

## EP.86 - Anne Khademian FINAL

**Narrator:** You're listening to *BioTalk* with Rich Bendis, the only podcast focused on the BioHealth Capital Region. Each episode, we'll talk to leaders in the industry to break down the biggest topics happening today in BioHealth.

**Rich Bendis:** Hi, this is Rich Bendis, I'm your host of *BioTalk*, where we interview leaders within the BioHealth Capital Region. And we have one of our newest leaders within the BioHealth Capital Region joining us today on BioTalk, and it's Anne Khademian, who is the Executive Director at the Universities at Shady Grove. Anne, welcome to BioTalk.

**Anne Khademian:** Thanks so much, Rich. It's great to be here.

**Rich Bendis:** It's neat to meet you, too. And unfortunately, it's virtual, but we're going to live through this for another couple months, and then we're going to get to see each other in person someday.

**Anne Khademian:** That sounds great.

**Rich Bendis:** Right. But we have a number of listeners out there that you're going to be introduced to for the first time, maybe, and a lot of people who have been on the campus. So I think the best way for you to start is for you to introduce yourself for our listeners, and sort of go back as far as you'd like, and bring us forward to where we are today.

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**Anne Khademian:** Wow, thank you so much, Rich. I'm the new Executive Director of the Universities at Shady Grove, stepping into the very big shoes of Dr. Stew Edelstein, who was in this role for almost two decades, and whose interview I heard, at one point, with you as well on this podcast. It's a really nice treat to be able to talk with you as well.

**Rich Bendis:** You're more pleasant to look at than he was.

**Anne Khademian:** Stew's great. He's great.

**Rich Bendis:** I know, Stew's a great guy. He has a good sense of humor, too.

**Anne Khademian:** He does. He absolutely does. So I'm in my sixth month here at the Universities at Shady Grove, and have been in this position virtually, on Zoom, meeting with my team and doing the work at Shady Grove

virtually, so I'm really excited to get to where we can all be back on campus together and see each other. But I come from Virginia Tech, where I was there for 17 years as a professor, as a director of the public administration program, and as director of a school of public and international affairs at Virginia Tech.

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And the last couple of years that I was there, I worked with the university president, Tim Sands, on some strategic initiatives related to his vision for the university, which we called Beyond Boundaries. And so, that work was very exciting. Really appreciated the kind of visionary work, looking at the region, looking at opportunities, looking at the role of Virginia Tech through the lens of partnerships, and workforce development, and a variety of these things. So that's my background. I've lived in the greater Washington DC region the whole time, so I was working out of the Virginia Tech offices in Alexandria and Arlington. But as Director of the School of Public and International Affairs, was driving to Blacksburg on a pretty regular basis to see our faculty who were based in Blacksburg as well as in Richmond. So I got to know Highways 66 and 81 pretty well over those years.

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I have a PhD in political science from Washington University in St. Louis and bachelor's and a master's in public administration from Michigan State University. So started out my life as a Spartan and ran my way through college, I like to say. I was a distance runner, cross country, and indoor/outdoor track. And that helped pay for college and gave me a really interesting perspective, I think, on the world, and work, and teamwork, and that kind of thing. So that's my background, Rich.

**Rich Bendis:**

Well, as an executive director in an academic institution, you need to be a distance runner because it's generally not a sprint. It generally is over a long haul.

**Anne Khademian:**

That's right.

**Rich Bendis:**

And the other thing that's interesting, Anne, is that from Blacksburg to Rockville, Virginia Tech keeps coming north more, with what they're doing in Northern Virginia, what they're going to do at Walter Reed facility, and now with you coming here to Shady Grove, looks like there's going to be a Virginia Tech connection within the whole BioHealth Capital Region.

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**Anne Khademian:** Virginia Tech's plans in the Innovation Campus are very exciting. And of course, people are familiar with the Amazon bid for partnerships, and Virginia Tech stood up quickly and with a lot of enthusiasm to be part of the state of Virginia effort in that. And the focus was really on education and on the state's investment in education, which is reflected in the building that will be in Potomac Yard that Virginia Tech will be a part of. And of course, that will be a flow of students and things as well. And then, of course, there's the partnership with Children's National Medical Center that you referenced as well, a research partnership that will be there, too. I learned a lot in Virginia Tech, and watched and observed quick action, quick thinking, and the importance of being present and ready to partner in the greater DC region. And I hope that that's something that will serve Shady Grove as well.

