



# UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND



## Conferences and Visitor Services

## Visitor Center Handbook

2009-10

Updated October 2009

# Visitor Center Manual

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## *Greetings!*

Congratulations on your decision to join the staff of the Visitor Center and the Conferences and Visitor Services Department team.

Your position as a Visitor Center Welcomer means you are an ambassador of the University. Your attitude, appearance and overall demeanor must reflect pride in all that the University of Maryland has to offer. This job is uniquely demanding but that is what makes it exciting and fulfilling! Hopefully, you will enjoy dedicating time to the Visitor Center and reap the many rewards of being a campus “ambassador”. With proper training, you will become well versed on many different topics and be a valuable communicator at our Visitor Center, and at the Administration Building Annex as you assist campus visitors.

Please read this handbook carefully and refer to it when you have any questions. (It is posted on the VC computer for easy reference). It outlines what is expected of you and provides basic guidelines and information to make your job easier. No employee handbook can anticipate every circumstance or question. The need may arise for revisions and supplements to this handbook and these will be provided to you if changes are necessary. The experience you gain through actual time at the center will be the best training you have.

Every employee contributes directly to the growth and success of the Visitor Center and it is my hope you will take pride in being a member of our team.

*Betty*

# Visitor Services at the University of Maryland

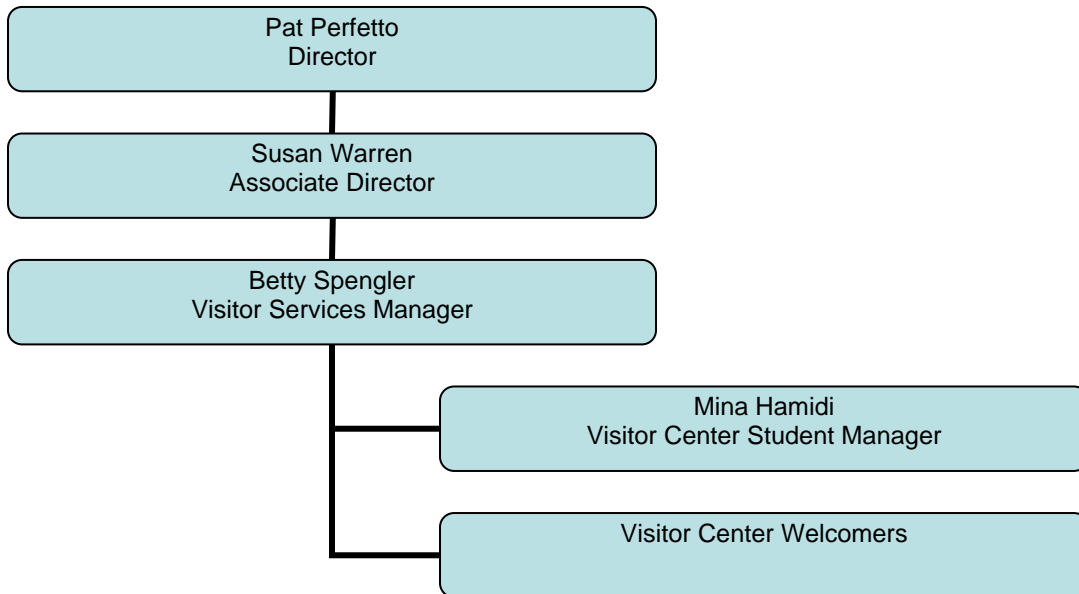
## A Little History –

The University of Maryland Visitor Center was first opened September 4, 1990 when President, William E. Kirwan, along with many deans, directors and department heads, decided that the creation of a campus visitor center should be one of six new campus initiatives. Through the efforts of Nick Kovalakides, a University of Maryland alumnus (B.S. '61, M.A. '68) the Visitor Center and Visitor Services became a reality and he became the first Visitor Center Advocate in 1990. In 2002, the Administration Building Annex desk was established.

Nick Kovalakides was also instrumental in forming the Collegiate Information and Visitor Services Association (website: [www.civsa.org](http://www.civsa.org)) which promotes and enhances the profession of collegiate information and visitors services and sets the standards for excellence in the profession. This website can be an interesting source of information about Visitor Centers at many other institutions around the country and you are encouraged to check it out.

## 2008-09 Organizational Chart

The Visitor Center is the responsibility of Betty Spengler, Visitor Services Manager. Selam Maru, Student Manger reports to Visitor Services Manager and assists with many of the day-to-day operations.



The Visitor Services Manager reports to Susan Warren, Associate Director of the Office of Conferences and Visitor Services (CVS), which is directed by Patrick Perfetto. CVS is part of the Division of Student Affairs.

## **I. MISSION & GOALS**

Conferences and Visitor Services mission is to promote the University, welcome guests and visitors, engage individuals in exploring and appreciating the University and facilitate meetings, events and conferences on behalf of the University.

Our goal at the Visitor Center is to provide all visitors excellent service by giving them correct information, making them feel engaged in our community, and represent a positive image of our University at all times.

