

President's Corner



March 16, 2020 The First Official Day of Remote Working

Welcome to the first official day of remote working! Moving instruction, counseling, and support services online in response to the COVID-19 situation is an extraordinary undertaking, which MC is tackling in a record amount of time. I have a unique perspective on many of these processes and get to see all of the College's divisions working in concert. I can tell you that last week I personally witnessed dozens of moments of selfless teamwork, outstanding creativity, and tireless attention to inclusion. I am so proud of the College's responses to this emergency. At the same time, I realize that the demands on most employees have escalated, some dramatically. Whether in public safety and facilities, information technology, academic affairs, student affairs, or other—many people are working extra hours and managing expanded duties. And in some cases, people are tackling duties that are entirely new to them.

For those of you who are stepping boldly into the world of telework for the first time, I applaud you. Please have patience with yourselves and your colleagues—we are all learning through this process. During this period of transition, let's remember that many offices are managing a spike in their responsibilities as we recreate the College's services in virtual spaces. Processes may be slower than usual at first because of this high demand, so please maintain an awareness of that. If something is not happening as fast as normal, let's assume that someone is doing their very best to accomplish it. In fact, a note of encouragement or understanding to a beleaguered colleague will go a long way in boosting morale in our virtual spaces. We may have to innovate a bit around maintaining those social bonds that we usually get from face-to-face contact, so let's connect and collaborate with those sentiments in mind.

In the spirit of such collegiality, I invite you to send me stories of unity and support you have experienced or witnessed. Maybe you have seen a particularly creative response that is serving students or employees well. I think we could all use some encouraging pictures of how different

corners of the College community are adjusting. You are welcome to share with me at president@montgomerycollege.edu.

In the meantime, [MC's Coronavirus webpage](#) adds material daily. Please refer to the excellent calendar for questions about who is authorized to be on campuses on which dates. There are also detailed instructions for students and employees, resources for those who need support or guidance, and updated information about any changes to the College's procedures. The more folks can use these resources to answer their own questions, the more personnel are freed up to tackle other pressing duties. As I mentioned in my Friday memo, the College has an important responsibility to collaborate with the county to limit the spread of the virus by teaching, learning, and working remotely. Continuing to provide high quality education to our students while supporting our colleagues is a challenge that I am certain we can tackle together.

Remember to wash hands, maintain social distance, and be well.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "DeRionne". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter "D" being particularly large and stylized.

DeRionne P. Pollard, PhD

We empower our students to change their lives, and we enrich the life of our community.

We are accountable for our results.
