

INTERsections



A Message from Dr. Sanjay Rai

It has been a busy spring semester so far, and I continue to feel inspired by our faculty, staff and students at every turn.

I was so pleased that 170 of you joined me for the first Academic Enquiries event on February 25th. This new series of monthly events is my attempt to connect with you while we are remote. I have missed my office hours on each campus every semester, and I plan to continue to connect with you virtually. The topic focused

on our honors programs, and we had the opportunity to hear from a remarkable student, Beverley Claire Okogwu, who learned about our honors programs via a flyer posted in a campus common area. Her journey is similar to that of so many of our students, and our hope, our goal, is that every student's journey is as remarkable. She started as a Computer Engineering major and changed to Computer Science. Finding that flyer was a turning point in her academic journey. She connected with faculty in the honors program who helped her hone her writing skills and encouraged her as she tackled her rigorous new program. She participated and took leadership roles in the math and computer science clubs. Beverley Claire transferred to Dickinson College following her graduation from MC. After being actively recruited by major IT corporations, she chose Oracle because it offered her the flexibility to continue doing research. In another year, with significant work experience, she will pursue a master's degree at Carnegie-Mellon University. Her remarkable story, I think you will agree, was captivating.



There was an element of chance as to how she connected with the honors program. While chance can be exciting, I could not help but wonder how many undiscovered Beverley Claire's we have at MC. How can we be more deliberate in connecting students early in their journey at the College? While it is not possible to have every student enrolled in honors, I encourage all of you to seek ways to expose your students to some of the experiences that can be transformational. For example, we have taken students to the Smithsonian for years for an incredible learning experience, and now during the pandemic, we have been able to bring the Smithsonian to our students. The virtual world opens so many doors. It will be with us after COVID. How can we take advantage of these opportunities going forward so that more of our students benefit? How can we connect with students like Beverley – intentionally – not trusting chance? How can we inspire all of our students?

Speaking of inspiration, the Global Humanities Institute's STEAMed Planet event was held on Friday. It was a very timely event as the evidence for climate change continues to grow. This GHI event explored the intersections between global humanities and STEM to address climate change. Science alone cannot provide the solutions. Human behavior has contributed to climate change. Changing human behavior must be part of the solution. Can the humanities offer an opportunity for deeper conversations? I believe so, and enjoyed the table topics being presented by our faculty. More information, including how to access the presentations, is provided below.

Last week we also celebrated OER week. Many of you are deeply engaged in this work. I celebrate you all and the work you have been doing! Over 10,000 students each semester benefit from OER sections, and you have saved our students over \$7.2M since we started focusing on this five years ago. ELITE has more information on OERs and the workshops and videos that showcase the latest achievements at MC (please see below for more information).

On a final note, I thank all of you who responded to the Employee Engagement Survey over the last two weeks. It is so important to have your voices included. Conversations on employee satisfaction and engagement need a starting point at an institution as large and complex as Montgomery College. The collective input will help guide decisions that affect us all.

I am ever humbled by the wonderful work you do. I look forward to seeing you soon (virtually).

Sanjay

STEAMed Planet

Exploring the Intersections of Global Humanities and STEM through Climate Change

On Friday, March 5th, the Global Humanities Institute sponsored the *STEAMed Planet: Exploring the Intersections of Global Humanities and STEM through Climate Change*. Our complex, profoundly connected world poses challenges that cannot be met by any single area of study. This event examined climate change from an integrative,

2021 FRIDAY, MARCH 5, 2021
2:00–4:00 PM, VIA ZOOM

STEAMed PLANET



Exploring the Intersections of Global Humanities and STEM through **Climate Change**

Join MC faculty, staff, administrators and students for an afternoon of rich interdisciplinary discussion of this critical issue!

TABLE TOPICS

- Table 1: Visual Depictions of Climate Change: How Can Art Show Human Impact? — Amanda Miller (Art) and Gillian Backus (Biology, NVCC)
- Table 2: Can the Free Market Solve the Climate Change Problems We Can No Longer Avoid? — Arthur Grinath (Economics) and Diane K. McDaniel (Geology)
- Table 3: Documenting and Displaying Climate Change Using

THE WORKSHOP INCLUDES:

- 2:00-2:30 — Welcome and Opening Remarks by:
 - Cinder Barnes, Director, Global Humanities Institute
 - Margaret Latimer, Vice President and Provost, Germantown Campus
 - Sanjay Rai, Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs
- 2:30-3:30 — Break-out Rooms with Table Topics
- 3:30-3:50 — Large Group Report-Outs



OER Videos, Workshops Highlight MC Celebration of Open Ed Week

Open Education Week was an opportunity to learn and to showcase the latest achievements in open education around the world. The College celebrates the week each year by promoting its open educational resources (OER) work.