Specifically, your goal is:

- To be an “ambassador” of the University of Maryland by proudly representing the school to all of our audiences.
- To always give the best answer to a question.
- To provide visitors with the information and materials they need to make their experience at the University of Maryland pleasant and productive.

## **II. STAFF EXPECTATIONS**

### **A. General Expectations**

You are responsible for assisting university guests and providing visitors excellent service by giving them correct and thorough information and making them feel welcomed and engaged as part of our larger community. By representing a positive image of our University at all times, you will help communicate the value of the university’s mission, serve as a resource to all visitors, including potential students and their families, making each visitors’ experience at the University of Maryland pleasant and productive.

You will serve and be seen as an ambassador for the university by every guest you greet. We expect high standards in how you represent the university to all of our visitors.

To successfully perform your job you must:

- Conduct yourself in a manner that communicates to visitors that they are your top priority.
- Be professional in appearance and attitude at all times.
- Take a proactive and resourceful approach to solving problems when they occur.
- Arrive on time for your work shift.
- Wear your nametag and VC uniform, which will be clean and neat.
- Provide a friendly welcome to all visitors (see Caring for your visitors!).
- Ask visitors to sign our guest book.
- Never just say “I don’t know” but rather say “I don’t know, but I WILL find out for you”.

- Know how to find answers via the computer (VC team services site, the University website, online sources), and phoning other university offices.
- Know where to find supplies and assist in insuring that ample supplies are on hand.
- Know and adhere to all the Operational Procedures as outlined in this manual.
- Record your time accurately and in a timely manner in the PHR system.
- You will answer the telephone in a professional manner and retrieve messages and return calls as necessary (see The Phone section).
- Keep the desk and the center uncluttered, neat and clean.

## B. Rules

1. Uniform: University of Maryland Shirt or jacket (provided when hired) and Khaki's, Pants, Shorts, Skirt of appropriate length, or jeans (clean, not ripped/unstained). VISITOR CENTER NAME TAG. Non-suitable items include: cut-offs, short shorts or skirts, sweat pants, gym shorts, inner shirt tails hanging out, hats, sunglasses or bare feet
2. Shorts are not to be worn at the Administration annex desk.
3. NO:
  - Instant messaging when visitors are present
  - Smoking
  - Chewing gum while on duty
  - Eating at the desk (or in the general area of the desk)\*
  - Listening to radio or streaming audio on the computer
  - Watching streaming video on the computer
  - Watching Television (Except for approved programs on the plasma)
  - Personal Phone Calls
  - Cell phone use at desk\*\*

\*Only exception is when you are the sole person staffing the desk for more than three hours. This situation rarely occurs during the academic year. In the event that it does you are not to eat or drink when a visitor is present and you must keep food and drink inconspicuously behind the desk.

\*\* Cell phones must be kept out of site, remain on silent or vibrate and should not be used for text messaging when visitors are present. If the need to return an important call should arise you should walk away from the desk to make the call.

4. While on duty, you may study, read or use our computer **when visitors are not present**. However, you are to stop, stand and greet visitors as soon as they enter the Visitor Center, not when they are already at the desk. This privilege will be revoked if abused. DO NOT place any personal materials on the front desk.
5. When two people are staffing the desk, all conversation between you must stop as soon as a visitor enters the door.

6. Bathroom Breaks: Make sure you put the sign up saying you'll be back in 5 minutes and a few highlighted maps on the desk. Secure the money, as well.
7. If your friends want to stop by and say hello, please make sure they do not congregate around the desk or come behind the desk with you and that their visit is brief.
8. Don't bring your problems/anger/bad mood to work. A good attitude and a smile are required for this job! Do not make negative comments about the university or guests.
9. Keep the Visitor Center neat, clean and uncluttered. Always check the entry area, both inside and out, and call work control if there are messes you can not clean up yourself. Make sure the Map Racks, Coffee tables, etc., are not stuffed full or cluttered/empty.
10. Staff Parking: Park in your assigned lot. **ADMISSIONS PARKING PERMITS ARE NEVER FOR PERSONAL USE OR TO BE ISSUED IN VIOLATION OF ESTABLISHED PROCEDURES UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCE. VIOLATION OF THIS POLICY COULD BE GROUNDS FOR TERMINATION.**

### C. Scheduling and Substitutions

The student manager is responsible for coordinating the work schedules for each semester, including summer and "winter break" when the University is open. Once the semester or break schedules are in place, it is your responsibility to find a substitute when you are unable to work a scheduled shift. Only fully trained members of the Visitor Center team are able to cover shifts.

If you need to get a sub to work your shift, you should send an email to [vcstaff@umd.edu](mailto:vcstaff@umd.edu) as far in advance as possible. Include the date, time and location of the shift.

Once you have reached agreement on a substitution, you must notify the student manager via email. The manager will confirm the agreement with both parties. Once confirmed, the person agreeing to provide coverage will become responsible for working the shift.

If a request for coverage is made two or more weeks prior to a shift, but no coverage is found, the VC Manager will be responsible for making arrangements for adequate coverage.