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I think strong partnerships focus on opportunities as they arise, being nimble and able to respond. I think these are things that we really need to grasp in my role at Shady Grove. The life sciences industry, biotechnology, biosciences are just right there in our backyard, just bursting and so full of possibilities and opportunity. And I see my role as creating opportunities for our students, building an infrastructure of support for our students, but also thinking about the pipeline, the pathway to those opportunities as well. And so, our job doesn't start and stop when students come in to Shady Grove for their junior and senior year. Our job is about building pathways with our partners in Montgomery County Public Schools and with Montgomery College, so that students have equitable and very accessible and affordable pathways to all of these wonderful career opportunities with different ramps, to different kinds of opportunities.

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And our job is, when the students leave, that we make sure that they have mentors, that they've had experiential learning, that they've got a job waiting for them. It's not our full responsibility, but wouldn't it be great if that was the case all the time? So let's make that our goal. So I think we take a very comprehensive look at the experience of our students, and I think that we need to be nimble and ready to partner to help build all of those pieces along the arc of learning, throughout their early days, through careers, and pivoting in careers. And focusing on the

life sciences, that's where the opportunity is now. That's where our degree programs are coming into the biosciences engineering building, and this is really where we can capitalize on the opportunity. And to your point, if I bring something with me from Virginia Tech, it's the observations about moving nimbly and quickly, and standing up and ready to partner. So I hope I can do that here as well.

**Rich Bendis:** Well, that's a great intro. And you've actually summarized our whole interview.

0:07:02 But what we're going to do is, we're going to drill down on those. I'm not going to let you off that easy. But we're talking about the Universities at Shady Grove, and there are a lot of people that don't really understand the nature of the Universities at Shady Grove, but how unique it is, not just within the university system of Maryland, but within our whole region. So can you give the listeners a little background on the Universities at Shady Grove and its interaction with the system, and the nine universities that come together?

**Anne Khademian:** Absolutely, and thanks for the opportunity to say more about Shady Grove. It was probably 20-some years ago that there was a discussion about bringing higher education to the county. And lots of innovative ideas, but this idea emerged, "Why not create a gateway for all of the universities in the university system of Maryland? A direct gateway to Montgomery County in direct connection with economic development and workforce development priorities."

0:08:01 And so, with the vision and insight of many wonderful founders and dedicated educational leaders, Universities at Shady Grove was created as a regional higher education center in Montgomery County, deeply connected, of course, to the university system of Maryland, and a place where all of the university partners could come to offer degree programs to students in Montgomery County or the region, more generally, in a campus setting. And that vision has really blossomed over these two decades so that we have over 80 degree programs that are offered on the Shady Grove campus. We have four major buildings there. It's a lovely wetland campus setting. It's just an exquisite location. And it's not like a traditional regional campus, in the sense that students may come in the evening, or it's more like a business setup. This is genuinely a campus with full student services and a life for students.

0:09:01 There's student council, there's graduate student association, there are all kinds of clubs, and leadership development, and opportunity that our USG team has cultivated and developed over the years. So students are coming to the campus as commuters. They don't live on campus. They live in the county, and they're coming to the campus. They're enrolled as students with one of our nine academic partners. So they're not enrolled as a USG student, they're enrolled as a student from the University of Maryland, College Park, or University Maryland, Baltimore County, or Salisbury University, or Bowie State. So they enroll directly with our partners, but they are taking those classes offered by our partners on the campus. So all nine of our partners bring programs. They hire the faculty, they hire the program directors, and then they become part of this very networked, amazing, layered community at USG. And we have over 3,000 students. There are about 3,200 to 3,400 students in any given semester. And more than 12,000 students have graduated over the last two decades from Shady Grove.

0:10:03 And many of them stay in the county and the region with the jobs that they acquire. We have a wide range of degrees that are offered, from psychology, engineering, all throughout the biosciences now. That area's growing. There's an IT/cybersecurity track. There's a wide range of possibilities for students. And these degrees are specifically focused on where the priorities and the needs are in the county as well. So the goal is not only a fantastic education for students, but great opportunities when they graduate, which is good for the county. I'll say one more thing, which is that we can't do this without our partners in Montgomery County Public Schools, Montgomery College, and other community colleges as well. Every student at Shady Grove is a transfer student, who comes in as a junior or a senior. They take their early credits at a community college or any four-year college, and then they transfer into Shady Grove as a junior or senior to finish out their four-year degree program.

