

# PRESIDENT'S REPORT TO THE BOARD

September 2011



**Montgomery College**  
endless possibilities



A fundamental part of our new mission statement is that we, as a College, enrich the life of our community. We do that by being relevant to its many needs: we train a skilled workforce and serve as an economic development engine; we invite intellectually challenging speakers to campuses; we offer original concerts, art exhibits, and theatre performances; we give back to those members of our community who need an extra hand.

As we embark on a new academic year, I want to focus this month's report on that last point: philanthropy. In the midst of homework assignments, grading, frequent meetings, support projects, service to the College, and more, our faculty, students, staff, and administrators carve out time to give back to the community of which we are honored to be a part. They have rolled up their sleeves to better the lives of others. They have donated their own time, money, and expertise to enrich the life of our community.

Sometimes it comes in the form of tutoring struggling students. Sometimes it comes in the form of delivering food to impoverished students. Sometimes it comes in the form of serving on boards and committees of organizations dedicated to making a difference.

Helping people who are struggling outside Montgomery College is especially crucial during a time of economic hardship, like the one our country currently faces. Our College community has lived up to this challenge and responsibility.

I invite you to read about various College initiatives and specific individuals who have taken the initiative—all to make our community a stronger, more stimulating place to live.

### **Board Discussion Questions:**

1. The board has often spoken about the importance of the "Town/Gown" relationship and the necessity of being a good neighbor. As we consider the needs and issues of Montgomery County and beyond, what role can you anticipate the College playing to strengthen our community?
2. As citizen leaders, our trustees volunteer their time and talents to Montgomery College. What motivated you to be of service to the College?

## College Initiatives

In its third year, the Montgomery College VISTA [Service Learning Collaborative](#) continues to thrive, building on the foundation set by two previous Maryland Campus Compact AmeriCorps\*VISTA members. The program facilitates service-learning activities for Montgomery College students and Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) students with community nonprofit organizations. The collaboration focuses on engaging diverse, first-generation college students in mentoring partnerships with local high school immigrant youth who are in English for Speakers of Other Languages programs at MCPS. These students come to weekly after-school meetings and participate in many weekend activities. The service-learning opportunities range from volunteering at the Green Festival to creating a keyhole garden and donating the food produced. In ongoing reflection and learning assessments, the K–12 and higher education student participants report an increase in self-esteem, self-knowledge, community knowledge, and self-confidence, increasing their likelihood of completing school and receiving a college degree.

The College believes in nonprofit organizations and works to empower them. The College reconfigured the [Nonprofit Leadership Program](#) within the Nonprofit Leadership Institute to provide skills to lower-level and middle-level managers in a cohort arrangement designed to provide ongoing support and connections. In late spring, institute leaders worked with a consultant to redesign the program and selected 24 competitive candidates who represented the range of nonprofits that affect the lives of those in the region. Due to an existing professional relationship, the College was able to partner with the Trawick Foundation to provide funding for the program. What would have cost approximately \$700 for the week's program cost the selected participants \$50. Some employers did give employees the time to take the program (equivalent to one week) and covered the fee. But, even at \$50, there were participants who did not or could not ask their employers for that funding. Some of the enrollees paid the fee personally. The College is continuing to develop the program and build partnerships and funding in order to impact an increasing number of people—both the nonprofit participants and those served by the nonprofits—who need assistance.

The College partners with Habitat for Humanity to create **alternative spring breaks**, which allow students the chance to spend their time away from school volunteering. Students participate in community-based service projects, learn about social issues facing members of communities with whom they have little or no direct contact, and develop lifelong leadership skills. Additionally, students develop a broader understanding of the world around them and the issues that challenge our country—poverty, racism, inadequate housing, and environmental damage.

- For the past four years, [Germantown Campus Student Life](#) has sponsored an alternative spring break trip, and this year 15 students from the Germantown and Takoma Park/Silver Spring campuses and three advisers [traveled to Bay St. Louis](#), Mississippi and spent the week building homes with Habitat—logging about 563 hours of service! With five full days of on-the-job training and hard work, Montgomery College volunteers helped build a house from foundation to framing to raising the roof. The job site in Bay St. Louis was so large—200 volunteers and five homes under construction—that it also provided many opportunities for Montgomery College students to develop friendships with other student volunteers from colleges around the country.
- In addition, students from all three campuses volunteered at a Saturday Habitat for Humanity House Build later in the semester in Frederick, Maryland.

To combat the statistics that indicate one in three MCPS children are at risk for hunger, the [Manna Smart Sacks Program](#) provides bags of healthy, yet kid-friendly, food to 1,600 at-risk children to eat during the weekends in 46 schools. Manufacturers, stores, and individuals donate the food to Manna and then community partners, including the College, pick up the food, pack it, and deliver it to schools. Student volunteers pack sacks on each Montgomery College campus every week of the school year. Research shows that chronic hunger in children can lead to poor cognitive development and, thus, poor performance in school. Together, hundreds of students from the College packed nearly 5,000 bags of food!



