

# FOUNDATION FOCUS

SUPPORTING MONTGOMERY COLLEGE TODAY AND TOMORROW | SPRING 2019 | VOLUME 13, NO. 1



Mr. Michael Knapp, left, Chairman of the Board of Trustees, and Dr. Pollard, right, President of the College, present Ms. Sheila Johnson, Founder and CEO of Salamander Hotels & Resorts, with an associate of arts in public service.

## Celebrating Commencement 2019

“Never lose sight of all that life has taught you. This knowledge has made you who you are and has given you the powers that are now untapped and are waiting to be unleashed upon the world.”

—MC 2019 commencement speaker, Sheila Johnson, Founder and CEO, Salamander Hotels & Resorts

Ms. Sheila C. Johnson, Founder and CEO, Salamander Hotels & Resorts, this year’s keynote speaker, reminded the graduates to be tenacious in their pursuits.

The above powerful words are deeply personal to both our keynote speaker and the more than 1,000 students participating in commencement.

Members of the audience had just heard about the incredible obstacles some of our graduates have triumphed over to earn their degrees. One student’s cap celebrated victory over cancer. The majority had worked at a job while attending college. Many had families to support. Some started at MC while learning to speak English. Others had experienced food insecurity while attending MC. The day was a true celebration of academic achievement and personal perseverance. It was impossible not to feel deeply inspired.

Ms. Johnson knows the power of proving to disbelievers that the impossible can be done. She talked about the three acts in her life: teacher, owner of Black Entertainment Television, and an entrepreneur whose company had \$200 million in revenue last year. Ms. Johnson encouraged the graduates to “be,” and ended her address by reminding students to “show everyone who you are and where you came from.”

## 2019 Honorary Degree Recipients

In addition to the proud graduates, five outstanding individuals were recognized for their commitment to the betterment of the community, and were presented with the prestigious honorary degree of associate of arts in public service.



Michael Knapp, chairman of the Board of Trustees, left; Mrs. Catherine S. Leggett, senior vice president for human resources, International City/County Management Association-Retirement Corporation; second from left; The Honorable Isiah Leggett, former Montgomery County executive; center; Trustee Leslie Levine, second from right; and Dr. Pollard, right



Michael Knapp, chairman of the Board of Trustees, left; Mr. Ilias Woldu, executive director, Ethiopian Community Center of Maryland, second from left; Trustee Kenneth Hoffman, second from right; and Dr. Pollard, right



Michael Knapp, chairman of the Board of Trustees, left; Ms. Mindi P. Jacobson, co-founder and executive director, Future Link, Inc., second from left; Trustee Gloria Aparicio Blackwell, second from right; and Dr. Pollard, right



## The Meyer Foundation Supports Presidential Dialogue Series

How can our nation create politics of radical inclusion? More specifically, how can we further the vision of a country in which everyone has access to a quality education, regardless of economic status?

These complex questions were explored during Dr. Pollard's 2018-2019 Presidential Dialogue Series: *The Politics of Radical Inclusion*. This year, the Series was generously supported by the Eugene and Agnes E. Meyer Foundation, and one conversation seemed particularly relevant to their mission and history. Arne Duncan, former secretary of education, and Dr. Pollard discussed how schools can be used to build community and empower students to seek, and attain, success.

Secretary Duncan, who served in the Obama administration, reflected that children in poorer neighborhoods do not receive the same quality education as children in wealthier districts. According to Duncan, "education should be the great equalizer, but in many cases it exacerbates the divide between the haves and the have nots."



Agnes E. Meyer, who established the Meyer Foundation along with her husband, Eugene, nearly 75 years ago, would have appreciated this dialogue. She was recognized by President Lyndon Johnson for creating a climate of public opinion that led to The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, which targeted federal funds for school districts serving low-income children. Fifty years later, this remains a compelling topic for discussion and engagement.

