



## GCSP Program at Montgomery College

The Grand Challenges Scholars Program (GCSP) is a National Academy of Engineering (NAE) initiative to create an honors program that will develop the students who will solve the largest problems facing engineering and the world in the 21<sup>st</sup> century; problems like better medicines, solar power, reverse-

engineering the brain, clean water, fusion, and carbon sequestration.

More than 150 universities in the United States and internationally have Grand Challenges Scholars



Programs. Nearly half of all undergraduates in engineering start their academic career at community colleges, so the NAE has made it a high priority to expand the GCSP initiative to community colleges. Over the last year MC has worked closely with the NAE in developing the model for how community colleges will participate in the GCSP initiative, and in designing a GCSP for Montgomery College to allow MC students to participate in this honors program both at MC and when they go on

to UMD, UMBC, or other receiving institutions.

On October 30 at the NAE annual meeting in DC, Montgomery College was accepted as the first community college to have a Grand Challenges Scholars Program. Dean Muhammad Kehnemouyi spoke at the conference about the demands and rewards of developing a GCSP at a two-year institution. The MC program will serve as a paradigm for other community colleges to develop their own programs. Prof. David Kuijt will be the director of the GCSP program at MC.

GCSP scholars will develop competencies in research, multidisciplinary, service learning, entrepreneurial, and multicultural approaches, and apply them to their chosen Grand Challenge Problem. Each student chooses their own Grand Challenge; they interact with mentors who advise them on choosing activities (like Engineers Without Borders, a NIST internship, Study Abroad, certain coursework, the Raptor Tank Entrepreneurship competition, and so on) that will allow them to develop skills in several of the above competencies.