

MONTHLY OUTLOOK

A Meeting Preview with Data Insights and MC 2020 Progress

February 5, 2016

February Meeting Highlights—What to Expect and Why

Your next meeting occurs on Monday, February 22. Following are major items and topics planned at this time.

Constituent Conversation. This month's constituent conversation will be held with the College Council, which consists of the chairs of the four campus councils, the four constituent councils, and the four functional councils. The discussion about Achieving the Promise will continue. This will mark the final constituent conversation of the academic year.

My Monthly Written Report. My February *President's Focus* report will continue to examine the pathways theme in the book *Redesigning America's Community Colleges* and explore our engineering degree program. As you may recall, our engineering program is the largest community college program in the nation.

Retirement Recognitions. Retirement resolutions for your consideration in February are for individuals who retired during the fall semester. In June, we will bring spring semester retirements for your action.

Collegewide Elevator Maintenance and Repairs Contract. This competitively bid contract is for elevator maintenance and repair to ensure operability and safety of the College's 53 public-use elevators, as well as their compliance with state and federal regulations.

Project and Portfolio Management System Software Contract. This competitively bid contract is for the continuation of a project and portfolio management system software used to track and coordinate information technology projects. This service is hosted by the vendor via cloud-based services.

Resource Center HVAC Upgrades Contract. This competitively bid contract is to upgrade the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning system in the Takoma Park/Silver Spring Campus' Resource Center Building. This is the third and final phase of the project in which equipment that is more than 40 years old is being replaced with modern, more efficient equipment.

New Policies. Two new policies will be presented for your consideration. The first, Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT), is a proposed policy to codify the BIT concept and processes developed at the College and across the nation in recent years. The second proposed policy, College Ombuds, would codify the Office of the Ombuds and its activities. Both policies have been reviewed through the internal College processes prior to being presented to the Board.

Data Focus of the Month

Student Financial Aid – A Five-Year Perspective



Students should not be restricted from attending Montgomery College because they have limited financial resources. The student financial aid program at the College is developed to act on this philosophy and provide support to an economically diverse student population. The percentage of students receiving some form of financial aid, such as grants, scholarships, and loans, has increased each year for the past five years.

How many MC students receive financial aid? In FY15, 54 percent (18,628) of MC students received \$72.7 million in financial aid, compared to FY11 when 43 percent (15,973) of MC students received \$57.5 million to pay for educational expenses. Over the past five years, total financial aid has increased by 26 percent (see chart below).

What type of financial aid is the greatest source of support for our students? The largest amount of financial aid for MC students comes from grant programs. In FY15, more than half of all financial aid came through a grant program. The federal Pell grant program is the largest source of student grants at MC, with 9,855 recipients who receive, on average, \$3,254. Grants are also awarded by the state of Maryland and other states, including the District of Columbia, and from the College's operating budget. Grant support to students from Maryland has declined, while support from the College's own Board of Trustees (BOT) grant program has increased. Support from the BOT grant program has risen from \$1.98 million in FY11 with 2,349 recipients to \$2.7 million in FY15 with 3,685 recipients—a 57 percent increase in recipients! In FY15, 73 percent of grant recipients from all programs were African American or Hispanic/Latino, while, in FY11, 68 percent of all grant recipients were African American or Hispanic/Latino.

Do many MC students borrow funds to pay for their education? Student loans are the second largest type of financial aid accessed by our students. Over the past five years, the number of students borrowing has increased 104 percent and the total amount borrowed has increased 150 percent. In FY15 student loan volume exceeded \$24.2 million. The average family income of a dependent student borrower was \$66,000. Students with this income level are not eligible for Pell grants, but they may still have significant financial need. More students are also borrowing to pay for rent, food, and other living expenses. Despite the increase in borrowing, Montgomery College's student loan default rate—9.9 percent—remains below the national average of 19.1 percent for community colleges and the fourth lowest default rate among Maryland community colleges that participate in the federal direct loan program.

Total Financial Aid for MC Students



Montgomery College 2020 Update of the Month



The *Montgomery College 2020* strategic plan is a seven-year effort that began in Fiscal Year 2013. In it, we charged ourselves to “increase the number of students awarded scholarships. Develop and implement partnerships that can defray the costs of student attendance.” To accomplish this we have been required to make some ambitious plans.

What is the condition of the county’s economy? Montgomery County, which has consistently been one of the nation’s wealthiest counties, has recently experienced some significant economic challenges as well as rapid demographic transformations. With this in mind, the Montgomery College Foundation Board of Directors approved a comprehensive campaign to raise \$30 million in cash and pledges between 2013 and 2020 to help meet the goals of the *Montgomery College 2020* strategic plan. We are currently in the readiness phase of the campaign. Once we surpass the \$26 million mark, we will move from the readiness phase to the public phase of the campaign, which will culminate in raising the final \$4 million from the community at large.

How much has been raised toward the \$30 million goal? As of January 2016, \$12 million has been raised in support of scholarships and programs designed to increase access to the College for those in need, while providing important resources for our faculty and staff. Leadership gifts from individuals and organizations such as the Clark Charitable Foundation, Westat, the Webber Family Foundation, Catherine Scott, Cliff and Camille Kendall, and Holy Cross Hospital, are just some that have contributed to our success thus far.

What are the campaign priorities? The campaign priorities include supporting student access, affordability, success, and completion. Two major initiatives that support these goals are the Montgomery College Promise and Achieving Collegiate Excellence and Success (ACES), with the combined goal of raising \$10 million in endowment funds. These programs will support need-based scholarships for recent MCPS graduates who come from families with income that is significantly below the county median.

What is the Promise program? MC leaders are excited by the possibility of implementing a ‘Promise’ scholarship for ACES students. ‘Promise’ scholarships provide community college tuition for students in need. Most recently, the MC Foundation had an outside consulting group analyze how much funding would be needed to fill the funding gaps that upcoming ACES students will experience. The estimates were based on current projections from MCPS, and would provide, on average, a \$700 scholarship for each of 600 ACES students at the College annually. A \$10-million endowment would be needed to create and sustain such an ACES Promise Scholarship program.

Are there other campaign priorities? Other *MC 2020* campaign priorities include the Dreamers Scholarship Fund, the Global Humanities Institute, the Innovation Fund, and unrestricted giving. Campaign co-chairs Linda Youngentob and the Honorable Jeffrey Slavin, along with fellow foundation board members, are driving the campaign over these seven years.

Be well,

DeRionne P. Pollard, PhD

We empower our students to change their lives, and we enrich the life of our community. We are accountable for our results.