

# THE CITY OR TOWN AS A CLASSROOM: LESSONS IN PARTNERING WITH LOCAL UNIVERSITIES

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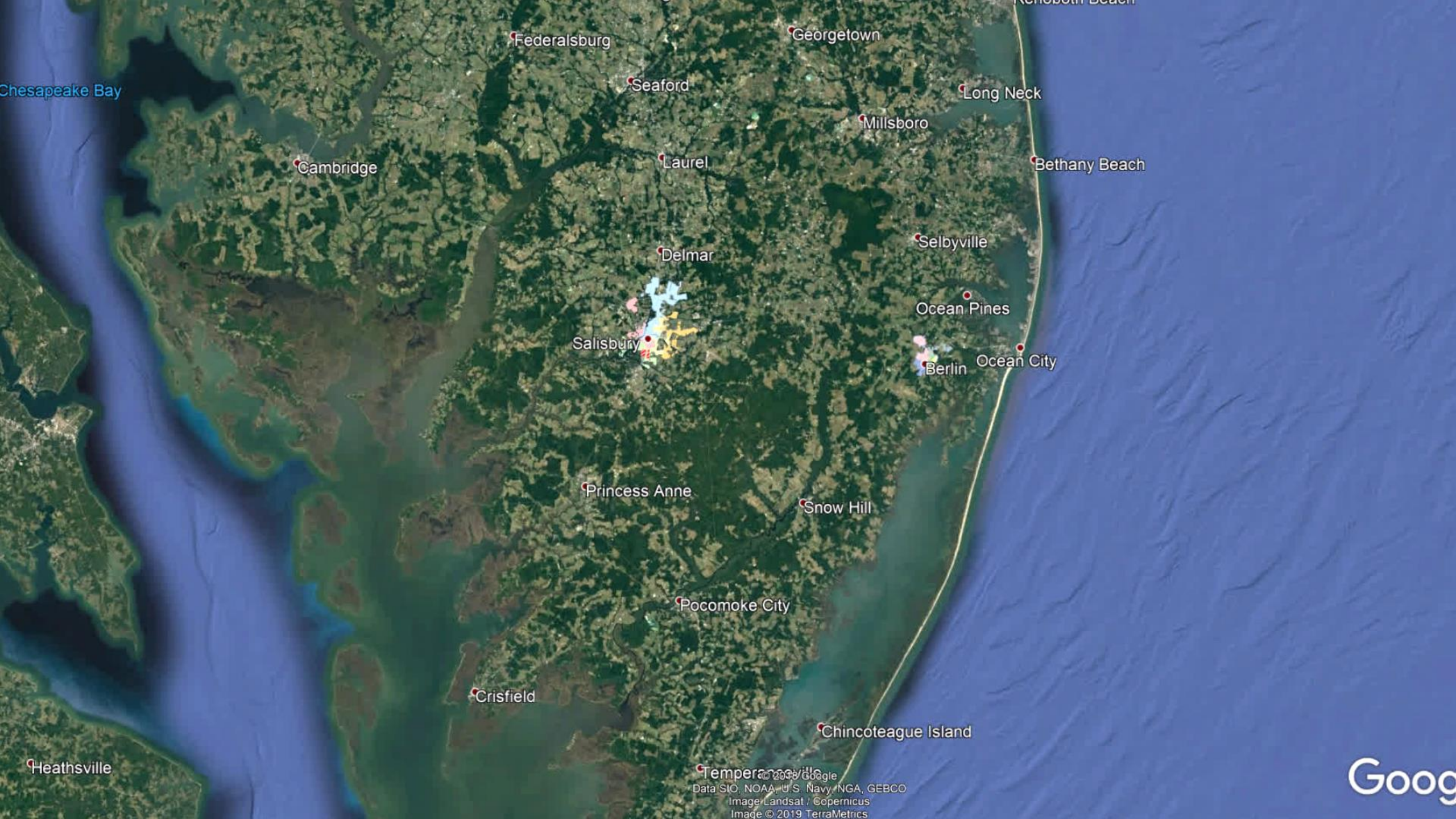








