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## Local

Report: Baltimore colleges generate \$17.2 billion for economy

Kelsey Volkmann, The Examiner

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Mayor Sheila Dixon, right, greets Sandra Kurtinitis, president of the Community College of Baltimore County, Tuesday afternoon after a news conference detailing Baltimore-area colleges' economic impact. — Arianne Starnes/Examiner

### BALTIMORE -

The [Baltimore](#) area's 16 colleges and two teaching hospitals generate \$17.2 billion a year for the regional economy, a report released Tuesday shows.

But if university and government officials want to capitalize on these economic contributions, they must look to [North Carolina](#), [Massachusetts](#) and [California](#) for ideas, according to a study by the Baltimore Collegetown Network, which promotes local public and private colleges.

With more than 63,000 employees, Baltimore-area universities rank sixth among local employers, behind retail trade, accommodations and food services, national resources, administrative services and manufacturing.

"With research parks, we aren't just supplying the work force; we are attracting businesses to come here," said [Kristen Campbell](#), executive director of the Collegetown Network, which formed

a decade ago.

The schools educate 120,000 students and grant 20,000 degrees a year, but only about a third of graduates remain in Baltimore and half stay in [Maryland](#).

The region could reduce the brain drain if schools, government and businesses worked to improve the quality of life for students, gave them more internships and opened a center that would help people launch start-up companies using universities' research and attract new businesses.

The report pointed to the [Research Triangle](#) of [Duke University](#), the [University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill](#) and [North Carolina State University](#).

To see how the economic impact of Baltimore colleges stacks up nationally, researchers from [Towson University](#) and [University of Baltimore](#) also looked at [Boston](#) and the [Silicon Valley](#).

"An institution like the [Research Triangle Institute](#) would be useful in stimulating continued faculty engagement with business and in providing an additional talent magnet for the area," the report says.

"In order for Baltimore to become a true center in the knowledge-based economy, the area's research universities must emulate other elite research universities in becoming premier developers and conveyers of new ideas, technology and products."

[Baltimore County Executive Jim Smith](#) and [Baltimore City Mayor Sheila Dixon](#) hailed the report as a tribute to the vital role local universities play in the region.

[kvolkmann@baltimoreexaminer.com](mailto:kvolkmann@baltimoreexaminer.com)

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