The Montgomery College Foundation is dedicated to leveling the playing field so all students have access to a quality, affordable education. We are grateful to the Meyer Foundation and to Secretary Duncan, who share our belief that continuing the conversation and acting purposefully will lead to a more equitable educational system.



Dr. Pollard and Secretary Duncan discuss the US educational system, including their shared commitment to closing the achievement gap, during the Presidential Dialogue Series.

## Legacy Society Donors Celebrated

In many ways, your estate plan is a reflection of what matters most to you in life. It speaks to what you value and the legacy you wish to leave this world. After providing for loved ones, some individuals have thoughtfully and generously chosen to make a bequest to support the Montgomery College Foundation. To honor those who have bestowed such a meaningful promise to the foundation, Arlene and Ken Becker, chair of the foundation, hosted the 2018 Legacy Society Luncheon. Held this year at Woodmont Country Club on December 6, The Legacy Society annually celebrates a special group of supporters who are dedicated to the mission of the Montgomery College Foundation, pledging gifts that will sustain the College for generations to come.

Dr. Cain, acting president of the College, welcomed guests and, along with Mr. Becker, presented certificates to Lena Barnett, Dorothy and Sol Graham, Donna Hoffacker, and Anne White. Lena Barnett remarked, "As a longtime resident of Montgomery County, I believe in giving back to the community which has been so good to me. I believe in the importance of education, and MC enables me to give back to my community and support education too. Montgomery College is turning 'endless possibilities' into wonderful realities and making our community a better place in which to live, work, and play. There is no better way to leave a legacy."



Dorothy and Sol Graham's (pictured with Dr. Stephen Cain and Mr. Ken Becker) support of Montgomery College students goes back many years. Through their personal philanthropy and Sol's numerous volunteer roles, their impact on the College is profound. Sol's latest role is as a member of the 2019 Montgomery College Foundation Golf and Tennis Committee.



Whether Lena Barnett (pictured with Dr. Stephen Cain and Mr. Ken Becker) is leading a seminar for College employees or meeting directly with students, she has a long history of support of MC. As an estate attorney, Lena founded the Planned Giving Group of Advisors, who, through their counsel, help generate legacy gifts on behalf of the foundation.



If you attended commencement or this year's Scholarship Luncheon, you benefitted from the dedication and professionalism of Donna Hoffacker (pictured with Dr. Stephen Cain and Mr. Ken Becker). Semi-retired from the College, she continues to work part time to ensure our signature events run smoothly.



Anne White (pictured with Dr. Stephen Cain and Mr. Ken Becker) may have retired from the College, but that certainly hasn't dampened her commitment to our mission. Most recently Anne hosted, along with retired College president Charlene Nunley, a reception in Florida for local alumni and retirees.

# Scholarship Luncheon 2019

More than 500 donors, students, faculty, and staff gathered on April 5 for the annual Scholarship Recognition Luncheon celebrating philanthropy and the access it provides to priceless educational opportunities.



**Donald D. Dawn**, President  
Gordon and Marilyn Macklin Foundation



**Luis Rosales '16**  
Senior, Georgetown University

"I realized the only way to end my family's cycle of poverty and homelessness was to pursue a college education. The Macklin Business Institute scholarship I received enabled me to pursue my associate's degree, but also allowed me to build a breadth of experience that made me a candidate for top schools like Georgetown and earn additional scholarships like the Jack Kent Cooke Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship.

To the donors, know that you touch the lives of students in such impactful ways – ways that may be unimaginable until you hear stories like mine."

**Luis Rosales '16**  
Senior, Georgetown University





“The more Gordon (Macklin) found out about Montgomery College, the more he loved it. He also loved business, so, logically, he proposed a marriage of business and Montgomery College – the Macklin Business Institute (MBI).

Each MBI student will take enough credits in honors courses to graduate with an honors designation, and they must maintain a minimum GPA of 3.5 to remain in the program. While that is a very high bar, the students continue to excel. This year’s class has a median GPA of 4.0.