In cases where requests for coverage occur less than two weeks prior to the shift, you will be expected to work. Exceptions will be made by the VC Manager on a case by case basis depending on circumstances.

In the event you have an unanticipated sickness and cannot report to work or find a sub in an emergency, you must call the Conferences and Visitor Services office at x47884 and the Visitor Services Manager ASAP.

The Student Manager will maintain the Visitor Center Shift Calendar on the Welcomers website, listing all available sub shifts, as well as track who has agreed to cover shifts. This is a good place for you to look if you are interested in picking up extra hours. Many people are relying on the Visitor Center and the Administration Desk to be regularly staffed. Therefore, frequent absences or unwillingness to sign up for shifts or reporting late for your shift are grounds for possible dismissal.

## **University Closings**

If the university is to begin classes at a time later than 8 a.m., (due to weather or dangerous conditions) then that is the time the VC opens. If you are assigned to work at the time the university is opened, you must be at the VC. If the University closes early, you will be notified as to when to close the VC. **IF THE UNIVERSITY IS CLOSED, SO ARE WE!**

## **D. Timekeeping and Payroll**

### Pay Periods and checks

Pay periods run from Sunday to the second Saturday, for 14 days. You must enter the hours you work each pay period on line at [www.timesheets.umd.edu](http://www.timesheets.umd.edu) using your SID number to log in. Your student manager will assist in showing you the steps for completing your timesheet on line during your “on the job training” time at the desk. Timesheets are to be updated each time you work. This means if you are late or leave early you must record that time. You must sign off on your timesheet by the end of business on the Monday following the end of a pay period. If you do not sign off, you may not receive a pay check on time.

**TIME ENTERED IN THE TIMESHEET MUST REFLECT THE ACTUAL TIME WORKED.** Inaccurate reporting of your time worked is fraud against the State and grounds for immediate dismissal. You are paid every two weeks if you have hours designated. Pay checks can be picked up at the Conferences & Visitor Services office at 4321 Hartwick Road, Suite 500 anytime after 10 a.m. on the university pay day (usually every other Friday). You are strongly encouraged to enroll in direct deposit and pay stub suppression to alleviate the paperwork involved in this process.

If you have problems logging on or questions about your paycheck that your student manager or VS manager cannot assist you with, you may contact Jean Evans, Business Manager, Conferences and Visitor Services. Her office is located in 4321 Hartwick Road, Suite 500 and her phone extension is: 5-0847.

### Compensation

The starting wage, per hour, is \$8.25. Your appointment as a Visitor Center Welcomer is for one semester. Provided evaluations of your work are satisfactory, you will be offered an appointment for the next semester. After working a full year and based on an evaluation, you will be considered for a possible hourly wage increase.

### III. OPERATING PROCEDURES

#### A. Sale of Parking Permits

The Visitor Center will sell one (1) hour and two (2) hour parking permits to visitors. These permits will not be advertised for sale but are to be made available as an alternative solution for NON undergraduate admissions visitors who need to park in the Visitor Center Lot for longer than the 30-minute meters allow. The intent is to limit parking in these areas to a maximum of two hours, therefore, do not sell a person multiple permits to enable them to “string” more hours together. If the Visitor Center lot is **VERY FULL** with Admissions guests, these permits **SHOULD NOT BE SOLD** and guests should be directed to other Visitor pay lots on campus.

These permits will be sold for \$2.00 for one hour and \$4.00 for two hours. We will accept cash or check only. Checks are made payable to the University of Maryland. You will need to stamp the permit with the date and fill in the time. The sale of these permits requires that you complete a written receipt, using the blue University receipt book. The white (top) copy of the receipt is given to the visitor. The yellow copy is to be placed in the envelope at the end of the day with the money collected (see section on reconciling cash). The remaining pink receipt is left in the book. **You will also need to record the permit number on the receipt for reconciliation at the end of the day.**

**Note: Departments may also purchase special parking permits directly from Transportation Services and leave these at the Visitor Center desk** for their guests to pick up. Check in the labeled cubby hole for any special department permits. These can be for specific individuals on specific days or they may be open ended if a department regularly receives guests and wishes to accommodate them in this manner.

#### B. Sale of Padded Campus Maps

Blank Campus Map Order forms are kept at the Visitor Center (in one of the labeled binders in the cubby holes in the desk). Campus Departments can order pads of the campus map for their use and will call you at the Visitor Center to place their orders. **(The cost currently is \$15 per pad of 100 maps).**

Follow the instructions on Campus Map Order form for completing the form. This is then filed in the “pending” pocket of the Map Binder. Maps must be picked up by the ordering department at the Visitor Center desk and cannot be sent through inter-office mail due to the size of the pads.

When someone comes to pick up the maps they ordered, you will need to get these from the supply room. (Don’t forget to put your “Staff will return” sign up at the desk while you retrieve these). You will then need to fill in the section on the form noting that these

have been picked up and place the form in the “completed” pocket of the Map Binder for the VC Manager to pick up for processing the payment.