OER are, according to the Hewlett Foundation, “teaching, learning and research materials in any medium that reside in the public domain or have been released under an open license that permits no-cost access, use, adaptation and redistribution by others with no or limited restrictions.” Often cited are what are known as the 5Rs: retain, reuse, revise, remix, and redistribute. MC instructional Michele Knight (retain) and professors Thomas Chen (revise), Chip Gladson (reuse), Craig Benson (remix) and Mary Robinson (redistribute) discussed what each R means to them in short video clips available [here](#). Professor Andrea Foster kicked off the video series with an overview of OER.

This year, the Office of E-Learning, Innovation and Teaching Excellence offered several workshops focusing on OER:

- What are Open Educational Resources, and Why Should We Care?
- E-Textbooks: Find Alternatives from Licensed Library E-Books OER and Social Justice: Transforming the Teaching and Learning Environment

These workshops will be offered again for those who missed them. For more information on OER, contact ELITE.

MC Proud: 7 Jack Kent Cooke Semifinalists

Seven MC students have been named Jack Kent Cooke Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship semifinalists. This is tribute to the rigor of the MC courses and dedication of our faculty. They were chosen from a pool of over 1500 applicants. JKC Undergraduate Transfer Scholarships contribute up to \$40,000 annually towards a bachelor’s degree. Finalists are announced in April, based on academic performance, leadership, perseverance, and service to others. Selected scholars will be announced in late April. Six of these students are Honors Program students: 2 Montgomery Scholars, 3 Renaissance Scholars and 1 STEM Scholar. MC is proud to have again the most semi-finalists among Maryland community colleges.

Please send recognitions to laurie.savona@montgomerycollege.edu

Part-time Faculty Spotlight

February 2021 - Elvan Katmer

Elvan Katmer's road to Montgomery College was paved about 15 years ago when as an undergraduate at Gazi University in Ankara, Turkey he studied English Language Teaching. Katmer is currently teaching part-time in the English and Reading department on the Germantown campus. He began teaching at the College in the fall of 2016.

Katmer's first love was teaching, however, when he moved to the United States he decided to change careers. He received his master's degree in journalism from Georgetown University, and he is currently a broadcast journalist at one of the major television networks.

Read much more [here](#).



March 2021 - Michael Balagtas

Many of us have had the experience of undergoing an ultrasound or some other type of diagnostic imaging in our lives. MC has a unique and vibrant program that teaches students

the skills necessary to land a job in this growing health care field.

Michael Balagtas is a part-time faculty member in the Diagnostic Medical Sonography program. He knows the program well. He graduated from it in 2019 and began teaching at Montgomery College soon after. Balagtas has been teaching at the College for the past two years.

His journey to Montgomery College has had several twists and turns, and he has never shied away from trying a new adventure. It began in 2002 when he joined the military and served as a Hospital Corpsman. Hospital Corpsmen provide medical care to sailors and other military members. They are part of the U.S. Navy, however; they also have a Marine Corps unit which is where Balagtas belonged. He helped patients on both land and sea. He left the military after 5 years and then became a federal agent with the Department of Homeland Security.

Read much more [here](#).

Academic Enquiries

Conversations with **Dr. Sanjay Rai**



Tuesday, March 30, 2021
3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Spotlight Topic:
Beyond Culturally

Academic Enquiries Upcoming Dates

March 30th
3:00-4:30 p.m.

April 29th
3:00-4:30 p.m.

Click anywhere on this flyer
to connect to Zoom

ZOOM MEETING INFO

Direct URL: <https://montgomerycollege.zoom.us/j/92764202296>
Phone Number: 301-715-8592
Meeting ID: 927 6420 2296 Passcode: 301634

Each month, Dr. Rai invites you to discuss the tremendous work of Academic Affairs faculty and staff in supporting student success.

*Beyond Culturally
Responsive Pedagogy:
Decolonizing the
Curriculum*

followed by

Open Office Hours

Look for a calendar invitation

**Each event includes open
office hours**



Congratulations to Stephen Kcenich
and Maria-Elvira Luna-Escudero-Alie
on their recently published article "La poesía de Borges
y las matemáticas: un colectivo de aprendizaje,"
Ciencias, 135

[link](#)