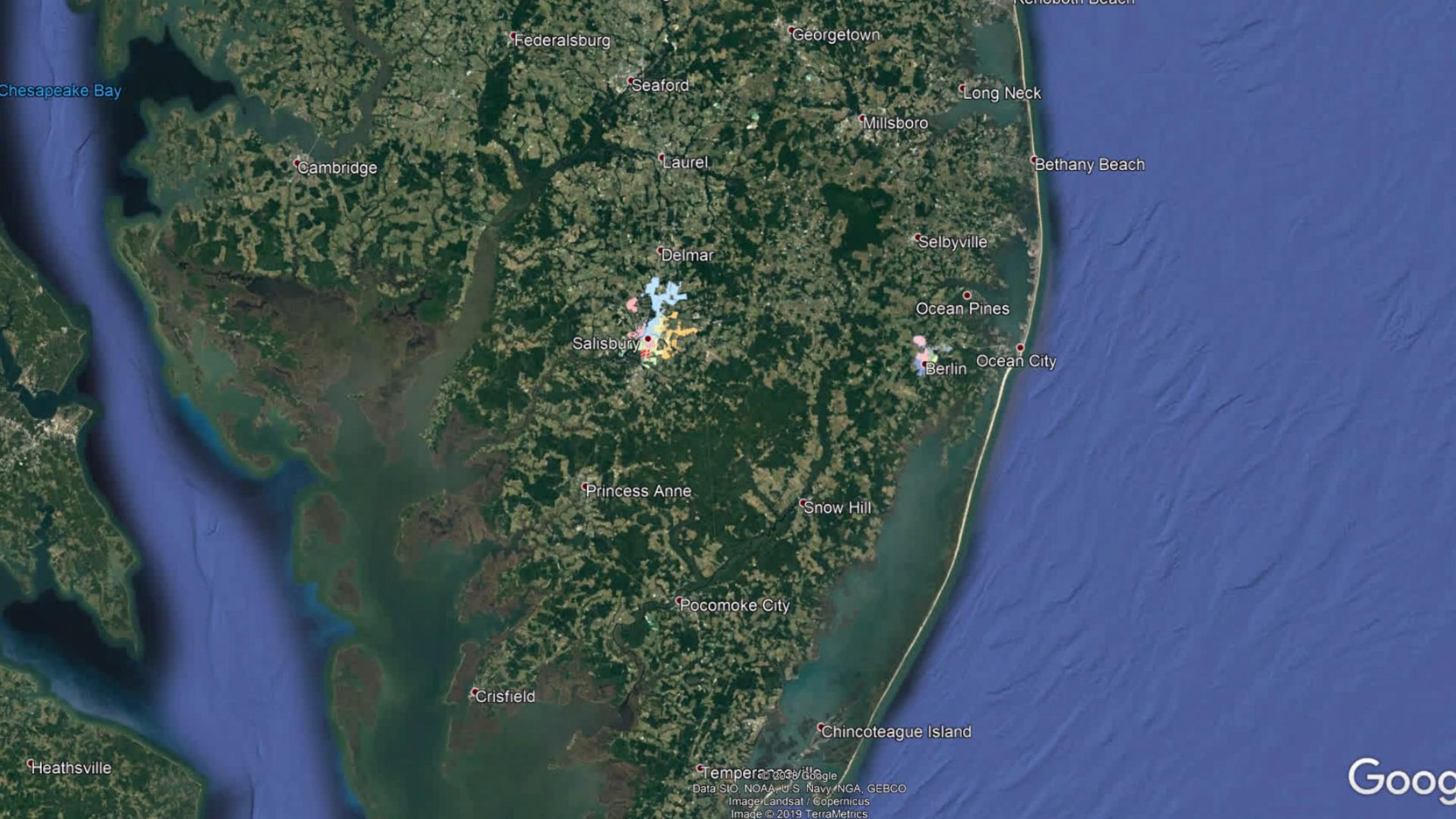




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Chesapeake Bay

Federalsburg

Georgetown

Seaford

Long Neck

Millsboro

Cambridge

Laurel

Bethany Beach

Delmar

Selbyville

Ocean Pines

Salisbury

Berlin

Ocean City

Princess Anne

Snow Hill

Pocomoke City

Crisfield

Chincoteague Island

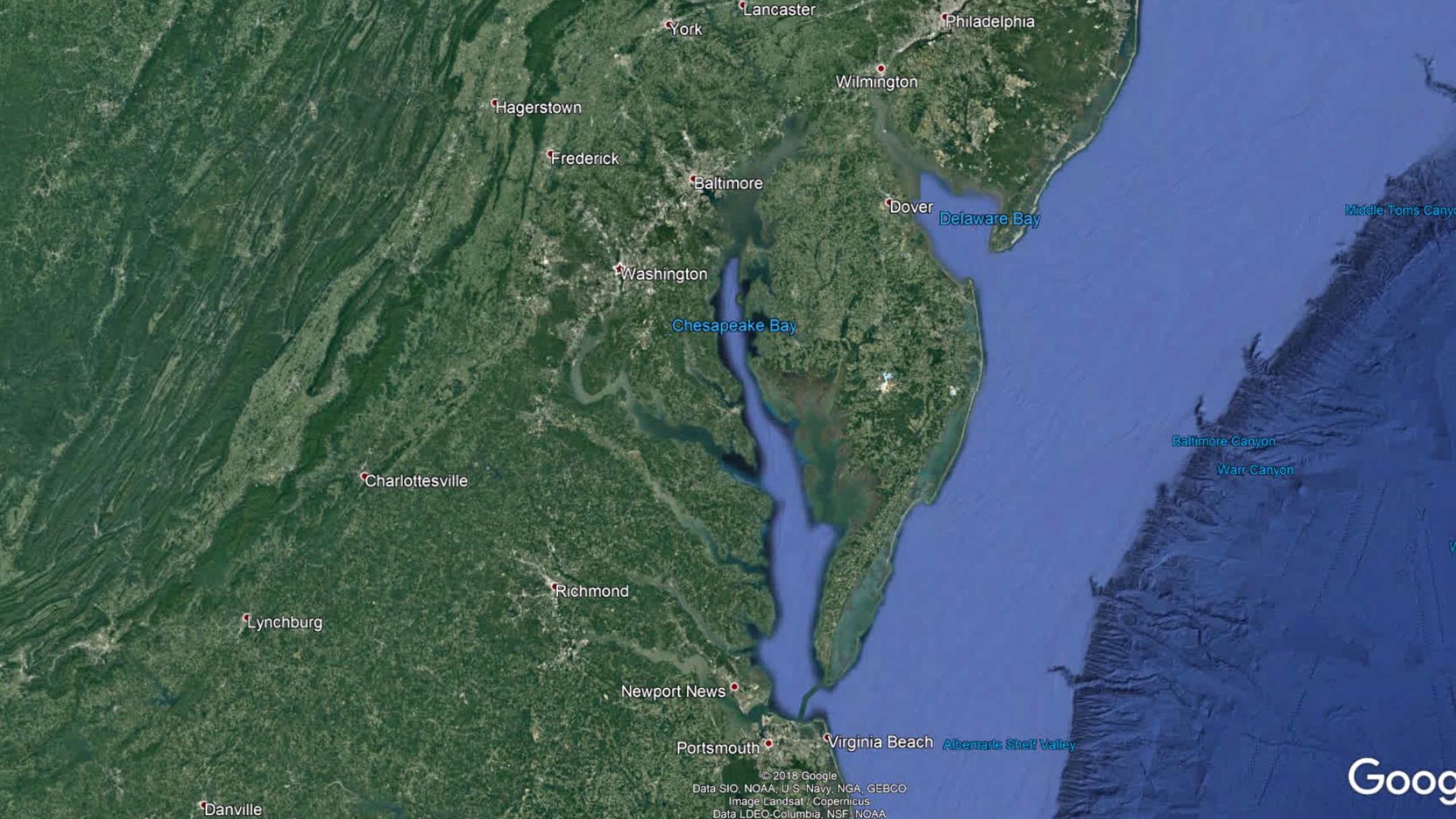
Heathsville

Temperanceville

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# Town of Berlin