## C. Reserving the Visitor Center Auditorium

Undergraduate Admissions Office is given priority for using the Visitor Center Auditorium for *My Maryland* sessions and other admissions related activities and is not charged a rental fee. Other campus departments and organizations may reserve the use of the auditorium for a fee when it is not in use by the Admissions Office.

If you receive a reservation request you should check availability on the online Visitor Center Calendar. If available, you should email the Auditorium Reservation Form to the person making the inquiry. An electronic copy of the form can be found under Guest Resources on the Welcomers website. Once complete, the form should be returned via email or fax to the Visitor Center Manager. Complete instructions are listed on the form.

When reservations are confirmed, they will appear on the calendar for the auditorium that is on the VC website.

When a reservation is requested for hours when the Visitor Center is closed, you may be asked to work and cover this event. You will be paid your regular compensation for this time if you are scheduled to work.

## D. Phone Procedures

### Answering Phone Calls

- If you are helping a visitor in person, DO NOT answer the phone. It will go to voicemail which has a detailed message. Follow up with the phone message after the person has left the VC.

The proper way to answer the phone is:

- OUTSIDE CALL: “University of Maryland Visitor Center, This is (your name), how may I help you?”
- INSIDE CALL: Visitor Center, This is (your name), how may I help you?”
- Pick up the call before the third ring or it will go to voicemail. Speak slowly and smile.

### Placing Phone Calls

- Please make phone calls with discretion, as each off campus local call costs 10 cents. It doesn’t seem like much, but it can add up. To place an off-campus call, dial “9” then “1” and the area code+number
- If you need to make a long distance call, it should ONLY be to help a visitor.

### How to transfer a call

- Give them the number you are transferring them to in case you get disconnected and tell the caller you will transfer them.
- Push the gray “transfer” button on the phone. You hear a beep and get a dial tone.

- Dial the number to which you are transferring, and when the party answers, tell them who you are and that you are transferring a call, and then push the transfer button again, wait to hear a beep, then hang up.

### **Putting calls on HOLD**

- If a 2<sup>nd</sup> call comes in while you are on the line, ask the primary caller to hold for just a moment, answer the 2<sup>nd</sup> call and immediately place them on hold and complete the primary call. When you go to get the 2<sup>nd</sup> call, push the gray panel labeled HOLD. You'll hear a beep and the green light next to your phone line will flash. To get the other caller, push the line the call is coming in on. To get back to your original caller, push the line (the one with the green blinking light), wait for the beep, and you will be re-connected.

### **Voicemail**

You are expected to check voicemail whenever the red message light is lit.

- Dial 5-5200
- When mechanical operator answers, press #
- Password is: VISIT# (84748#)
- Press 2 to get the message, to listen to each message press zero. Once you get the messages and write them down, press “ \* D” to delete the messages.
- Call back any caller who has left a message.

VISITORS SHOULD NOT USE OUR HOUSE PHONE EXCEPT IN THE CASE OF EMERGENCY. Guests should be directed to the campus phone for on-campus calls.

### **Telephone Books:**

We have White and Yellow pages. Guests can look at the books in our visitor center lobby or in the Dairy, but they must be returned to the desk. We also have a UM Faculty/Staff directory and student directory. This information is also available at [www.directory.umd.edu/search](http://www.directory.umd.edu/search). Student information is not to be disseminated to the general public.

## **E. Opening, Closing & Shift changes at the Visitor Center**

### **Hours of Operation and Phone Numbers:**

Note: Both desks are **closed** whenever the University is closed.

Visitor Center (4-7777)

Monday-Friday: 8am - 5pm

Saturday: 9am - 3pm

Sunday: Closed

Main Administration Building (5-9623)

Monday-Friday: 9am – 4pm

Saturday and Sunday: closed

## **Access System**

The Visitor Center has a card access system. You will swipe your student I.D. to enter through the front door of the Center if you are opening up. The door on the opposite side of Turner Hall will also be accessible to you for entry and will lock automatically at 5pm. The door through the Dining Services garage is supposed to be locked at all times and only Dining Services staff will have access. This is for the security of the building and for your own personal safety! If you have any problem accessing the building, the UM Police can assist you. Use the phone on the outside of the VC to contact them at the Non-emergency # (5-3555). Once you are inside, the door will be unlocked by use of a key using the box to the left of the doors.

## **Opening the Center:**

- Turn on the lights. (center, portico and spotlights).
- Unlock the front door with key on the chain.
- Change entrance sign to read "OPEN".
- Place the Guest book on the desk counter, open to current sheet. Denote new day by using the date stamp (don't forget to change the date!!!!)
- Bring driving tour maps, walking tour maps, visitor guides and general campus maps inside from outside rack.
- Turn on the computer.
- Check the VC Web site for updates and announcements and FYI's.
- Inspect bathrooms, call work control if not clean.
- Recycle old Diamondbacks.
- Turn on the TV and VCR to appropriate media (see multimedia section).
- Check the phone for messages
- Check the standing binder and schedules under glass for Images special tour schedules.