- During the 2010-2011 year, 260 volunteers spent about 128 hours on the Germantown Campus packing 1,786 bags for Fox Chapel Elementary School.
- Rockville Campus students packed and delivered nearly 500 food packs for children who live in “food insecure” homes.
- Takoma Park/Silver Spring students packed and delivered more than 2,200 food packs for children at Broad Acres Elementary School, which has the highest number of children receiving free or reduced price lunches in MCPS.

College relationships and partnerships with the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, the Latin American Youth Center-Maryland Multicultural Youth Centers, and the Latino Health Initiative underscore our commitment to engage the fastest-growing population in our community.

Every summer, the Takoma Park/ Silver Spring Campus opens its doors and classrooms to [Upward Bound](#), a college readiness program for high school students who are low income and first-generation college bound. They receive logistical support from the Office of the Vice President and Provost to provide this service to the community. The campus also works with the Upward Bound program to provide information about volunteering and service opportunities, and the two institutions partner in any way when applicable.

The [College’s Youth Programs](#) and the Montgomery College Foundation work together to help fund students who cannot afford summer camps at the College. The Montgomery College Foundation uses funds donated by program participants and additional dollars, when possible, to offer a limited number of scholarships to children eligible for free and reduced meals. And recipients are paying it forward as a result. This year, after two years of receiving scholarships for two children, one mom was able to cover the cost of camps for her kids and worked with the foundation to donate \$1,100 so that another child could enjoy these experiences.

The Takoma Park/Silver Spring Campus has a strong partnership with [Silver Spring Green](#), a group seeking nonprofit status that works to make downtown Silver Spring more eco-friendly by doing things like installing company-sponsored recycling bins on Ellsworth Drive. The plan is to bring businesses, civic organizations, residents, and the College together to identify opportunities that enhance our environment, economy, and shared sense of community. Some of the most significant efforts are the nonprofit’s emphasis on the community engagement process and sustainability as a benefit to both people and businesses.

## Faculty/Staff Volunteerism

College faculty, staff, and administrators belong to dozens of local, state, regional, and national **community groups and organizations and professional and voluntary associations**. Their roles include:

- Volunteering with Veterans Affairs, Maryland Humanities Council, Rockville Economic Development, Inc., Impact Silver Spring, the Coalition to Build the Purple Line, the Greater Silver Spring Chamber of Commerce, the Silver Spring Arts and Entertainment District Advisory Committee, the Long Branch Citizens Advisory Board, the Silver Spring Rotary, MCPS, the Montgomery County Coalition for the Homeless, Manna Food, and many others.
- Serving as panelists for the National Institutes of Health.
- Collecting and sending books internationally, including to countries such as Mozambique and El Salvador.
- Contributing original works for auction at Mobile Masterpieces, a biannual event organized by the Montgomery College Alumni Association.

Specific members of our College faculty, staff, and administrative teams who have donated their time include:

- **Kathy Awkard**, health sciences nursing lab instructor, spent her summer volunteering for the [Special Olympics in Athens, Greece](#). She officiated basketball for almost three weeks at the World Games for Special Olympics from June 18 through July 11. Additionally, she participated as a note-taker in Special Olympics discussion groups entitled, Conversations with Women. The purpose was to identify strategies to engage more women—as athletes, mentors, and supporters—in the Special Olympic movement. Ms. Awkard considered her volunteer service as one of the nonfamily-related highlights of her life and has volunteered with this organization for more than 10 years.



- When **Dr. Meg Birney**, biology professor, is not teaching about microorganisms, she has a keen appreciation for what they do in the soil: she farms! For several years, Dr. Birney has used her horse-drawn plow to cultivate a productive garden. Several of her colleagues benefit through a community-supported agriculture membership and enjoy the fruits (actually, the vegetables) of her labor each week, as do members of the community who rely on food banks. Each week during the summer growing season, Dr. Birney donates 50 to 100 pounds of fresh vegetables. Those plow horses also have taken wounded veterans on hayrides on autumn weekends.
- **Raven Wilkens**, a pre-GED instructor located at the Adult ESOL & Literacy–GED Program’s Quince Orchard High School site, has had a longtime commitment to community service. After hearing about the [Montgomery College Refugee Training Program](#), Mr. Wilkens described the program to his class, integrating it with discussions of geopolitics and refugee resettlement. Together, they decided to launch a coat drive for refugee families. Students went to other classes to raise awareness and leave boxes for donations. They led a competition to see which class could collect the most donations. Other students approached family, friends, and employers. The donations expanded beyond coats to include toys, children’s clothing, and household goods, filling several large boxes.
- In addition to an existing scholarship pledge for the [TechLEAP](#) Scholarship Fund, **Professor Ray Kimball** donated an extra \$2,000 in July to help returning spring semester students complete their studies. Professor Kimball’s initial donation of \$10,000 was matched by a TechLEAP alumnus who is now successfully engaged in an information technology career.

