

**To:** Montgomery College Community  
**From:** Montgomery College Board of Trustees  
**Subject:** **Interim President of Montgomery College**  
**Date:** June 8, 2021

As the Board of Trustees communicated on April 29, 2021, Dr. DeRionne Pollard has accepted the presidency of Nevada State College, which begins this summer. After careful consideration, the Board has asked Dr. Charlene Mickens Dukes to serve as the interim president of Montgomery College beginning August 7, 2021, while a search is conducted for a new president. Dr. Dukes is a higher education leader with 42 years of experience in administration, policy development, and national service. Her extensive local and regional background position her optimally to step into this role seamlessly and support the College's mission during this transition. The Board is confident that Dr. Dukes' leadership will complement the array of strengths of our senior leaders, whose diligence and skill have contributed to the success of the College during Dr. Pollard's tenure.

Dr. Dukes served as the president of Prince George's Community College for 13 years until her retirement in June 2020. During that period, Dr. Dukes was a champion of student access and success, leading countless initiatives that improved student completion. She has extensive experience in the community college sector nationally, having served on the boards of the Association of American Colleges and Universities, the American Association of Community Colleges, the Institute for Higher Education Policy, Campus Compact, the Community College Advisory Panel, and the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators, among others. She continues to serve actively as the chair of the Board of the Meyer Foundation, secretary of the Greater Washington Community Foundation, and vice chair of the Board of CareFirst, Inc. Dr. Dukes is the immediate past convener of the Presidents Round Table, and a past chair of the Board of the American Association of Community Colleges. She serves as a mentor for the Aspen Institute's Fellows Program. Dr. Dukes was appointed in July 2020 by the Prince George's county executive to serve as co-chair of Prince George's Forward, a task force charged with the post-COVID transformation of Prince George's County. More details on Dr. Dukes' experience is available on the [College's website](#).

The Board of Trustees is confident that Dr. Dukes' leadership will enable Montgomery College to continue to thrive. Working closely with the College's senior leadership, who will bring their talents and experience to support Dr. Dukes and the College in every way possible, we will ensure that the College continues to fulfill its mission. The momentum in place to propel the institution's current initiatives will be enriched by Dr. Dukes' experience empowering students and partnering with the community. Dr. Dukes has been briefed on

several MC initiatives at critical junctures, which will receive her focused attention. In particular, the College's work on equity will continue under her leadership with the implementation of the Presidential Scholars Program, the advancement of the Board's antiracism work, and the progression of the East County strategy. The College's recovery from the pandemic will move ahead with the Return-to-Campuses plans already in progress and careful administration of federal and state recovery grants. The Segal strategic workforce planning project underway and the Advising Redesign will remain on course and be brought to their next phases with her support. Considerable internal efforts have already been invested in this work by people at many levels of the institution. The Board has every confidence that they will continue successfully with Dr. Dukes' guidance during this interim period.

While Dr. Dukes leads operations at the College, the Board is taking steps to select the firm to lead the presidential search process. The next step will be the formation of a search committee, the creation of a timeline, and the communication of processes in which the public can participate. Once the Board has selected a search firm, it will work closely with that firm to complete a search, optimally, within the next six months. Given the importance of this selection, however, an extension of time is possible, if needed. The Board considers it more important to be judicious than hasty. We recognize that this presidential search is taking place during a time of significant transition—returning to campuses and worksites after a period of extended remote work due to the pandemic. We are aware that transitions can be unsettling—particularly several at once. However, there is substantial depth to the leadership of the College at all levels. The Board is confident that all divisions of the College will partner productively to accomplish our shared goals and achieve the stability needed while the institution embarks on this change in presidential leadership. As the College continues to empower students to change their lives and enrich the life of the community, it will also nurture the economic growth of the county and the state.