0:11:00 And they earn their degree not from Shady Grove, they earn their degree from the university where they are admitted and enrolled. So I always say, nine universities, one campus, and great results. Students have an amazing experience. They get great jobs when they leave. But it is a layered, fascinating partnership. My dream, and the dream that I share with all of our team at Shady Grove, is to take Shady Grove to the next

level, which is to be increasingly an innovation hub in all of this. So we're not the 13th campus in the university system of Maryland. We are a hub of innovation that serves our academic partners, that serves the university system of Maryland, that serves, of course, our students and the needs of Montgomery County. And magic happens at Shady Grove. Magic happens in the form of collaboration, new programs, connecting programs together, opportunities for students to grow and develop as leaders, as team players, as members of a rich, cultural global community.

0:12:06 So a lot of cool things happen at Shady Grove. And we also are that translation space where our academic partners can align expertise and talent with the needs and priorities of the county, especially in this case, with biosciences and biotechnology, the Life Sciences Corridor.

**Rich Bendis:** Well, we have a shared dream, then. Because if you have a dream for this innovation campus, and we're BioHealth Innovation, trying to support innovative entrepreneurs and businesses, then there needs to be a closer linkage from what we're both doing, right?

**Anne Khademian:** Absolutely. And entrepreneurship's a big part of what we're trying to do on the Shady Grove campus as well. We have a new center, it's called The Lab of Entrepreneurship and Transformational Leadership, which is directed by a wonderful entrepreneurial faculty with Marc Steren, and also made possible by an initial gift by David Blair.

0:13:02 And so, this center is really focused on bringing entrepreneurial thinking to any student at Shady Grove. So it's not just limited to a business student. Any student who is interested in learning more about entrepreneurship as a skillset that they can take with them into this transforming economy, no matter what their profession's going to be. That's our goal, to reach as many students as we can with that. And to really build a culture of entrepreneurship. So absolutely, Rich, the connections between BioHealth Innovation and us are very tight around that idea of entrepreneurial thinking and innovation.

**Rich Bendis:** So I love fireside chats with students. So sometime this fall, maybe we can do a fireside chat. And since I'm old, I have a lot of entrepreneurial successes and failures to talk to students about. So we'll see if we can do that.

**Anne Khademian:** That sounds awesome.

**Rich Bendis:** One thing that's really exciting that you've inherited is a brand new facility, which is world-class for the whole region in the state of Maryland and within the system, and that's the Biomedical Sciences and Engineering facility, the BSE building.

0:14:07 Please tell us a little bit about that, Anne.

**Anne Khademian:** This building is absolutely phenomenal. It is a lead, platinum-certified building, so it's top of the list for sustainability. From a visual perspective, when you enter into this building, the building feels alive. It looks like a tree trunk grows through the center of it. There's this amazing center that they call the drum, which is a big circle in the center that looks like it could be a massive tree there. There are walls with live plants growing up them and all kinds of recycled water approaches and things. It's just an amazing facility. But what this facility brings for us is wet lab space, dry lab space, collaboration space, maker lab space. So there are phenomenal spaces in this building for doing the work of life sciences, doing the work of engineering and life sciences combined, and data sciences.

0:15:00 There's just all kinds of opportunity, technology, and spaces built into this building that will facilitate the programs that we're bringing to Shady Grove. The other really important thing about this building is, not only are there amazing programs that are based there, like translational life sciences and technology through UMBC, or the biocomputational engineering program from the UMD, or the embedded systems and internet of things from UMD College Park as well, these degrees are just so creative. And oftentimes, they're not offered at their home campuses, but they're offered at Shady Grove. And they're highly multidisciplinary, they're very focused on application. And so, in the BSE, there's also space for students to collaborate, get to know each other, and work across multiple spaces. So there's a lot of opportunity for a bio scientist to be learning from a data scientist, or for someone studying dentistry to learn from someone studying entrepreneurship. The space is created for that kind of collaboration.