## **During Every Shift:**

- Read all entries on the VC website
- Check the VC Auditorium Calendar.
- Check the checklist
- Keep the desk, lobby area, storage room and office CLEAN!
- Maintain literature for visitors around the VC.
- Check the restrooms after large groups of people have visited. Wipe countertops if needed. Call work control if more attention is needed.

## **Closing the Center:**

- Highlight the Visitor Center on campus maps (5 of each Mon-Fri, 10 on Sat/holiday weekends), place them in the upper racks outside.
- Complete Admissions Parking Permit Report
- Complete Daily Cash Report (see separate section). Lock money and Parking permits in lower safe. Drop daily cash report, yellow receipts and daily profits, enclosed in an envelope, in upper safe.
- Lock the lower safe.
- Put white paper and newspaper (Diamondback) in recycling bin.
- DO NOT Recycle BETWEEN THE COLUMNS. It is published once a month. Only recycle when new issue is delivered.
- Make sure auditorium equipment is turned off, and that the auditorium is orderly.

- Turn off Computer, lights & T.V.
- Change sign on door to read “CLOSED”
- Secure the VC by locking the door with the key.

### **Communicating with Each Other**

You will need to be able to communicate with all of your fellow VC staff members by informing them via entry of information into the various sections on the VC Website. In addition, general management initiatives will come from information found on the VC Website announcements section. Please make sure that you enter important information into the website every shift you work and read EVERYTHING that has been written since the last shift you worked.

## **F. EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

### **Fire Alarm Sounding**

Make sure to follow these steps:

1. Stay calm.
2. Instruct all guests or other staff in the VC to leave and leave the building.
3. Call 911 or 301-405-3333 (direct to campus police) by cell phone or use the closest public emergency telephone (blue light).
4. Report what you know – “The alarm is going off,” location of fires, injuries, etc.
5. Meet with the fire department or police when they arrive to provide any information that may have regarding the incident.
6. After the event is over, write up a report of the incident and send to the VC Manager.
7. If false alarm, incident report is all that is required; if there were to be a real fire, as soon as possible after vacating the building, call the VC Manager.
8. You will be directed by emergency personnel when you are able to return to the building.

### **If you see a fire or smoke:**

1. Pull the fire alarm located on the wall next to the main VC entrance door.
2. Follow procedures above for when fire alarm is sounding.

**If Door alarm “talks” to you**, call Campus Police at x53333; if the alarm is just beeping, call work control at x52222

### **Tornados, Hurricanes, Natural Disasters, Homeland Security Emergency**

The University has installed a campus wide Early Warning Siren System to alert the campus community in the event of a weather or homeland security emergency. The sirens are tested the 1st Wednesday of the month around noon for 30 seconds....do not be alarmed if you hear this. **IN A REAL EMERGENCY, A STEADY TONE THAT WILL SOUND FOR AT LEAST THREE (3) MINUTES WILL BE HEARD.** In the event of Early Warning System activation, there are several resources you may check which will provide you with information on why it has been activated and what basic actions should be taken.

### **The University has also initiated a new emergency text messaging system, UM Alert.**

We urge you to register for UM Alert so that when an emergency occurs, you will receive a text message with instructions on where to go, what to do and who to contact. You can then assist our visitors who are in the VC should an emergency occur on your shift.

Check one of the following Resources: [www.umd.edu](http://www.umd.edu), 5-7669 (automated message), campus cable channel 76 or 88.1FM WMUC Radio Station (broadcast information)

In the event of a Tornado:

1. Direct all guests and go to an interior hallway of the VC
2. Do NOT pull the Fire Alarm
3. Stay away from windows and glass
4. If you or other people are just outside the building, get inside the VC at once.
5. One short blast that will sound for less than 30 seconds will alert you when the situation is "All Clear"

In the event of a homeland security emergency, the resources you check will direct you in the specific actions to take.

## **IV. Admissions (Undergraduate) Information**

### **A. Parking**

For those people coming to campus related to **UNDERGRADUATE ADMISSIONS** only (not graduate admissions or admitted students coming for other purposes such as dining, residence halls or financial services), the answer to campus parking is an easy one. You will issue the admissions guest a one day parking permit and they can use this to park in the VC or Rossborough Inn lots at any numbered space. This permit is also good at other campus Visitor Parking Lots and Digital Pay Station areas. See the sample parking permit below for the correct way to fill out this permit; you must use the DATE STAMP with the correct date. The general overflow lot for parking (e.g. when the VC lot and the Rossborough lot with meters are full) is the Paint Branch Lot.

At the end of the day, you must record the series of numbers of admissions passes that were distributed in the parking log. The Admissions parking log is kept on the VC computer.

**Prospective students must sign into the guest book and you must record the permit number with their entry before issuing the permit.**

When you see that you are running low on permits (200 or less), contact the student manager or VS Manager ASAP to let them know. They will order new permits, as needed, from the Department of Transportation Services.

See the section under Dealing with Problems for what to do IF visitors get a parking ticket or have car problems.