Population: 4,500

Budget: \$15 million

Employees: 70

Utilities: 4

Area: 3.15 square miles

‘America’s Coolest Small Town’  
*Budget Travel Magazine* - 2014

‘Top 50 Most Beautiful Towns’  
*Country Living Magazine* - 2015

‘20 Best Small Towns to Visit in 2016’  
Smithsonian.com - 2016

‘South’s Best Small Towns’  
*Southern Living Magazine* - 2016



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# City of Salisbury

Population: 32,338

Budget: \$60 million

Employees: 435

Utilities: 3

Area: 13 square miles

Average age: 27.2

'Fastest Growing City in Maryland'  
*USA Today* - 2017

'#1 Small City Poised to Become a Powerhouse'  
Realtor.com - 2018

'9<sup>th</sup> Cleanest City'  
Realtor.com – 2017

Home to the National Folk Festival  
2018-2020



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# Salisbury University

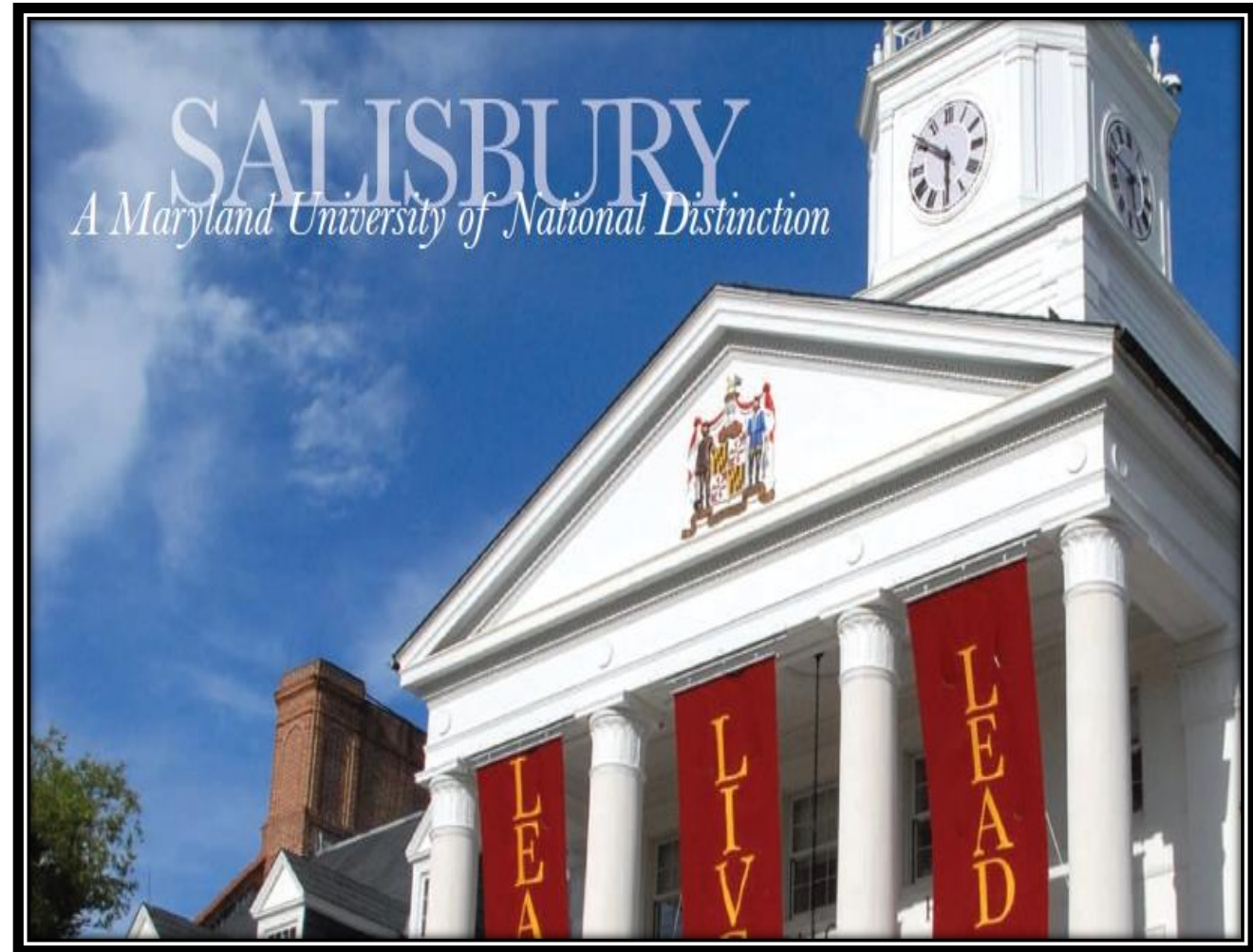
Regional comprehensive public university

