



Quality Enhancement Systems and Teams  
Bridging the Gap Between Knowledge and Action

CELEBRATING

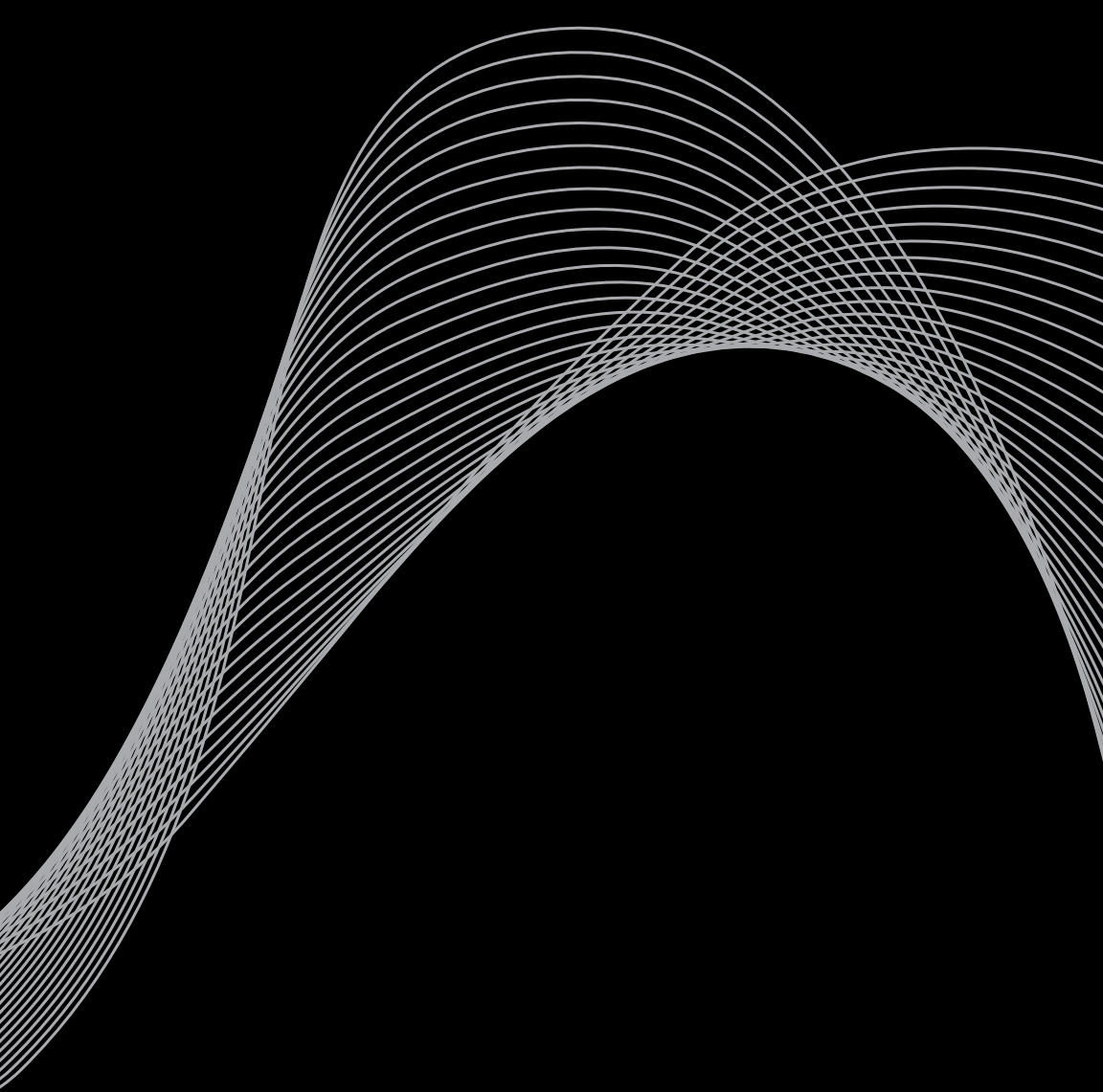
*fifteen  
years*

OF EXCELLENCE

Looking forward to 15 more



UNIVERSITY OF  
MARYLAND



“QUEST IS MORE  
THAN A PROGRAM OR  
A SET OF CLASSES.”

—Michael S. Schaffer  
*Cohort 11, Deloitte Consulting, LLP*

# Message FROM THE DIRECTOR



Dear Friends,

Fifteen years ago QUEST represented the future of undergraduate education. Cross-functional teams learning quality principles represented a new frontier in higher education. In a rapidly changing world, geography has become cyberspace, markets have become networks and communication of one-to-one has transformed into interactions of many-to-many. QUEST has sustained prominence during these transformative times and continues to provide an innovative model for undergraduate education. Examining how QUEST can prepare students for the globalized world is both our purpose and our challenge.