## B. Who to Call for What in Admissions

### Office of Undergraduate Admissions (OUA) Contact Sheet

#### Inquiry

I want to attend a My Maryland **information session and tour**. (typically families and prospective students)

I want to schedule a **group tour** of 10 or more. (typically high school students)

I'm a **faculty/staff member** and have an important person/group coming to campus.

I have a tour scheduled for today, but we're **running late**.

I have a question regarding admission to the University.

#### Contact Person/Group

**General OUA Public Inquiry**  
1-800-422-5867/301-314-8385

**Maryland Images**  
Campus tour guides  
\*E-mail: [mdimages@umd.edu](mailto:mdimages@umd.edu)  
Phone: 301-314-1970  
IM: umdimages

**Peggy Tiffany**  
Coord. for Programs & Visitor Services  
\*E-mail: [ptiffany@umd.edu](mailto:ptiffany@umd.edu)  
Phone: 301-314-8362  
IM: PTif

**Front Counter- Public Inquiry (PI)**  
Phone: 301-314-9608  
IM: PI Counter

**General Admission Inquiries:**  
1-800-422-5867/301-314-8385

**\* E-mail is the preferred method of communication.**

If there is an urgent matter that needs immediate attention, please contact people in the following order: (e.g. If a group arrives and there is no tour guide)

**Front Counter:** 301-314-9608  
**Maryland Images:** 301-314-1970  
**\*\*Peggy Tiffany:** 301-314-8362  
**\*\*Kate Innes:** 301-314-8363

**\*\*These phone numbers are for INTERNAL USE ONLY**

## C. MY MARYLAND Information Sessions and Campus Tours

The Office of Undergraduate Admissions offers My Maryland Information Sessions on a **reservation only basis**. The My Maryland session begins with a 45 minute information session including question and answer period conducted by an Admissions representative and held in the Visitor Center auditorium. Immediately following the presentation is a 90 minute walking tour of the campus led by a Maryland Images student. For reservations prospective students should visit [www.uga.umd.edu/visit](http://www.uga.umd.edu/visit) or call 1-800-422-5867.

The Office of Undergraduate Admissions also offers campus tours (Terrapin Tours) Monday-Friday at 11am and 2pm throughout the year (with a few exceptions between academic terms), led by Maryland Images student ambassadors. No reservations are required for these walking campus tours for prospective students and their families which depart from the Undergraduate Admissions office located in the Mitchell Building. Guests are encouraged to arrive 20 minutes prior to the tour to view a video presentation, "Take a Look".

### Taking Group Tour Reservations

Special tours for groups of ten or more persons may be arranged by appointment only and should be arranged at least two weeks in advance of a visit. Generally, group tours for students in high school are conducted by the Maryland Images through the Undergraduate Admissions office and tours for younger student groups, alumni, visiting faculty and other general visitors are conducted through the Visitor Center.

Requests for group tours from high schools should be referred to Undergraduate Admissions: 301-314-1970 or [mdimages@umd.edu](mailto:mdimages@umd.edu)

Requests for group tours for all others (all students other than 9-12 grade, community groups, grad students, etc.) should be recorded on a tour request form, found on the clip board at the Visitor Center desk. Completed forms should be left on the clip board until removed by the Student Manager.

Complete a Tour Request Form whenever in doubt about how to handle a request for a tour. The Visitor Services Manager will follow up.

## V. Welcoming, Providing Information & Engaging Visitors

### A. Caring for your Visitors

- Stand, Smile and Say hello.
- Offer to help them. Welcome them to the University.
- EACH VISITOR DESERVES YOUR RECEPTION. RECOGNIZE ALL GUESTS WITHIN 20 SECONDS OF THEM ARRIVING AT THE CENTER.
- Do not guess at an answer. Make sure it is right before you give it!

- Only make suggestions or recommendations if you have actually lived the experience you are recommending. Do not make recommendations from something you have “heard” but not “experienced”.
- Remember, patience is a virtue.
- When Visitors are leaving the center, thank them for stopping by, and wish them well in whatever they have come to visit for.
- Don’t degrade anyone or anything...Conversations are to be positive and productive!

## B. Maps/Visitor Guides

Use your judgment as to whether a guest needs a campus map and a Visitor Guide or if the map in the Visitor Guide is sufficient.

**Offer a Visitor Guide to every guest.** The Visitor Guide contains a campus map and a self-guided campus tour that is very useful for guests who want to visit many popular campus destinations. Use this map to assist visitors when practical. It is an eco-friendly practice and saves printing costs.

## C. Commonly Asked Questions

The questions below will come up regularly. You should know how to find these answers on the computer and the highlighted questions and answers should be committed to memory!

**Q1: Sports events: where, when? How can I get tickets?**

A: Visit [www.umterps.com](http://www.umterps.com) for specific information.