0:16:00 And one of the most interesting aspects of this, there is a dental clinic on the second floor that has 24 chairs. It's just this vast room of beautiful

technology in this setup of 24 dental chairs. It's a clinic for the public. And the students working there are able to learn through the process of serving the public as well. And so, there's that hands-on kind of porousness, if you will, with the public, with people coming in for the service, students learning hands-on, that kind of experiential learning. And the other aspect of this space is, we're focused on intraprofessional education in the BSE. So students studying nursing, pharmacology, social work, dentistry, there are opportunities for students to learn about the health sciences across multiple disciplines. So they may be becoming a nurse, but they may have a background in pharmacology, or they may have experience through social work. So they can bring a more holistic, multidisciplinary approach to the work that they're doing with their patients in the future.

- 0:17:03                   And I think that also stimulates a kind of innovation around research, innovation around application, which I think is, again, a wonderful contribution to our life sciences and the innovation of the future.
- Rich Bendis:**           The passion you have is coming through in this podcast. You're extremely excited with all of the assets and resources you have.
- Anne Khademian:**      It's phenomenal.
- Rich Bendis:**           Yeah, you're very lucky. So there's another building on campus that a lot of people may not be aware of, but it's the Institute for Bioscience and Biotechnology Research, IBBR. And it's probably a unique relationship between the Universities of Shady Grove and IBBR. Can you explain a little bit about how it works?
- Anne Khademian:**      It's really interesting. So IBBR had a previous name. CARB, Center for Advanced Research...
- Rich Bendis:**           That's an easier one to remember.
- Anne Khademian:**      Yeah, it's evolved over the years. It is a center that's an asset of the university system of Maryland. It's based on the Shady Grove campus.
- 0:18:02                   And it's directed by faculty and leadership from University of Maryland, College Park and University of Maryland, Baltimore, from the medical school as well. So there's a partnership in NIST, who is a key partner in this, too. So that institute's been there for a number of years, but there's



been very little connection between IBBR and USG. But we want to change that. We want to change that big-time. So there have been some students who have gone on to do some research with faculty there, or some opportunities where different program heads have found an opportunity for a student there. But I think there's so much potential to really strengthen that relationship and really zoom in, in the life sciences, around the research education nexus. So we're educating students, we're preparing students for careers in the life sciences, and many other things. We'd like to be able to expose them to more research opportunities so that they can take that into their career as well.

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And I think when students are exposed to research opportunities, that becomes the catalyst for innovation because they are learning research, they're learning about applications in the life sciences, they go off and become employees in the life sciences. Their companies get excited about what's going on there. Partnerships build back with IBBR and USG as well. So students become the engine, the catalyst, I think, for a lot of this. I think where there is great potential, and what we would love to facilitate, really kind of zooming in on some specific things, and where we think we can get some real traction to help in our role, both in educating students and giving them great opportunities, and also serving economic development in the county, is around this area of scaling and manufacturing. I think there are so many questions, so much research questions about taking a ten-ounce test tube to a 30,000 liter vat. And the science of that is very complicated, very challenging. It's industrial systems engineering, it's management, and of course, it's all of the life sciences, and biotechnology, and biosciences.

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So I think there's a real opportunity to think about, "How can we cultivate some research that may be happening at IBBR that can be a source of great innovative thinking and work across multiple faculty from these great institutions, but can also be a place where students, in a systematic way, have opportunity to go, and learn, and be part of that research, thinking about the applications, and then taking that knowledge about scaling and manufacturing, not only from the classroom but from the lab or research experience, into their work in the biosciences?" We think that that could be a really tremendous contribution that we could make. And so, we have a long way to go in this effort, but one of the roles Shady Grove is trying to play is to bring players together to think about how to

accomplish this, where we start, where the ground work is. And I think this is an area, Rich, where our organizations could also do a lot of collaboration and work together.

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**Rich Bendis:** I agree. I think it's a tremendous asset that we have in the county that's probably been underutilized. And there hasn't been as much connectivity to USG as there could be. And as you say, it's a living laboratory where the students could get exposure to actually real life practices of what's going on in a lab, and then with some of the top scientists within the whole university system of Maryland. And I think there's a greater connectivity, and I'd be glad to explore how that can be more of a partnership between us.

**Anne Khademian:** That's great. I mean, it's a world-class research institution.

**Rich Bendis:** Oh, definitely.

**Anne Khademian:** And the partnership with NIST, in terms of the equipment that's available, the work that goes on, is just phenomenal. And Dave Weber and John Marino, who are heading up as co-directors, are awesome partners. They're just terrific. And I'm really excited to work with them about how we can now determine the direction of IBBR, but how we can be partners in growing these opportunities for students and growing the opportunities for innovation in the county and in the life sciences.

