

**From:** [DeRionne Pollard, Montgomery College President](#)  
**Subject:** Civility in Action: Dialogues across Difference  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 21, 2017 4:21:46 PM

---

## MONTGOMERY COLLEGE

Office of the President

February 21, 2017

### MEMORANDUM

**To:** The Montgomery College Community  
**From:** Dr. DeRionne P. Pollard, President  
**Subject:** Civility in Action: Dialogues across Difference

I am pleased to announce a dialogue series that I hope will inspire our community to communicate productively across difference. The incivility of much recent political discourse has left many of us wondering how we can peacefully talk about issues such as race, religion, and immigration. As I mentioned in my recent [op/ed](#) in the *Baltimore Sun*, the divisiveness wrought by recent campaign rhetoric has diminished our ability to communicate from positions of difference. Rebuilding civil discourse on our campuses and in our communities should be the work of community colleges. For this reason, the College will host a [series of dialogues](#) around these issues. I am grateful to our faculty who have spoken out about the need for such conversations, especially as many of our students feel personally insecure due to national political developments.

I am excited that several experts in their fields have agreed to participate:

- **Pastors Chris and Dennis Wiley**, Covenant Baptist United Church of Christ on [February 28](#)
- **Chief Tom Manger**, president of the Major Cities Chiefs Association on March 9
- **Ambassador Connie Morella**, former Congresswoman and MC professor on March 30
- **Imam Yahya Hendi**, Muslim Chaplain at Georgetown University on May 8
- **Neel Saxena**, executive director at Asian American LEAD on May 8

Each event will be structured as a conversation with me about the complexities of speaking with civility and compassion across difference. I anticipate that these dialogues will help us to challenge misperceptions and explore solutions to community problems that respect all parties. I hope you can join us for one or more of these events. I encourage faculty to urge their students to attend. If you know of a local or national organization that would like to cosponsor an event, we would be happy to talk with them about how they can be a part of positive change with us.

Thank you for all you do for Montgomery College and your work to create an environment where civility is expected and valued.