## Student Volunteerism

Students throughout the College also volunteer their time, whether as part of a course or in their spare time. Their projects include:

- Volunteering with Habitat for Humanity, the American Cancer Society, Montgomery County Fire and Rescue, Montgomery County Coalition for the Homeless, the National Center for Children and Families, community sustainable gardens, local food pantries, and more.
- [Montgomery Scholars](#) contribute at least 20 hours serving the community during their time at the College. In the past, they have volunteered at the following organizations: Centronia, Aumazo, La Raza, Falling Whistles, Ten Thousand Villages, Polaris Project, Heritage Foundation, Bikes for the World, Greater DC Cares, International Student and Scholar Services, and the Center for Global Education.
- **Web portfolio students**, as part of their capstone course, [CA 299](#), design or improve websites for nonprofit organizations and small local businesses, such as YMCA Camp Letts, Toy Exchange, and Commercial Emblem.
- The [Women’s Studies Student Group](#) raises funds for House of Ruth, DC Rape Crisis Center, and the V-Day Spotlight on Women and Girls in Haiti.

**Specific students** who donate their time include:

- **Francisco Rodriguez**, A.S., R.N., a May 2011 nursing graduate, began giving back many years before he developed an interest in nursing. For 11 years, he has volunteered his time to work with Dr. Andrew Cobb to provide free dental care for children and adults outside the United States. Mr. Rodriguez has served with Dr. Cobb’s effort every year since his high school days when he participated in his first six-week stint. Mr. Rodriguez has participated yearly, if not twice a year, in delivering dental care through the [Somos Amigos Medical Missions](#), which provides dental and medical care in a small village located in the central highlands of the Dominican Republic. Occasionally, he also assists in providing direct medical care to these children and adults. Since he is bilingual, Mr. Rodriguez has helped communicate and contribute to the well-being of hundreds of children and adults. Mr. Rodriguez’s role in the pediatric behavioral health department at the National Institutes of Health has expanded now that he is a registered nurse. His next goal is to return to school and complete a B.S.N. at the University of Maryland School of Nursing.
- During fall 2010, **Elias Rivera** volunteered at the [Gilchrist Multicultural Center](#) in Wheaton, assisting in a Spanish conversation class as part of the service-learning requirement for his Spanish course SN 201, taught by **Professor Carla Naranjo**. Inspired and motivated by his service-learning experience, Mr. Rivera again volunteered in spring 2011, even though it was not a requirement for any class. He was not alone; Professor Naranjo joined him in volunteering and teaching English as a Second Language at the **Langley**



**Park Catholic Center** during the spring semester. Mr. Rivera has family in Langley Park and wanted to give back to his community. He will be a student at Towson University this fall.

- **Victor Reyes**, a native of El Salvador, had been in the United States for 26 years when he entered the [Montgomery College Citizenship Preparation Program](#). Although he had never been to school in his native or adopted country, he worked tirelessly to become a naturalized citizen in March 2011. After he attained his goal, Mr. Reyes wanted to give back, and has become a volunteer in the program. He attends program orientations and visits classes, talking with students about the program and his journey, inspiring many along the way.
- In the past year, **Deborah Coverley**, a Biomedical Scholar who is transferring to the University of Maryland, has volunteered for [IN2Books](#), an online mentor program that helps elementary school students better understand reading. She has also volunteered for the [Montgomery Housing Partnership](#) in after-school and summer programs helping students with homework and providing free summer daycare for families whose parents could not afford paid daycare.
- **Adama Sombie**, a mechanical engineering major who also serves as a student ambassador, came to the United States in 2008 from the Ivory Coast. He enrolled in the fall 2009 semester and worked his way from American English Language I (EL 101) to Techniques for English and Writing II (EN 102). Even with his classes, Mr. Sombie still finds time to volunteer. After meeting a recruiter at the Takoma Park/Silver Spring Campus Volunteer Opportunity Fair in February 2010, Mr. Sombie started volunteering with the [Silver Spring Fire Department](#). Ever since, Mr. Sombie has assisted with ambulance work every Thursday, has served on-call for other shifts, and has participated in fire trainings. This is no small feat, given that Mr. Sombie depends on public transportation, including using it to transport him home when training classes end at 11 p.m. He says: "I joined the fire department to help my community in my spare time. It is important to help someone out when they're in need."



## Montgomery College Board of Trustees

DeRionne P. Pollard, Ph.D.  
*President*

### **Board of Trustees**

Stephen Z. Kaufman (2001–2013)  
*Chair*

Reginald Felton (2007–2013)  
*First Vice Chair*

DeRionne P. Pollard  
*Secretary/Treasurer*

Gloria Aparicio Blackwell  
(2009–2014)

Jonathan Jayes-Green  
(2011–2012)

Kenneth J. Hoffman  
(2010–2017)

Leslie S. Levine  
(2009–2015)

Michael C. Lin  
(2000–2012)

Michael Priddy  
(2011–2017)

Marsha Suggs Smith  
(2009–2016)