**Q2: Library: Hours? May I eat there?**

A: McKeldin Library Hours –check on [www.lib.umd.edu](http://www.lib.umd.edu) for hours.  
You may eat at Footnotes Café in McKeldin Library

**Q3: What are the Bookstore Hours?**

A: 1. University Book Center (Student Union)

- Monday-Thursday: 8:30am-8pm
- Friday: 8:30am-6pm
- Saturday: 10am-5pm
- Sunday: 11pm-5pm

2. Maryland Book Exchange (on Route 1)

**Q4: What’s new at the Stamp Union? Any events?**

A: Visit [www.union.umd.edu](http://www.union.umd.edu)

- Food Court (Chic-fil-A, Freshens, Marketplace Deli, McDonalds, Panda Express, Sbarro, Steak Escape, Taco Bell); Adele’s, Coffee Bar, Food Co-op)
- Hoff Movie Theatre
- TerpZone: Bowling/Billards/Arcade
- Ticket Master Ticket Office

**Q5: May the public use campus facilities?**

**A:** Yes, the public may use campus facilities, but may have to obtain a special card (to use the libraries) or to obtain a membership to the CRC or to rent venues for conferences or special events.

**Q6: Where are nearby hotels?**

**A:** See the “Area Hotels” handout behind the desk

**Q8: Where do I pay a parking ticket?**

**A:** 1. Pay directly at Department of Transportation OR  
2. Mail in payment with parking ticket

**Q9: Shoemaker Building Testing Center...where is it?**

**A:** On the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Shoemaker Building

**Q10: Where is the nearest airport? Train station? Bus Depot? Metro?**

**A:** 1. Airport: BWI; Reagan National is accessible via Metro  
2. Train Station: MARC Train from College Park Metro; Amtrak from Union Station  
3. Bus Depot: Union Station, Washington D.C.

**Q11: Do you have metro/Amtrak schedule?**

**A:** Metro: [www.wmata.com](http://www.wmata.com)  
Amtrak: [www.amtrak.com](http://www.amtrak.com)

**Q12: What is UMUC and where do I park?**

**A:** University of Maryland, University College. Park in parking garage adjacent to UMUC, at the intersection of Adelphi Road & University Blvd.

**Q13: Is the golf course open to the public?**

**A:** Yes.

**Q14: Where can I eat around here? Coffee?**

- Dairy
- Student Union
- Provide guest with “Places to Eat” or the “Downtown College Park” handout
- Refer to the Conferences & Visitor Services webpage <http://www.cvs.umd.edu/visitors/dining.html> for a complete listing of on-campus dining options.

**Q15: Where can I shop around here?**

- Downtown College Park
- IKEA
- Provide guest with “Where to Shop” or the “Downtown College Park” handout

**Q16: How do I get...?** Be familiar with driving directions To/From campus to local and distant points as well as directions to popular tourist spots! This includes to I-95 and the Baltimore Washington Parkway (BW Parkway). Printouts of these directions can be found on the DIRECTIONS DATABASE IN THE COMPUTER.

**Q17: Where can I park on campus...?** This is probably the most asked question you will get at the Visitor Center (and as a student, I am sure this is no surprise to you!). In order to help our guests avoid getting a ticket and make sure their ability to find parking is as hassle-free as possible, you must be well versed in where to direct people to park and give accurate information and good directions. There are three Visitor Parking Garages; they are Union Lane, Stadium Drive and Mowatt Lane Garage. There are two Visitor surface lots; they are the VC/Rossborough numbered visitor lots and Paint Branch Drive lot.

## D. Resources

### **The Computer**

When Windows XP starts up, enter the username “welcomers;” the password for that is “cvsterp1200.” Our VC website is the homepage on the computer and to access that website the user name is your first initial and last name and the password will be individually assigned to you. The VC website has the auditorium calendar, announcements and various sections for communicating and sharing information.

The computer also has an on-line answer and direction database and on line documents. This collection of information is intended to provide you with answers to questions that may “stump” you and provide written directions to commonly requested places of interest including other Universities in the area and tourist attractions.

REMEMBER, there is nothing wrong with not knowing an answer, provided you know where to find it. **Review the Answer Database regularly as additions are occasionally made to it.**

### **Change for parking**

Each Day, you will retrieve petty cash from the safe to be used to make change for visitors purchasing one and two hour parking permits or using the digital pay station. For security purposes, always handle large amounts of money out of the view of visitors.

***Please let your managers know if change needs to be replenished or cash needs to be broken into smaller bills.***

### **Office Supplies**

Basic Supplies are provided. If there is something you need or supplies are running low, check the supply room first. Make photo copies of things when they run low. Problem solved! Please notify your student manager or the VS Manager if a supply order needs to be placed.

### **Campus Building Numbers**

Each campus building has been assigned a three-digit number by Facilities Management. Occasionally, your visitors will ask for directions for building ###. Search for the “Building Index” on the University website to find the appropriate building.

### **Leaks, Lights, Bathrooms...facility problems...**

If something goes wrong in the facility or near the entry way (icy steps/etc), call Work Control at 5-2222.

### **Receiving Brochures from outside agencies**

If you are approached by representatives of an on or off campus group that would like to give you information on something they offer, please refer them to the VS Manager.