Approximately two thirds of MBI graduates continue onto the Smith School of Business at the University of Maryland. Other prestigious universities MBI graduates attend include Cornell, Columbia, Georgetown, NYU, and the University of Virginia. Some are doing graduate work at Harvard, Columbia, Duke, and UNC.”

**Donald D. Dawn**  
President, Gordon and Marilyn Macklin Foundation



Dr. Pollard and Ken Becker



## Morgan Sullivan



When Morgan Sullivan joined the foundation in 2014, he was adding an important responsibility to a life already packed with deep commitments to his family, his career, and the community.

Professionally, Morgan is a senior managing director at JLL (formerly Jones Lang LaSalle) where he

begins his twenty-fifth year. Close to home, Morgan is the chair of the Development and Impact Committee for the Montgomery College Foundation and is a member of the Golf and Tennis Committee, which, over the past few years, has been responsible for raising hundreds of thousands of dollars for unrestricted scholarships.

Reading the roster of Morgan's volunteer commitments you wouldn't think he has time to sleep, let alone juggle his professional responsibilities while remaining a committed family man. He's the vice chair of Rockville Economic Development, Inc.; serves on the executive board of the National Capital Area Council of the Boys Scouts of America; and serves on the boards of directors for the Greater Washington Community Foundation, PEERLESS

Rockville, Inc., and Christ Episcopal School. Additionally, he is a member of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, Maryland Trust for Historic Preservation, the Potomac Conservancy, and the National Eagle Scout Association. Still, he is as focused on spending time with his wife and four children (ages 19, 18, 17, and 4) as he is on his community and his role at JLL. Undoubtedly, he is a board member quite deserving of our spotlight.

### Let's Get Personal! What's...

**Your favorite local sports team?** University of Maryland Men's and Women's Lacrosse Teams.

**Your favorite place to eat lunch around the College?** Il Pizzico (founded and owned by a Montgomery College alumnus!) Xi'an Gourmet, and Giuseppe's Pizza.

**The last good movie you saw?** *Whiplash*.

**Your favorite piece of advice to give?** "Be the first one in, and the last one out."

**Your favorite sport to play (or favorite pastime)?** Anything that has to do with being outdoors with my family.

**The junk food you find most irresistible?** Sweets....and sweets.

**The best concert you've attended?** The Who, at the Capital Center, in 1979!

**Your biggest global wish?** That all who desire can experience economic mobility through higher education.

At this year's Scholarship Recognition Luncheon, I joined my family and more than 500 others as we listened intently to Luis Rosales, '16. He spoke about his family's journey from El Salvador and the profoundly difficult obstacles they encountered once here. Despite challenges that included homelessness, he excelled in his studies in high school, yet didn't imagine an opportunity for higher education until a guidance counselor encouraged him. Accepted into every college to which he applied, only Montgomery College offered a full scholarship. At that moment, his new life truly began. As part of the Macklin Business Institute (MBI), Luis poured his heart into his studies. His hard work paid off two years later when he received a prestigious Jack Kent Cooke Transfer Scholarship and was accepted into Georgetown University. Upon graduation this spring from Georgetown University's McDonough School of Business, he will head to Wall Street as an investment banker at JPMorgan Chase.

Little did Wendy Mejia Aguilar, a current MBI and ACES student, know as she listening to Luis speak about his

journey that a few weeks following the luncheon, she, too, would be selected to receive a Jack Kent Cooke Transfer Scholarship. Knowing that the Montgomery College Foundation and the donors who support our mission played a part in both Luis's and Wendy's



educational journeys is a great source of pride for the members of the board of directors. Luis's path took him to places he never imagined – transforming his life and the lives of his family members – and Wendy's future looks equally promising. We hope this will happen for all of our students following their own paths and their own dreams. We believe in every student's potential for success and we recognize that philanthropy often allows them to take that most important step – the first one.

