

From: [DeRionne Pollard, Montgomery College President](#)
To: [MC Communications!](#)
Subject: Closing the Achievement Gap/Achieving the Promise Implementation Plan
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MONTGOMERY COLLEGE
Office of the President

September 3, 2015

MEMORANDUM

To: Montgomery College Colleagues
From: Dr. DeRionne P. Pollard, President
Subject: Closing the Achievement Gap/Achieving the Promise Implementation Plan

This week, more than 25,000 new and continuing credit students embarked on the next phase of their education journey at Montgomery College. This is their moment as they work to build a better future for themselves and their families. And this is our moment to do all we can to help them become success stories.

We know that we face a challenge across the country—and here at MC—in ensuring all students succeed. In fact, current national data and Montgomery College data show that African American and Hispanic students have not succeeded at the same rate as their Asian and White counterparts. Closing this so-called “achievement gap” has been one of my priorities since I came to Montgomery College nearly six years ago.

During my State of the College address last April, I introduced a new name—“Achieving the Promise”—to replace the term “Closing the Achievement Gap” since it more positively captures the essence of the goal that students realize their fullest potential. As we continue our efforts, I should first acknowledge the valuable work of the Closing the Achievement Gap Implementation Team (CTAG-IT), which, under the leadership of Co-chairs Monica Brown and Jason Rivera, developed a plan to realize our Achieving the Promise vision. In late 2014, this plan was submitted to the senior vice president for academic affairs and the senior vice president for student services for review. CTAG-IT also shared and discussed the plan with the College community in six forums held during the spring semester.

Upon recommendation of CTAG-IT and my senior leadership team, I am accepting the implementation plan and I look forward to seeing positive developments in this important work.

We were fortunate to receive county funding targeted for this work in our FY16 budget, though not as much as would be needed to fully implement the plan. Therefore, in light of this budget difference, I am working with the senior leadership team and the CTAG-IT co-chairs to:

- identify the initiatives that can be started in FY16,
- leverage existing and/or redeployed resources where possible to support implementation,
- consider philanthropic resources to support Achieving the Promise initiatives,

- develop an Achieving the Promise advisory committee, and
- strategize how to sustain implementation efforts in the coming fiscal years.

Achieving the Promise is a critical institutional priority and one that will require innovation, dedication, and creativity. Dr. Jason Rivera, collegewide director of learning centers/instructor of reading, will coordinate our Achieving the Promise initiatives. In addition, Carmen Poston-Travis, Student Services operations director, will work with Dr. Rivera to implement the Student Services components of the plan. Please watch for communications from Dr. Rivera to learn how you can be involved and support this effort.

I can think of no greater contribution that each of you could make than to help all Montgomery College students *achieve the promise* of a higher education and a better life.