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Montgomery College Trustees Adopt FY '10 Operating Budget Request
Budget Plan for \$218 Million Maintains Education and Student Services at Time of Increasing Enrollment

Montgomery College's Board of Trustees this week adopted a \$218 million operating budget for fiscal year 2010 that maintains education and student services at a time of increasing enrollment and fiscal difficulties. The budget request was approved at last night's Board of Trustees meeting and sent this morning to Montgomery County Executive Isiah Leggett and the Montgomery County Council.

The proposed operating budget of \$218 million marks only a three percent increase over the current fiscal year 2009 budget. The College has worked to minimize its budget request by instituting a hiring freeze, deferring major purchases, reducing temporary staff, and cutting back in other operating expenses. In addition, the College has eliminated ten positions, reduced base budgets for College units, and are renegotiating contracts for its unions. These measures come at a time when Montgomery College is experiencing the highest enrollments ever in its history.

The budget reflects the College's top priorities: ensuring access to higher education by keeping the College affordable; protecting jobs and meeting the increase in employee benefits; accountability; and continued funding for projects that began in the previous fiscal year. The College's total appropriation request to the County—including self-supporting units, such as those for Workforce Development and Continuing Education and Auxiliary Services divisions—is \$266.9 million.

As proposed by the Trustees, the College's budget would include a tuition increase for the next academic year, starting fall 2009, of \$3 per credit hour for in-county students, \$6 per credit hour for in-state students who live outside of Montgomery County, and \$9 per credit hour for out-of-state students. The current spring semester tuition rates for each of these groups are \$99, \$203, and \$275 per credit hour, respectively. Students also pay a variety of fees, in addition to tuition. On average, a full-time student who takes 15 credits a semester and lives in Montgomery County currently pays \$3,984 in tuition and fees annually. With the recommended increase in tuition, Montgomery County full-time students in fall 2009 would pay \$4,092 in tuition and fees annually. To offset tuition increases, the budget proposal includes additional scholarship support and financial aid funding for students in need. Final tuition and fee rates for the next academic year are set by the Board of Trustees in April.

"Montgomery College recognizes that Montgomery County is in a difficult budget situation and our operating budget reflects this reality," said Dr. Brian K. Johnson, president of Montgomery College. "At the

same time, the economy has driven our enrollment to record levels, and we must be able to meet our increased demand while maintaining academic excellence and services that our students expect and deserve.”

Some of the key requests included in the College’s FY’10 budget plan are:

- Support for students through increased financial aid (institutional grants)
- Continued funding for the remaining Takoma Park/Silver Spring Campus expansion projects, which includes the planned opening of a performing arts center in fall 2009 and the renovation of the Commons building into additional classroom space
- Salaries and benefits for employees

Montgomery College’s adopted operating budget goes to the County Executive for his review. The County Executive will submit his proposed fiscal year 2010 County operating budget to the County Council by March 16.

The Montgomery County Council has until the end of May to approve a final County operating budget, which would include its appropriation for Montgomery College, among other public agencies. The Board of Trustees will adopt the College’s final operating budget in June, after the budget has gone through the County process.

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