To meet these needs, QUEST has pursued initiatives rooted in core values of our program:

- Adoption of leading-edge green innovations in class projects and program operations;
- Pursuit of social responsibility in the U.S. and abroad, including partnering each year with at least one nonprofit organization;
- Introduction of systemic thinking into the QUEST curriculum and students' intellectual repertoire; and
- Promotion of student innovation by supporting patent applications and idea implementation.

As executive director of this program, I was handed a baton and asked to run the next leg of the QUEST program relay. In that time, we have continued to sustain the program as the preeminent multidisciplinary program on campus. It is with great pride that I can say we have not only kept good time in this race, but have inspired others to join with us in our endeavor. As I pass the baton to the QUEST of the future, our community is strong and our promise is vibrant. Winning is not simply coming in first, but arriving together at the forefront of education.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "J. Gerald Suarez". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "S".

J. Gerald Suarez, Ph.D.

*Executive Director, QUEST Honors Fellows  
Associate Dean, Office of External Strategy*

# History OF QUEST

*In the early 1990s, the quality movement had spread from corporations to college campuses nationwide. The University of Maryland, under the leadership of President William E. Kirwin, formed a committee which aimed to advance pedagogy and improve instruction through implementation of total quality principles. The convention was to apply quality principles to operational processes. Maryland applied them to the process of learning.*



*The University of Maryland applied for and was one of eight universities to win a grant from the IBM Corporation in the IBM-TQ competition. Maryland was the only school to include an undergraduate program in their total quality initiative, the IBM-TQ Program, founding what is now the QUEST (Quality Enhancement, Systems and Teams) Honors Fellows program.*

**15**  
Years of  
Excellence

**1992**

**IBM awards one of eight IBM-TQ grants to the University of Maryland**



# *fifteen years*



1993

First cohort of 40 IBM-TQ students admitted; IBM-TQ Teaching Theatre, an innovative computer-based classroom, completed for use

# Where are they now

ALUMNI REFLECT ON  
THEIR QUEST EXPERIENCE

“The skills required to work as part of a cross-functional team—cooperation, open-mindedness, communication—are like muscles: they require use to become strong. These skills were part of the core set of strengths hammered into place by the QUEST program.”

Joy Sinderbrand  
*Development Department  
The Tunnel at Port Authority of  
New York and New Jersey*

“I currently work with a diverse group of individuals: geologists, engineers and environmental scientists; all are business-focused people. The ability to work as a team is critical to success. The team members continually learn new skills to bring to the larger team and provide solutions. QUEST gave me the opportunity to branch out from pure engineering to expose me to the ‘real world’, where I would be working with more than just technical people.”

Kevin Yue  
*Project Engineer, Kleinfelder*

“The QUEST Program not only prepared me for the business world, but also led me to a career that I am incredibly passionate about. The program increased my confidence in my own abilities, enabling me to step up in situations of uncertainty.”

Anita Gupta  
*Formerly of Deloitte Consulting, LLP  
and currently pursuing her MBA at  
University of Chicago  
Graduate School*

## 1996

QUEST receives the Maryland Association for  
Higher Education Distinguished Program Award

# Fifteen YEARS OF QUALITY

*The IBM-TQ program, renamed QUEST in 1998, incorporates the quality principle of “voice of the customer” to deliver an unparalleled undergraduate experience. Student ideas continually impact the design of courses, co-curricular events and processes. The Maryland Association for Higher Education recognized this student-centered excellence with the Distinguished Program Award in 1996, and the growing number of involved alumni and professional partners reaffirms this distinction each year.*



*Leveraging multiple perspectives is essential to the quality movement, and cross-functional teamwork is another formative aspect of QUEST. Teamwork is a “very transferable, high-longevity skill that we impart to the students,” says Dr. Arjang Assad, a founding father of the program. Creating this experience requires extending QUEST beyond the classroom. Orientation, referred to fondly by students and alumni as “QUEST Camp,” builds the trust that is essential to our community. The tradition of building a community outside the classroom continues with the QUEST Student Organization (QSO), Integrating QUEST (IQ) co-curricular events for students, and many other activities.*

## 1998

**IBM-Total Quality program takes a new name: Quality Enhancement, Systems and Teams (QUEST) when the original IBM grant expires and the University adopts the program; QUEST featured on Maryland Public Television’s program “Maryland State of Mind”**

# QUEST TODAY

*T*hroughout its 15 years at the University of Maryland, the QUEST program has upheld its goal of teaching quality through real-world applications that challenge students to innovate in a dynamic environment. “The sense of community, spirit of collaboration, enthusiasm for teamwork, celebration of diversity, and integration of multiple perspectives has remained the same in many ways,” says Dr. Gerald Suarez, director of the QUEST program from 2005-2008.