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**Rich Bendis:** It's an important thing on your to-do list, which continues to grow, right?

**Anne Khademian:** It's growing.

**Rich Bendis:** So before we get into your vision and focus for the future, which you've been talking a little bit about, you talked about how you're educating students that can actually go into the workforce right in their own backyard here. So talk about what you think is the strength of Universities at Shady Grove and how it can interact a little more effectively and directly with the industry we have within the Montgomery County area.

**Anne Khademian:** It's a great question, and I'm learning a lot about this, too. I'm still feeding at the firehose with all of this. But I do see that there's a lot of room for more collaboration with industry, and for building not just one-off events and things, but really building an infrastructure that allows this kind of collaboration to take place on a regular basis. I think, speaking in very broad terms, academia has lots of expertise, lots of great ideas, so many talented faculty who've got great ideas about degree programs and what to offer, but there's an institutional structure there that people follow, that's the incentives about what degree programs are created and how they're offered.

0:23:14 And there's a business model that academia has as well for that. Business, on the other hand, has a lot of needs and priorities. And sometimes they say, "We need these degrees. We need this. Why can't this happen?" And I think it's not that both can't work together, it's just that there needs to be facilitation for the two to work together. I think there needs to be more translation about what's possible, a space for collaboration, a space for more understanding, and a space for collective thinking as well. And I think USG can play a role in fostering that. I think it's less about bringing business in occasionally, and more about making business an inclusive part of our thinking and the work that we're doing. And that can happen through the great suggest you had about fireside chats, and talking with students, and being regularly involved, and mentoring, but to more systematic kinds of things around MOUs that determine, "We can host ten students this year.

0:24:09 We can host 15 students this year." And understanding where different industry needs are, understanding where the industry is going, understanding how we can be more supportive of industry. I think there are a lot of things that we can do to build a more systematic structure. And we're trying to do that at Shady Grove. We're calling the work we're doing around the life sciences, Life Sciences Network at USG. And we see three components to that, which I think go directly to your question. One component is around mentoring and networking. So students need to be able to, in a very systematic and ongoing way, connect with business leaders, with professionals, opportunities, learn about what's out there, develop mentors, and really become immersed in the life sciences industry. I think that's one part of it. Another part of it is this research education partnership we were talking about.

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So how do we connect research experiences that are applied to educational opportunities that prepare students to step in and become innovators and problem solvers right off the bat? And then, the other piece of this, I think, is around data sciences and data management. And to be able to gather information from industry partners, and from Maryland Technology Council, and the Life Sciences Advisory Board, and BHI, and others, to be a place where we can pull together, analyze, think about what we're seeing, run an RFP up the flagpole that says to our academic partners, "Here are some real priority areas," collaborate and work with our academic partners to see that we can bring everything from new degree programs, undergrad, graduate, to point-of-need learning, boot camps, all kinds of possibilities. So I think that that data management, that data gathering and analytic piece is really important. That's a really important part of this infrastructure that can, I think, make academia and our partners in USG more relevant for business and bring in more of the energy and ideas of business into the thinking of our partners as well.

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**Rich Bendis:** We view BioHealth Innovation as an innovation intermediary to help connect all the partners. And what you're describing is USG to be an academic industry intermediary, to bring the parties closer together and to understand their needs in helping develop students for their careers to meet those needs. So I think you're in an excellent position to do that, and that's what USG—is it 2.0 or 3.0 that you're working on?

**Anne Khademian:** We're looking at 2.0.

**Rich Bendis:** 2.0, OK. Yeah, Stew had a long 1.0.

**Anne Khademian:** Yeah.

**Rich Bendis:** It went [0:26:37]. Oh, yeah. 2.0.

**Anne Khademian:** An amazing 1.0.

**Rich Bendis:** Oh, amazing. So I'm talking to Anne Khademian, Executive Director for Universities at Shady Grove. And let's talk a little bit about your vision and focus for the future right now. We've talked about that in general around a number of different program areas that you'd like to build

upon. So how do you summarize in a concise fashion what your vision and focus for the future for USG is?