8,300 undergraduate and 400 graduate students

Liberal Arts focus

Commitment to civic engagement in Mission and Vision statements

Civic Engagement Across the Curriculum:  
Faculty development programming



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# Developing Partnerships with Salisbury University

- Town of Berlin
  - Additional capacity and younger set of eyes on environmental issues
  - Show students how local government can be a great place to work
  - A way to give back to the community as environmental leaders
- City of Salisbury
  - Did not have expertise on staff
  - Fresh perspective and passion
  - Wanting to be a leader in environmental issues



# Sustainability Projects

- Town of Berlin
  - Bee City USA certification and pollinator gardens
  - Plastic bag and plastic straw ban
  - Take Pride in Berlin Week
  - Berlin Falls Park entrance
- City of Salisbury
  - Recycle Right Campaign
  - Zero Waste Plan for the National Folk Festival
  - Bee City USA





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# Project Benefits

- Town of Berlin
  - Re-energized organization and community on environmental issues
  - Low-cost and entertaining way to meet sustainability goals
  - Students expressed interest in working for local government
- City of Salisbury
  - Created a Sustainability Coordinator
  - Pipeline for staff throughout the City
  - Engage in City during and after their time at SU
- Salisbury University
  - Application of course concepts
  - Development of professional skills and competencies
  - Demystifying local government



# Maintaining Relationships

- Find partners with similar/overlapping goals
- Maintain contact outside the scope of the class (formal and informal processes)
- Reciprocity as a basis for interaction
- Communicate success/Build on success
  - Beyond partner sites/classes to the general public
- Identify projects that meet the needs of all partners



# Benefits Beyond Programming: Student Reflections

- “With my passion, I want to help those around me and I always want to be working with my community in a positive way. Communities make up who we are, and they also make up who we do not want to be. I want to make a difference and I know now, that the place to start will always be within my community.”
- “Through the civic engagement projects that I have been associated with, I have learned a lot about the challenges that are associated, but this is not an entirely negative aspect at all. Throughout learning about working with the community and local governments, I have learned about the bureaucratic processes that takes place. This means, learning that there are always hops to jump through, people to convince, and red tape to bust through even if everyone is on board. This, although is incredibly frustrating at times, is extremely useful to understand because it is motivating to me, more times than not, to understand the innerworkings and understand what can be done rather than to feel powerless because you’re on the outside and think that nothing is being done because no one cares which is often not the case at all.”



# Key Takeaways: How to get started!

- Organic approach = low cost with high benefit
- Be open to what students provide
- Brainstorm in the short, medium, and long-term
- Relationships matter



# Contact Information

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# THANK YOU

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Questions?

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