Office of Equity and Inclusion

To:	The Montgomery College Community
From:	Ms. Sharon Bland, Chief Equity and Inclusion Officer
Subject:	Montgomery College 2020 Excellence in Equity Awards **NOMINATIONS ARE BEING ACCEPTED UNTIL JUNE 1, 2020**
Date:	April 21, 2020

Due to the current environment surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic, we have decided to postpone the Excellence in Equity awards' presentations until October 19, 2020 during the Office of Equity and Inclusion's Fall Equity Dialogue. Nominations are being accepted until June 1, 2020. Nominations already received need not be resubmitted

The purpose of this award is to recognize and celebrate students, faculty, staff, and administrators who have demonstrated exemplary accomplishments in advancing equity, inclusion, and diversity. These individuals serve as leaders through their active participation and contributions in making Montgomery College and/or their local community more inclusive by creating an environment where all individuals are valued, respected and feel welcomed. A total of nine awards will be given: one full-time faculty; one part-time faculty; two staff; one administrator; and one student from each campus including WDCE.

I encourage you to nominate an employee you work with or a student who embodies the characteristics of equity and inclusion in their performance and service inside and/or outside of the college and who is well-deserving of this special recognition. The operational definitions guiding these awards are attached. This prestigious award is given annually and the awardees' names will appear on a prominently displayed plaque in the Board of Trustees Gallery in the Central Services building. The awardees will also receive individual awards/certificates.

Please visit the Equity and Inclusion Awards page to submit an award nomination.

Montgomery College is indeed fortunate to have a wealth of dedicated and extraordinary employees and students deserving of this recognition. If you have any questions regarding the 2020 MC Excellence in Equity Award, please send an email to CEIO Advisor. You will receive a prompt response. Thank you for your continued dedication and service to the College.

MONTGOMERY COLLEGE

**Office of Equity and Inclusion Definitions
for Cultural Competency and IDEEALS**

Montgomery College is committed to becoming an equity-minded institution. Advancing social justice, creating a sense of belonging and addressing systemic inequities are bedrocks of Montgomery College's commitment to student success and institutional cultural competency. Institutional Cultural Competency is a best practice for valuing diversity, practicing inclusion, and creating equity. Cultural competency enables our organization to acquire the wisdom and develop capabilities for critically examining our institutional and social policies and how cultural worldviews influence perceptions of power, dominance, and inequality. Studies show that investing time and resources to organization-wide cultural competency efforts is positively related to greater innovation, performance, success, problem solving, talent acquisition, and market share.

The College defines cultural competency as the state of having and applying knowledge and skill in five areas: awareness of one's own cultural worldview; recognition of one's attitudes toward cultural differences; realization of different cultural practices and worldviews; reflective practices and improvement; and thoughtfulness in cross-cultural interaction. Moreover, the College's cultural competency definition and commitment align with the best practice guidance from the National Center for Cultural Competence and the seminal works of Terry Cross and others who identify five essential elements contributing to an institution's ability to become more culturally competent:

1. Valuing diversity.
2. Having the capacity for cultural self-assessment.
3. Being conscious of the dynamics inherent when cultures interact.
4. Having institutionalized culture knowledge.
5. Having developed adaptations to service delivery reflecting an understanding of cultural diversity.

The College's philosophical and operational frameworks for cultural competency are inclusion, diversity, equity for students, equity for employees, access, leadership, and social justice (IDEEALS). This framework equips the College to successfully navigate the dynamics of difference, authentically partner with others, maximize creative potential, dismantle barriers, and align our intent with our outcomes. Equity is grounded in the principle of fairness.

Inclusion: The active, intentional, and ongoing engagement with diversity—in people, in the curriculum, in the co-curriculum, and in communities (intellectual, social, cultural, geographical) with which individuals might connect—in ways that increase one's awareness, content knowledge, cognitive sophistication, and empathic understanding of the complex ways individuals interact within (and change) systems and institutions.

Diversity: Individual differences (e.g. personality, language, learning styles and life experiences) and group-social differences (e.g. race, ethnicity, class, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, sexual identity, disability, country of origin and ability status as well as cultural, political, religious or other affiliations) that can be engaged in the service of learning.

Equity (student focus): The creation of opportunities and intentional design of the college experience for each student, particularly historically underserved populations to ensure, preserve participation in,

and provide equal access to educational programs that are capable of closing the achievement gaps in student success and completion.

Equity (employee focus): The creation of opportunities for historically underserved populations of employees (faculty and staff) to have equal access to professional growth opportunities and resource networks that are capable of closing the demographic disparities in leadership roles in all spheres of institutional functioning.

Equity (business focus): The creation of opportunities for historically underserved and local businesses to have equal access to the College's procurement and partner relationships.

Access: Convenience, affordable, proximity, provide equal opportunities for persons with disabilities to all aspects of campus life, non-selective, local postsecondary, multiple pathways to the College.

Leadership: Motivating a group of people to act toward achieving common goals and developing and implementing strategies to meet the College's mission.

Social Justice: Social justice is a concept of fair and just relations between the individual and society, as measured by the distribution of wealth, opportunities for personal activity, and social privileges…. The concept of social justice has often referred to the process of ensuring that individuals fulfill their societal roles and receive what was their due from society.
In the current movements for social justice, the emphasis has been on the breaking of barriers for social mobility, the creation of safety nets, and economic justice. Social justice assigns rights and duties in the institutions of society, (i.e., education, in efforts for gender, ethnic, and social equality, for advocating justice for migrants, prisoners, the environment, and the physically and developmentally disabled, which enables people.

Historically underserved or underrepresented populations include but are not limited to: first generation, low income, students of color, adult students; marginalized orientations, gender identities, and intersex students; students with second-language backgrounds; undocumented students; veterans; students with disabilities; students with dependents; foster care youth; and formerly and currently incarcerated students.