

To: Montgomery College Community
From: Dr. DeRionne P. Pollard, President
Subject: **Face Coverings and Generosity**
Date: April 8, 2020

Good afternoon, MC. Today's news involves some inspirational giving and some increased precautions.

As I'm sure you have heard, coronavirus infections are continuing to rise in Maryland, as Governor Larry Hogan reported yesterday. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) are now encouraging folks who have to go out for essential purposes—medical care, pharmacy or food shopping—to wear cloth face coverings in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain. These are not surgical masks or N-95 respirators, which are being prioritized for health care providers. You can find some [easy instructions](#) here.

While these precautions may seem additionally stressful, their goal is to reduce the spread of infections and protect lives. They are an investment in our communal future.

Last night I was paging through a favorite book, *Leadership in Turbulent Times*, by historian Doris Kearns Goodwin, when I stumbled upon a quote by Abraham Lincoln. Even among the great loss and extreme hardship of the US Civil War, Lincoln was steadfast: "I am a firm believer in the people. If given the truth, they can be depended upon to meet any national crisis. The great point is to bring them the real facts."

As we navigate the times ahead, I take great pride in the courage of our faculty, staff and students to speak truthfully about their circumstances. I see our students supporting one another with encouragement, virtual meetings, phone calls, and positive messages. Faculty are bringing their all to teaching in new ways, while staff are adapting readily and creatively to new ways of working. We see community members stepping up every day to help generously with urgent financial needs. As of yesterday, the Montgomery College Foundation had made 842 awards of student assistance, totaling \$352,000. This is 60 percent of the 1,070 requests submitted and we are still working. This is the true spirit of radical inclusion.

Let's not leave anyone behind.