## Building a Community through Philanthropy



Silvia Hernandez, seated left; with ACES Pathway donors Paula Kowalczyk, seated right; and Peter Kovar, standing

For many students, the ability to attend college without the worries of the high cost of tuition and textbooks would be a dream come true. Debbie and Cliff White recognized this, and began providing full last-dollar scholarship and textbook support for their second group of 20 ACES students in fall 2018. In order to increase the impact and inspire others, they issued a matching gift challenge, and asked that the Montgomery College Foundation and the Universities at Shady Grove (USG) identify donors to sponsor 20 additional students.

As always, the kindness of our community did not disappoint. As of spring 2019, 41 ACES students are benefitting from ACES Pathway Champions Scholarships, and several more of these scholarships will be awarded in the fall.

Throughout the past year, ACES Pathway Champions donors and their scholarship recipients have had several chances to get to know each other and build their shared commitment to each student's college success. Among all the laughter and selfies, there is an undeniable sense of gratitude from these students, who now have a strong measure of financial security in their quests to pursue their associate's degree at Montgomery College before transferring to the Universities at Shady Grove to earn their bachelor's degree. Removing barriers to success and building a spirit of community are some of the highest purposes of philanthropy, and we thank the Whites and the other 17 caring supporters who, quite literally, are changing lives.



Top row from left to right, Bill Becker, ACES Pathway donor; Jamarcus Williams; Alejandro Salamanca; Shirley Brandman, ACES Pathway donor; Nicole Munoz. Bottom row from left to right, Melinda Becker, ACES Pathway donor; Morelia Garcia; Eyram Tracy Ayida



Debbie and Cliff White, back row on either side of the Raptor, join together with ACES scholarship recipients. More than 40 students benefit from their vision for the ACES Pathway Champions Scholarship program, which is building a community of donors who are committed to student success.



From left to right Steve Hull, ACES Pathway donor; Emilee Nicole Pereira; Krishna S. Murti, ACES Pathway donor; Ivana Samuels; Chitra Krishnamurti, ACES Pathway donor



From left to right Karen Hernandez with ACES Pathway donors, Sonia Herson and Lynne Herson Grad

## Words of Wisdom from an ACES Student



**A graduate of Northwood High School, Veronica Soriano joined ACES because she was looking for guidance regarding college. Her goal is to pursue a graduate degree in social work.**

**List three adjectives that describe the impact your ACES coaches have had on your education.**

Devoted, Encouraged, and Unbelievable.

**Which class at MC has had the biggest impact on you? Why?**

Sociology was the class that really opened my eyes to how our society functions. I learned about many crucial historical factors that impact how our world works to this day. It also allowed me to understand why things are the way they are in our country, and it answered many questions that I had growing up regarding the state of our world and the people in it. I highly recommend that everyone take a sociology class because it teaches you not only to be more self-aware, but more open-minded as well.

**Fill in the blank: Because of ACES, \_\_\_\_\_**

Because of ACES, I am able to obtain a higher education and have the opportunity for a better future.

**In your wildest dreams, what does the future look like for you?**

I want stability in all aspects of my life. I want to be physically, psychologically, and spiritually sound. A stable career and stable income—one that I enjoy and look forward to every single day, and stable relationships. I hope one day I can achieve this.

**If your ACES donor is reading this, what do you want him or her to know about you?**

I've been going through a hard time for a while now. This past year alone was one that brought new challenges and experiences that impacted me both negatively and positively. Despite the hardships I've had to experience, whether it be internal or external, I have done all I can to get my work done and push myself to exceed everyone's



Achieving Collegiate Excellence & Success (ACES) coaches provide both academic and student support, using a case management approach. They meet individually with students and provide test preparation, tutoring, assistance with college applications and financial aid/scholarship applications, and college visits. ACES is an intrusive approach to student success by identifying and neutralizing barriers that may prevent an at-risk student from graduating with a bachelor's degree.

