

GIVING AT UMBC



A Decade of Challenges and Progress

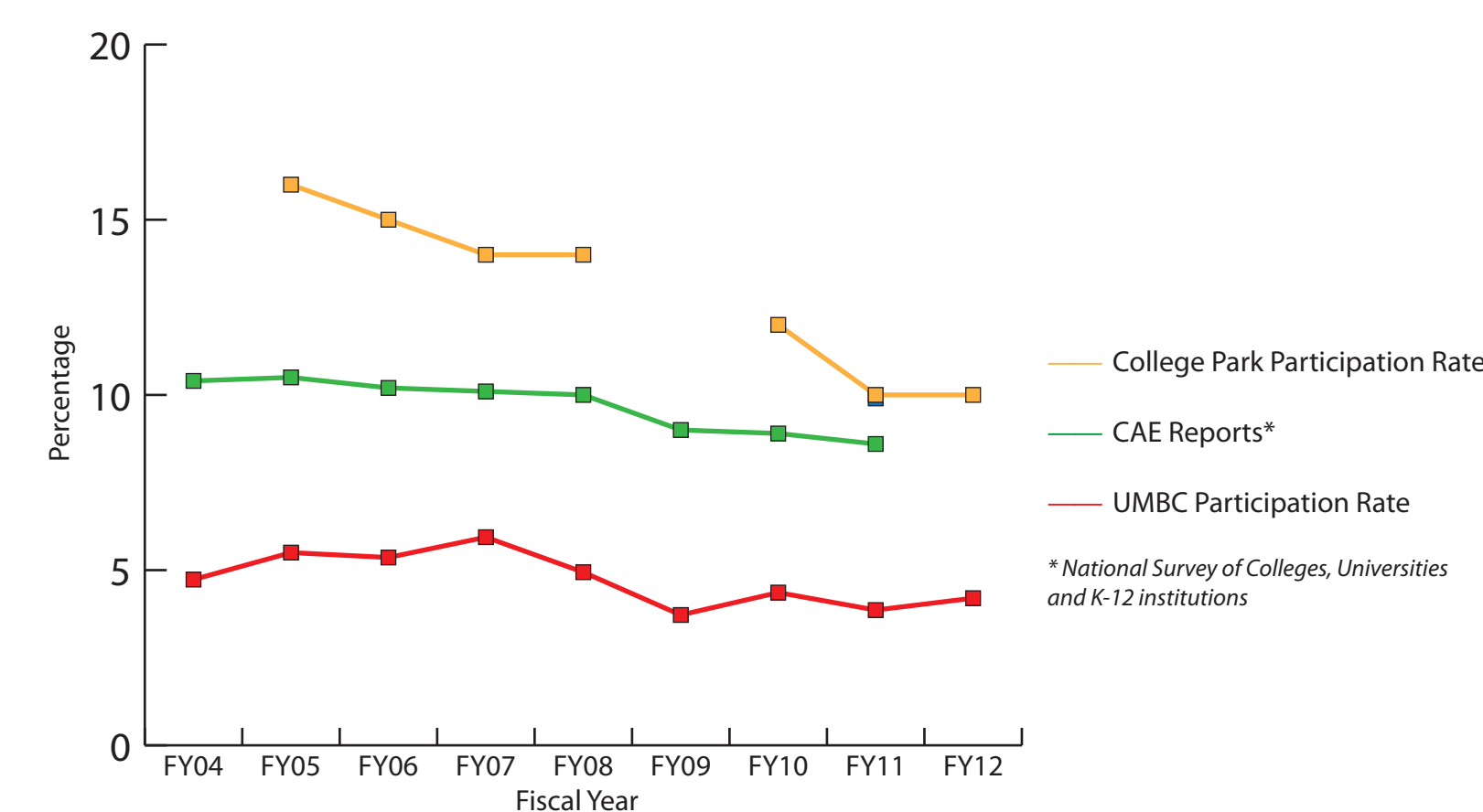
UMBC has experienced significant milestones in fundraising over the past decade. Much of our accomplishment has come despite a low alumni rate of participation. In fact, alumni giving made up less than 4 percent of our highly successful, \$116 million Exceptional by Example campaign.

In the face of challenging economic conditions, shifts in national alumni giving trends, and our limited ability to invest in development infrastructure, UMBC has weathered the economic crash of 2008 and has stabilized alumni participation over the last four years. Using a “back to the basics” approach grounded in greater transparency and stewardship, UMBC – through its Annual Giving, Major Giving, Donor Relations, and Corporate and Foundation Relations operations – is committed to building a solid alumni donor base that will grow from year to year.

To meet our ambitious goals in coming years, the UMBC community must find ways to encourage more and greater investments from alumni in the future. We must forge on-campus partnerships while seeking more innovative ways to spark a culture of philanthropy among our graduates that can turn each new generation of alumni into lifelong supporters of UMBC.