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**Anne Khademian:** It's really about going from kind of one shared vision to an expanded shared vision. And I think our current shared vision, where we are right now, USG 1.0, is, if you ask us what we're passionate about, we will say, "Student success." We're all about student success. And if you ask us what we're better at than anybody else, we will say, "Serving the needs of the transfer student." That's where our passion lies, and that's what we're really good at. I think that we will always have that at our core, and I think we will always do a really good job of serving transfer students. But I think our mission pushes us to think a little bit more broadly. And for me, that broader vision rests in Shady Grove in order to deliver on that student success in a holistic way. We need to think about Shady Grove as a hub of innovation in this broader educational ecosystem.

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An ecosystem that includes our academic partners in the university system of Maryland, that includes Montgomery County Public Schools, that includes Montgomery College and other community college partners, and that includes Montgomery County Economic Development Corporation, WorkSource Montgomery, and all of our partners across industry. So if you say, "So what does that mean? What does it mean to be an innovation hub and a connector?" I think we're focused right now on two key areas. And we're in the middle of a strategic planning process. So a lot of this will still evolve and grow. But I can see this taking shape in two key ways. One is focusing on the pathways of students coming to Shady Grove. We're at one point kind of towards a middle point of a student's career. They've come through elementary school, middle school, high school, onto community college, and then they come to Shady Grove to get a four-year degree program. From the students who come to us, we can see where there are gaps, we can see where there are challenges, we can see where there are maybe missteps or where students get lost along the way.

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So we have a really interesting perspective about that pathway. And I think focusing our attention in collaboration with all our partners on, "How do we build super strong, smooth, seamless pathways that are centered on the student, that are built around the foundation of equity,

and that are aimed at students' lifelong learning?" really focusing on, "How can we, at Shady Grove, work to see those challenges and help to figure out those challenges?" Because that pathway is critical to our success. We need students coming along that pathway in a powerful way. And we're partners in Montgomery County. And so, that's part of it. So I think part of our focus has to be on the equitable pathways of students into all kinds of educational opportunities. I think another way we can think about this innovation hub is kind of what I described to you with the life sciences, that we can play this role of connective tissue. We're here, we're in Montgomery County. We have nine academic partners who bring their A-game to Shady Grove on a regular basis. We have a phenomenal board of advisors who are hyper connected across the county.

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We have all kinds of friends and partners in the life sciences. We have our partners at Maryland Technology Council with Marty Rosendale, we have our partners in the Life Sciences Advisory Board, in Montgomery County Economic Development, WorkSource Montgomery, and we can be that point that's convening, that's bringing people together through our student-centered focus. What do our students need to be successful? And so, we can be that point. We don't have to do all of it. But we just have to make sure that we're building the capacity for all of our partners to do it, to deliver on it. So I think our future is more about building a support system, a place where innovation can happen, and a place where the partnerships are strengthened, and where we hold a kind of holistic vision of what's possible in the county. Now, how we do all of that, there are a lot of questions around that. And that's a ten-year vision that we'll have to continue to grow and develop.

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But I imagine a day, Rich, where, thinking out of the box, the Kid Museum from Montgomery County, which is this amazing STEM-oriented, hands-on learning museum that has a footprint in the BSE. And every day, there are kids from Montgomery County Public Schools coming to the BSE to go to the Kid Museum. And they're mingling and mixing, and they see college kids all over the place, walking around, and graduate students, and faculty. And they're learning in the lab, but then there are also students at Shady Grove who are studying to be teachers, who are doing experiential learning, working in the lab, working with the kids, learning how to do this kind of teaching, learning how to do this kind of hands-on

education. And then, maybe we've got partners who are interested in the research around that effort. They want to learn about this experiential learning, they want to learn more about how students learn this way and how partners can do more with that. And that research is feeding back into what we do. So I envision this highly layered, educational experience that is very porous to our academic partners and to the community.

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People are coming to the dental clinic. Students are coming to the Kid Museum. Businesses are coming to the entrepreneurship lab. And those hubs of learning opportunities are sources of innovation where our academic partners can be exposed to more, where business can be exposed to more, and it's all happening in this bubbling hub at USG. So that's my vision. That's my hope. There's a lot that has to happen to make that happen. But I think that higher education needs to have a good dose of innovation, and I think that Montgomery County will benefit greatly from a mechanism to translate some of this into a real meaningful effort. So that's how I'm thinking about it.

**Rich Bendis:**

Well, that's a pretty interesting thought process. If I'm listening, basically, rather than driving by USG, you want people to drive to USG.