Take a sample of what they want to display and give to the VS Manager for review. The Manager will follow up with the individual.

## **E. DEALING WITH PROBLEMS**

### **Visitors who are difficult to understand**

Follow these suggestions:

- Try asking them to speak slower *or*:
- Provide them with paper so that they can write their question *or*:
- Call the appropriate foreign language department, explain the situation and see if they have a translator.
- Some of the staff in *The Dairy* speak Spanish and are usually willing to help out with a Spanish speaking guest

### **Angry Visitors**

When visitors approach you and are upset, LISTEN to them. Allow them to say everything they want to say, and then recognize them by saying something along the lines of "I'm sorry that this has happened"...It has obviously upset you, but thank you for bringing it to our attention. I'll make sure your concerns are directed to the appropriate person/department." If appropriate, offer to help or ask the visitor what you can do to help resolve the problem. DO NOT say anything like...Oh, yeah, that happens all the time. That makes it seem as if we don't care or resolve any problems! Offer to contact someone who can be of more help (VC manager, other CVS staff or a staff person from the department they are upset with).

### **When Visitors get parking tickets or have car trouble**

When visitors bring their parking tickets to you, they usually want you to get the ticket voided. After gently telling them that you CANNOT do that, urge them to appeal the ticket by completing the form on the ticket and mailing it to the Department of Campus Parking. (Instructions and the DCP address are on the ticket.) Tell them, "Campus Parking is usually fair, especially if it is the first time." For Admissions guests who have received tickets and are still dissatisfied, offer them the aid of our TICKET APPEAL NOTE (which can be found stored with the passes). Whatever you do, **DO NOT TAKE THE TICKET**, as if you are going to appeal it for them or have it voided.

## **F. GIVING TOURS**

The Visitor Center staff provides tours and helps arrange campus visitations for elementary school students, graduate students, new faculty, conference guests and other general visitors. The Student Manager is responsible for ensuring there are an adequate

number of guides assigned for each of our tours. You are expected to make yourself available to conduct tours whenever your schedule allows. Willingness to sign up for tours will be noted in the mid-semester evaluation and will be given significant weight to when appointments are offered for the upcoming semester.

## G. MULTIMEDIA

The TV in the lobby is connected to the campus cable, a DVD player and a PC. There is a remote and general operating instructions at the desk. From 9am-3pm, either the VC PowerPoint, university marketing or admissions DVDs or campus network channels are to be shown at all times. The Cable Channel listing is on the VC website. During severe weather on significant world events news channels may also be shown.

Family friendly TV is can be broadcast before 9 a.m. and after 3 p.m. Shows such as Jerry Springer and soap opera type shows are NEVER appropriate.

There is also a computer and projector located in the auditorium. These are used primarily by the Admissions office during their Up Close presentations and the software on the computer is maintained by them. **The auditorium hardware and equipment is maintained by the OIT Instructional Facilities group. Fran Bass is the IT coordinator and can be contacted for problems at x58623 or x52600.**

You are expected to have a general understanding of how to operate this equipment to assist other users. You will be shown this during your on the job training, and full instructions are posted on the Auditorium desk. The Username and password for this computer is posted on the console desk in the auditorium. The projector bulb is very expensive to replace so it will be your responsibility to make sure it is turned off every evening to conserve the life of the bulb.

## VI. ADMINISTRATION ANNEX DESK (Phone # is x59623)

The Visitor Center now has an annex desk located in the main lobby of the Administration Building. This Desk has been created to help with the flow of traffic within the Main Administration Building which houses many of the University of Maryland Officials including:

- the President of the University, President C.D. (Dan) Mote
- the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost, Nariman Farvardin
- the Vice President for University Relations, Mr. Brodie Remington and
- the Vice President for Administrative Affairs, Mr. Doug Duncan

These officials receive many high profile guests and you will expect to know how and where to direct these visitors and be very professional in your dress and demeanor. Refer to the Administration Desk General Information Book for floor plans and directories. In addition, many general visitors often show up at the building and have similar questions to the ones we receive at the Visitor Center. We will not handle any money at this desk.

Some quick protocol:

- Traffic Flow
  - Direct all parents to the Provost's office
  - Direct students to the appropriate CAMPUS department. (i.e.: their dean, faculty, RA) do some investigating and have them start at the right source.
- The Building
  - Basement:** Computer Technology, Office of Extended Studies (including Freshman Connection- Rm. 0132)
  - First Floor:** President's Office, Administrative Affairs, Provost's Office, Associate Provost's Office
  - Second Floor:** University Relations, Provost Budget Office, President's Legal Office

Supplies that will be kept at the Administration Desk will be CDT,CWT and Maps. You will access the computer at the Administration Desk in the same way as you do the Visitor Center.

Each time you OPEN at the administration desk:

- Take previous day newspapers to recycle bin
- Turn on lights

While working at the Admin desk, you may also be assigned to do special projects during times when there are not visitors present. These may include producing handouts for the VC, tabulating visitor statistics, etc. These assignments will be made by the student manager and VS manager.