Donor Participation Rates Dropping Nationwide

Historic economic downturns – like the dot.com bust and the current global economic crisis which began in 2008 – have taken their toll on philanthropic giving. In addition, national giving trends show alumni participation – the number of alumni who give back to their respective institutions – has dropped steadily since 2002.



UMBC’s rise in national prominence and increased success at retaining and graduating students has dramatically grown our alumni base from under 40,000 in FY03 to nearly 60,000 in FY12. This provides a rich network of alumni to be mined as employers, mentors, and donors.

It also necessitates that we acquire and retain a growing number of new alumni donors each year to maintain and grow our rate of alumni participation, which has implications in national rankings like the *U. S. News and World Reports College Guide*.

Giving at UMBC

UMBC’s unique challenge is to build a solid base of alumni donors who are inspired to invest in our students, faculty, and programs each year. To meet this challenge, we are focused on crafting a giving program that can weather economic storms AND meet the evolving philanthropic goals of alumni – especially the “millennial” generation, which appears to give in ways that are significantly different than that of their parents.

Evidence suggests that we have made progress towards stabilizing a base of alumni donors:

- UMBC alumni giving dropped in the period following the launch of the Exceptional by Example Campaign and during the height of the economic downturn. Since FY09, alumni participation has hovered around 4%, down from a 10-year high point of 6.68% in FY03.
- In FY12, alumni participation was up 17% over the previous fiscal year. More importantly, the giving program produced 517 new alumni donors, 67% of whom graduated in the last decade.
- Donor fulfillment—the number of alumni who actually give when they say they intend to give—was at an all-time high at UMBC last year (84%), 14% higher than the national average.

Growing UMBC’s Giving Program

UMBC is committed to building a culture of philanthropy that is increasingly demonstrated by growth in alumni giving. As philanthropy is influenced as much by relationships and past experiences as it is pride in the UMBC of today, the Office of Institutional Advancement has fortified its outreach in these areas:

- **Communications:** The launch of *UMBC Magazine* (2009), as well as a new Giving site and blog (2010), annual endowment reports and other print and electronic pieces improve consistency and transparency, helping donors see exactly where and how their money is being used.
- **Phonathon:** A new in-house student calling program (launched in Fall 2011) gives alumni donors a direct pipeline to student voices. By employing our future alumni as fundraisers, we are cultivating natural dialogue between yesterday’s students and the current UMBC community.
- **Donor Stewardship:** Special events (launched in Fall 2009), including an annual scholar luncheon and receptions centered around campus events, give top/consistent donors special attention and access to activities that highlight what’s best about UMBC. Most importantly, it helps our donors understand how deeply appreciative we are of their support.

Why We All Need to Help

In order to build momentum in this work, UMBC’s giving programs will depend upon the strengthening of relationships on campus, as well as an investment in infrastructure and technology.

- **Department Relationships:** UMBC faculty and staff are key ambassadors to the University’s nearly 60,000 alumni. Partnerships between OIA and academic departments have demonstrated positive impact on giving to benefit specific programs – and UMBC overall. For instance, our annual “department appeal” has helped increase the number of individual donors to their departments since we launched this effort in FY10.
- **Innovating the Student Experience:** Alumni donors are motivated to give to initiatives that support current students, including scholarships, athletics, and special campaigns like the Retriever Learning Center. At the same time, UMBC’s continued successes in improving the student experience can improve the likelihood that these students will become lifelong supporters of UMBC.
- **Investment in Infrastructure:** Investments in data gathering, additional fundraising staff, and the technology that drives so much of our communication and online giving, will keep operations strong and create further opportunities down the road.

Reflecting on a decade of giving at UMBC means also taking external and internal events into account. Key points in recent years point to an internal investment in programs and policies that will push giving at UMBC to the next level.

Red: External Factors
Green: Internal Factors
Blue: Annual Giving Percentage

Dot Com Crash	Chapter of Young Alumni incorporates giving goal into first annual Wine Tasting event to support Alumni Association Scholarships	UMBC names 29 alumni to the Campaign Leadership Committee	Exceptional by Example Campaign launches publicly UMBC Celebrates its 40th Anniversary	Global Economic Crisis	Launch of UMBC Magazine	Launch of new giving site with focus on transparency and education	Successful conclusion of Exceptional by Example Campaign New stewardship activities, giving blog launched	New student-driven Phonathon launches New scholarship luncheon brings together donors and students
FY04 4.73%	FY05 5.50%	FY06 5.36%	FY07 5.94%	FY08 4.94%	FY09 3.72%	FY10 4.36%	FY11 3.86%	FY12 4.31%

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