**Anne Khademian:**

And through it, and walking, and more.

**Rich Bendis:**

And you get greater exposure and become that innovation ecosystem hub for the county and even beyond the county, really, because you have more to offer than just people in Montgomery County.

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**Anne Khademian:**

Absolutely.

**Rich Bendis:**

What haven't we talked about that you'd like to share with the listeners? Because we've gone through a lot of things, but is there anything we've missed?

**Anne Khademian:**

I will say that I know Montgomery County has been exploring--and Shady Grove is part of this answer--"What is the higher education solution in Montgomery County?" And many people are supporters of Shady Grove, and they embrace what we do, and they're so excited about what we do. Many people don't know about Shady Grove. Many people have never heard about Shady Grove, and they're like, "Oh, that's so interesting. Oh."

And they learn more, and they're just really curious and interested. But even our students who come to us hear about us through the grapevine, through a brother or sister. So as much work as we do, and we do a lot of work to get the word out about Shady Grove, and to really work with our partners to spread the word, and to advertise, and all of that, we're still a relatively unknown quantity. And so, I think on the one hand, the tendency might be to put ourselves forward more as a traditional campus. People relate to that. They understand that. Students understand that.

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And I think that's a strong temptation, and I understand it. But I don't want to be a traditional campus. I want us to be the cutting-edge of innovation for the county and for the university system of Maryland. And I think to be viewed as a traditional campus is to miss the opportunities that we can bring to the county and to our partners. So I just want people to explore and learn more about us. And I hope more and more people discover Shady Grove, and more families see the wonderful potential, the opportunity for a more affordable degree, a very exciting degree, a degree that will land you a great career from one of the best universities in the country. But I also want people to kind of join us on this journey of what we can be and what we can bring to the educational ecosystem at Montgomery County. I think we can be one of the most innovative counties in the world through our educational innovation. But it's going to take people kind of seeing beyond the boundaries of their own institutions to think at this higher level.

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I'll end on this note, Rich. I bring a lot from my wonderful colleagues at Virginia Tech, but one of the things that really stuck with me was, a mentor of mine, Dennis Dean, one day said to me, "Anne, why are you so focused on trying to make the School of Public and International Affairs great? What you really should be focused on is how SPIA," which was our acronym, "can make Virginia Tech great. And then, you'll be really successful." And in some ways, it's very simple wisdom, but it just flipped my world upside-down. And it changed my whole perspective from, "How can I make SPIA the number-one-ranked public affairs school?" to, "How can SPIA help Virginia Tech be the number-one-ranked school?" And I bring that insight to what I'm doing at Shady Grove. And I hope that what I can help our partners see, and what all of us can work on together, is that it's not about making USG great. It's not about making MCPS great.



0:36:01 Yes, those are important, and we all are held accountable for those things. But what's really important is how, together, we can make Montgomery County and the health sciences industry great, how we can create great opportunities for students who get great educations, pursue great careers, do highly innovative things, solve all kinds of health innovation challenges, and they do it right here in Montgomery County, and they live in Montgomery County. And they continue to be educated here, and retire here, and continue to bring their knowledge and experience back. So I think we all need to focus on the value of strengthening Montgomery County, and how we can do that together, and all those pieces. I think that shared vision will go a long way in what we need to do.

**Rich Bendis:** That's a great perspective because sometimes if you want to change the paradigm, it takes a different perspective, it takes different resources, different knowledges, different networks, different communication that needs to take place. I think you're a breath of fresh air coming into the county, and your experience and leadership is going to be just what USG needs right now because as you say, it's a 2.0.

0:37:04 There's a fantastic foundation to build upon and a great base, but there's so much more to be done in the future. And congratulations on your new role. And I think you're a great addition to Montgomery County and the academic institutions within the region. And we've been talking to Dr. Anne Khademian, Executive Director of Universities at Shady Grove. I want to thank her for being on BioTalk today. And I guarantee you, we're going to have a number of follow-ups. Because as you implement new programs, we're going to have to educate a lot more people about these new things you're doing there, Anne.

**Anne Khademian:** I'm so excited to work with you and looking forward to the partnerships ahead. And I'm so grateful for the chance to talk with you today.

**Rich Bendis:** Thanks for being on BioTalk.

**Anne Khademian:** Thank you.

**Narrator:** Thanks for listening to *BioTalk* with Rich Bendis.

**End of recording**