

To: Montgomery College Community
From: Dr. DeRionne P. Pollard, President
Subject: **Mindfulness and COVID 19**
Date: March 26, 2020

Good afternoon. As we inch towards the end of this demanding week, I hope everyone is taking some daily time to rest and get centered. You may have heard that the Student Health and Wellness Center is hosting daily mindfulness meetings on Zoom. What a wonderful way to re-center one's self: Please see the [Coronavirus](#) website for details. There are also a number of free apps that promote [mindfulness](#) and calm, of which we could all use more.

Tomorrow is Friday so we are officially on the downward slope of a very busy week. I hear from my team that everyone is tired, but I have to share one more piece of vital information. The [Maryland Attorney General](#) is asking us all to be very cautious about fraudsters who are often active in times of crisis. The [Federal Trade Commission](#) has created a list of how to respond to specific techniques, such as robocalls, new COVID-19 treatments products, and requests for donations. Scammers can disguise themselves as charitable organizations or tout miracle products that treat COVID-19.

Fraudsters can even impersonate Montgomery College personnel, trying to take advantage of the many students who are critically in need of funds. When offering students support, the Montgomery College Foundation will never ask a student for banking information or a social security number. Scammers come in all forms, so keep your eyes open for them, and always make a phone call to a trusted source if you suspect fraud. Don't click on emails or attachments from sources you don't know. If an offer sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

The College has also had reports from our technology users of scams that claim "better ways to work remotely during COVID-19." About ten of these are reported daily through the Phishing report buttons. Please continue to watch for these. Additionally, please be wary of any attempt to steal your personal information: don't share address, driver's license number, medical records, financial information, or credit card numbers. Bad actors try to take advantage of our distraction—or even desperation—in these times, and our inattention can make them even more successful than usual.

Tomorrow I'll be sending you a video in which I relay some of the messages that faculty and staff have shared with me about their first full week of teaching/learning remotely. Some of these notes are filled with gratitude and humor, while some express frustration and impatience. I think we have all felt each of these emotions at some point in this whirlwind week, so I think you'll see something of yourself in this collection. I look forward to seeing you then.