>
<th>31.5% in 2009</th>
<th>31.5% in 2006</th>
<th>19% in 2003</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>30% in 2012</td>
<td>29% in 2006</td>
<td>36% in 2003</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unlikely/Definitely Not</td>
<td>32.1% in 2012</td>
<td>36% in 2009</td>
<td>39.5% in 2006</td>
<td>44% in 2003</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Top reasons students say they will stay:**
1. Job
2. Family/Hometown
3. Quality Of Life

**Top reasons students say they will leave:**
1. Job **AND** Crime/Grime
2. Want To Try Something New

**Do you have or plan to have an internship?**

**YES** 69.7%

**What is Baltimore missing that you wish it had?**

1. **Better Transportation (36%)**
2. Less Crime (15%)
3. Nothing (11%)

**What It Means**

- Survey data show that more students want to stay in Baltimore and the 2010 Census supported this finding – the population of 18-24 year olds in Baltimore grew more than 10% over the last decade, the only segment of real growth in the city.
- Transportation and jobs emerged as things that will keep more students in the region after graduation.

**What Collegetown Is Doing**

- Last year the Collegetown Shuttle carried more than 90,000 riders between 7 area colleges and Towson shopping centers, Penn Station, and the Inner Harbor (via connection to the Charm City Circulator).
- Students who have local internships are 50% more likely to stay in the region. Collegetown has the only website in Baltimore dedicated to internships where employers post and students find hundreds of positions each semester.

www.BaltimoreCollegetown.org/intern
Conclusions

More students are engaged in the community through volunteering and internships.

More students report wanting to stay after graduation — for jobs and the quality of life here.

Students like the range of activities here, as well as the waterfront and the people in our community.

Students like going to college in Baltimore and have reported this consistently over the last decade.

Over the last ten years, students have said repeatedly that transportation (from bus and rail options to better bike lanes) is the number one thing lacking in the region. Students want more ways to get to social destinations, jobs/internships, shopping, and volunteer positions, without having to navigate through neighborhoods they don’t know or pay for parking. Stronger transit networks would encourage students to live here and grow our region.

Baltimore Collegetown Network
Our Mission

The 14 colleges in the network have been collaborating for the last 13 years to:

- Enhance the academic and social lives of college students in Baltimore;
- Attract students, faculty, and staff of strong academic and professional standing and diverse backgrounds to the Baltimore area institutions of higher education;
- Increase professional development opportunities for faculty and staff working at the colleges and around Baltimore;
- Enable the Baltimore area colleges to share resources;
- Promote the economic impact of higher education on the Greater Baltimore region;
- Enhance the visibility of the higher education community in the Baltimore region locally, regionally, and nationally;
- Serve as a resource and advocate to city officials and regional government; and
- Engage in community service and provide support to the Baltimore metropolitan area.
Baltimore Collegetown Network Members
Community College of Baltimore County
Coppin State University
Goucher College
Johns Hopkins University
Loyola University Maryland
Maryland Institute College of Art
McDaniel College
Morgan State University
Notre Dame of Maryland University
Stevenson University
Towson University
University of Baltimore
University of Maryland, Baltimore
UMBC

Affiliate Members
Baltimore City
Baltimore County

For an electronic copy of this publication, please visit www.BaltimoreCollegetown.org/survey2012