QUEST students, like Cohort 13 alumna Lindsey Schwalb, reflect on the positive impact of the program. “The courses are taught by incredible faculty. And the hands-on, real-world experience I’ve gained—I couldn’t have gotten it anywhere else,” she says.

Vlad Tchompalov, a Cohort 14 Computer Science major, says, “I feel that QUEST teaches you ethics in a lot of ways. Not only doing the right thing, but doing it for the right reasons.”

Rachel Cohen, QUEST program manager, believes the program creates a well-rounded learning environment. “We’ve been able to provide a larger platform of opportunities for students to be involved and to feel empowered to bring ideas to the table.

The community is growing, in that everybody here contributes and receives something that is customized for them.”

The community includes not only current QUEST students, faculty and staff, but a growing group of alumni who want to give back to the program. “Our alumni are coming back and they’re actively engaged in more numbers than ever before,” says Suarez.

So what’s next for QUEST?

Its history proves that no matter what opportunities the program chooses to pursue, its unique approach to learning, dedicated faculty and staff, and talented students will ensure a meaningful experience and academically successful results.

—Maggie Boneika, Cohort 14

## 2001

Students from the College of Computer, Math and Physical Sciences first admitted into program

“THE HIGH CALIBER OF STUDENTS IN THE QUEST PROGRAM PROVIDED US THE OPPORTUNITY TO TARGET CHALLENGING, BIG-IMPACT PROJECTS RESULTING IN IMMEDIATE WINS.”



—Mike Genau, *Vice President & General Manager  
GE Healthcare, Maternal-Infant Care  
490H Project Sponsor, 2006 and 2007*

2006

Participation in GE-mtvU Ecomagination Challenge with highest submissions of any university; First large-scale QUEST innovation and consulting conference with more than 250 attendees



Alumnus Matthew Brumberger and Dr. C.D. Mote, Jr., President, University of Maryland, College Park



## 2007

Systems Thinking for Managerial Decision Making introduced as addition to core curriculum; Conference renamed the Brumberger QUEST Innovation and Consulting Conference after alumnus and donor Matthew Brumberger

# THE QUEST STUDENT EXPERIENCE

**Q**UEST offers a student-centered experience founded on the idea that real-life situations facilitate learning that transcends classroom education. From the creation of a quality product, process or service in the 190H course, to providing consulting services for professional partners in 490H, the QUEST curriculum rests on a foundation of reality-centered education. Integrating QUEST (IQ) events allow professionals, often our own alumni, to share insights on a variety of topics ranging from diversity in the workplace, to personal financial planning, to consulting workshops. When students reflect on their experiences with QUEST, what comes to mind is quality, community, innovation, opportunity, and impact.

In its simplest form, QUEST can be thought of as an opportunity. “An opportunity for what?” you might ask. Well, that all depends on who you ask. Pose the question to the over 200 students in the program and you are likely to receive over 200 different answers. For some of us, QUEST is an opportunity to challenge traditional thought and become truly innovative; for others, it is an opportunity to transform an idea into reality. It is an opportunity for students from different majors to expand their breadth of knowledge into other fields of study. As new QUEST students, it is an opportunity to show off our creative genius for the first time. For the experienced seniors, it is an opportunity to highlight our skills on a real project for a real organization; an

opportunity to network and learn from industry professionals.

The QUEST experience is unique to each student, but we must not forget those opportunities afforded to us all. QUEST is an opportunity to surround ourselves and work with some of the most intelligent, motivated students at the University of Maryland. It is an opportunity to be part of an active, energetic community of students, staff, faculty, and alumni. Above all, QUEST is an opportunity to do more. Life will present us with countless opportunities as we continue our endeavors. Each time opportunity knocks, remember that QUEST knocked first.

—Joel Liebman, Cohort 14, QUEST Student Organization President



“THE ROBERT H. SMITH SCHOOL OF BUSINESS IS PROUD TO CELEBRATE THE PAST 15 YEARS OF QUEST, AND WE KNOW THEY WILL CONTINUE TO PROVIDE AN EXCEPTIONAL EXAMPLE OF REALITY-CENTERED LEARNING IN THE YEARS TO COME. QUEST HAS BEEN A SHINING EXAMPLE OF A COMMUNITY BASED ON CROSS-DISCIPLINARY COLLABORATION AND LEARNING. IT IS WITH GREAT HONOR THAT I JOIN IN CONGRATULATING THE QUEST STUDENTS, ALUMNI, PARTNERS AND LEADERS ON CONTINUING TO GROW AND ENHANCE THE BEST UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM ON CAMPUS.”

—G. “Anand” Anandalingam  
*Dean, Robert H. Smith School of Business*

The QUEST Honors Fellows Program engages students from the Robert H. Smith School of Business, the A. James Clark School of Engineering and the College of Computer, Mathematical and Physical Sciences.



ROBERT H. SMITH  
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS



A. JAMES CLARK  
SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING

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