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March 23, 2026

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As we return from spring break, there is much to celebrate across Montgomery College. This week, we recognize two Honors College students whose research earned statewide recognition, highlight the growing resources available at our East County Education Center, and share exciting national news about our commitment to student success. Thank you for the role each of you plays in making these moments possible.

### **HONORS STUDENTS SHINE AT STATEWIDE STEM CONFERENCE**

We are proud of Honors College STEM Scholars Joshua Richard Lewis and Lawrence Woo, who earned an award for their poster presentation at the Maryland Collegiate Honors Council's 2026 Annual Conference. Their research project explored how gel materials form and strengthen by measuring electrical flow through the substance—innovative work that earned recognition among honors students from institutions across Maryland. Joshua is a mathematics major and Lawrence is a chemistry/biochemistry major, and both were mentored by Chemistry Professor Dr. Tom Chen. Their achievement is a powerful reminder of what becomes possible when talented, driven students are paired with dedicated faculty. Congratulations to Joshua, Lawrence, and Dr. Chen.

### **BACKPACKS ON THE GO: EXPLORING ECEC**

In the latest episode of [Backpacks on the Go](#), MC student Ryan Jones and I visited the East County Education Center (ECEC), where we explored several of the outstanding resources available to students and the surrounding community. We toured the nursing lab, an important

workforce-readiness resource available at ECEC in addition to our Takoma Park/Silver Spring Campus. We also visited the library and learning center, where students can study and access academic support, and stopped by Raptor Central and the flex lab, which offer hands-on learning opportunities. Another highlight was seeing our food pantry, part of the Fuel for Success program that reflects our commitment to supporting the whole student. If you have not yet visited ECEC, I hope this episode inspires you to explore the center and see its impact firsthand.

### **MC NAMED ATD 2026 LEADER COLLEGE**

I am thrilled to share that Montgomery College has been named an Achieving the Dream (ATD) 2026 Leader College. This prestigious three-year designation, announced earlier this month at the ATD DREAM Conference in Portland, Oregon, recognizes our sustained, collegewide commitment to student success, equity, and measurable outcomes. Leader Colleges are selected from more than 300 institutions nationwide for demonstrating significant gains in student achievement and implementing data-informed strategies that support student success. This recognition belongs to all of us—our faculty, staff, and most importantly, our students, whose hard work and resilience make Montgomery College the institution it is. As a Leader College, we will share our proven practices across the ATD Network to help strengthen student success at colleges nationwide.

With Raptor Regards,



Dr. Jermaine F. Williams

President

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