

# SHINING A LIGHT ON

## ENERGY RESEARCH

**BUILDING AN "ENERGY ECONOMY"** in the United States may be as simple—or as complex—as flipping the switch on a better light bulb. A more efficient light bulb requires the science to develop it, the innovation to manufacture it, the public policy to regulate it and the social science to have the public accept it.

All facets of energy research and public policy are top priorities at the University of Maryland, where faculty from many disciplines are designing next-generation energy storage systems, developing new ways to produce biofuels and guiding policy choices to enhance energy security and reduce environmental risks.

The University of Maryland Energy Research Center, or UMERC, coordinates campuswide energy research under the direction of Eric Wachsman.

Since arriving at Maryland last year, Wachsman has expanded UMERC's capabilities,

reaching out to faculty from chemical and life sciences, public policy, computer and physical sciences, social science and agriculture to join with a core group of researchers in the A. James Clark School of Engineering, which administers the center.

"Energy research and development are vital if America is to decrease greenhouse gas emissions at lower cost, reduce dependence on foreign oil and become the world leader in tomorrow's clean-energy economy," says Steve Fetter, a former dean of public policy at Maryland and now the assistant director at large for the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy.

Many of the major federal grants related to energy research, including support for 46 Energy Frontier Research Centers (see Impact Profile) funded by the Department of Energy, or DoE, require research combining different disciplines.