Montgomery Blair High School  
James Hubert Blake High School  
Clarksburg High School  
Albert Einstein High School  
Gaithersburg High School  
John F. Kennedy High School  
Colonel Zadok A. Magruder High School  
Northwood High School  
Paint Branch High School  
Rockville High School  
Seneca Valley High School  
Springbrook High School  
Watkins Mill High School  
Wheaton High School

expectations—including my own. I am proud to say that I have been able to manage going to school full time while working part time and having a part-time internship as well. I hope I make you proud with all that I have done during my time in the ACES program, and everything that I plan to do in the future.

## Love of Theatre + Love of Education = New Scholarship!

A few years ago, Vernon Skinner wanted to see a play. As many do, he bought tickets to a Summer Dinner Theater production at Montgomery College and went, simply expecting to be entertained. Little did he know he would be quite impressed and moved by the school...to such a degree that he would honor the legacy of his parents and their love of education by establishing a very generous scholarship, the Vernon L. and Frances D. Skinner, Sr. Memorial Scholarship. Thankful for the support of his parents, Mr. Skinner wanted to ensure that students pursuing a degree in health sciences, engineering or, of course, the theater, will have access to the same opportunities Mr. Skinner's parents made available to him.

If, as Shakespeare wrote, "All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players," then Mr. Skinner truly is filling a role that will have a tremendous, and ongoing, impact on his fellow players.

The 2019 Board of Directors' Challenge surpassed all expectations with the help of Mr. Skinner's \$100,000 gift. In total, more than \$175,000 was raised at this year's Scholarship Recognition Luncheon. Since the challenge began in 2016, more than \$500,000 has been donated for scholarship support.



## Foundation Welcomes New Leadership

After working at Penn State for 30 years, Joyce Matthews was seeking a new challenge and the rewards that come with it. Specifically, she was seeking a mission-driven college with dynamic and ethical leadership, a community that supports student success, and an advancement team with a sense of compassion and urgency. Montgomery College and the Montgomery College Foundation clearly fit the criteria. Asked about her new role as vice president of development and alumni relations and executive director of the Montgomery College Foundation, Joyce said, "It hasn't taken me long to see the profound contributions this institution makes in the lives of our students, their families, and this community. It's a joy to be here."

The Montgomery College Foundation Board of Directors was integral in the selection process. According to Ken Becker, the board chair, Joyce was the board's unanimous choice because "she embodies the experience, the interpersonal skills, innovative ideas, and a 'swing for the fences' approach to getting things done. We are delighted to have Joyce as our executive director."



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Montgomery College Foundation's newsletter is produced by the Office of Advancement and Community Engagement.

**Joyce Matthews**, vice president of development and alumni relations, executive director of the Montgomery College Foundation

**Katie Kumkumian**, donor relations director

**Pete Vidal**, photographer

**Montgomery College Foundation Inc.**  
9221 Corporate Boulevard, Rockville, MD 20850  
240.567.7900  
montgomerycollege.edu/foundation

[www.montgomerycollege.edu/onlinegiving](http://www.montgomerycollege.edu/onlinegiving)

For gifts, contact Joyce Matthews, executive director of the foundation, at 240.567.7493 or [joyce.matthews@montgomerycollege.edu](mailto:joyce.matthews@montgomerycollege.edu)

34TH ANNUAL

MONTGOMERY COLLEGE FOUNDATION  
**GOLF AND TENNIS  
CLASSIC**

PRESENTED BY



**SAVE THE DATE**  
**OCTOBER 21, 2019**

Lakewood Country Club  
13901 Glen Mill Road  
Rockville, MD 20850

Join us for the 34th Annual Montgomery College Foundation Golf and Tennis Classic, an event to benefit student scholarships at Montgomery College, presented by Buch Construction. For more about this year's event, visit [montgomerycollege.edu/golftournament](http://montgomerycollege.edu/golftournament).



2019 MONTGOMERY COLLEGE FOUNDATION GOLF AND TENNIS CLASSIC COMMITTEE



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