

**From:** [DeRionne Pollard, Montgomery College President](#)  
**To:** [MC Communications!](#)  
**Subject:** Civility and Inclusion at MC  
**Date:** Thursday, December 10, 2015 5:01:39 PM

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**MONTGOMERY COLLEGE**  
Office of the President

December 10, 2015

**MEMORANDUM**

**To:** Montgomery College Colleagues  
**From:** Dr. DeRionne P. Pollard, President  
**Subject:** Civility and Inclusion at MC

It came to my attention this morning that some disturbing graffiti has appeared in several places on MC campuses. While the intent of the markings is unclear, I am greatly distressed by any attempts to make our campuses unsafe or insecure for students, faculty, or staff. I will work with local law enforcement to ensure that any violations of the law—or of the Student Code of Conduct—are thoroughly investigated.

On a personal level I am profoundly troubled by these events. With political and social tensions already running high, the potential for an incendiary remark or symbol to exacerbate underlying friction is a reality of which we must all be aware. On numerous occasions I have mentioned how much diversity is valued at MC. This is a moment in which we must do more than give lip service to our cross cultural classrooms and communities. The College must stand for diversity in ways that actively reject intolerance and incivility.

History has taught us that succumbing to fear and discrimination has produced results that were unimaginably tragic. As a pluralistic society we have studied these lessons well and have built our nation on principles intended to guard against future atrocities. Equally important, though, is that our college community protect the climate of our academic institution: one in which diverse points of view are explored civilly and threats of violence are condemned. Our academic culture prides itself on inclusion and diversity, and we should embrace these values with even greater responsibility in the face of any threats against them.

One group that has done this with exceptional grace and courage has been the Montgomery College Muslim Students Association. Throughout the last few months the group has been actively engaged in outreach efforts around the teachings of Islam, seeking to correct misunderstandings and misinformation that have circulated in the media. Their actions and attitudes embody the best of our College and the true spirit of academia. To those who have responded to these student efforts with interest and respect, I commend you. Such exchanges are fundamental to building a more just and equitable society. I ask that all of you follow this precedent and join our larger community in rejecting prejudice and ignorance on our campuses and in larger society. Let us truly live the values that MC promotes in times of ease and show people that civility and growth can, indeed, flourish in a diverse environment.