

Subject: Appointment of the Interim Dean of Chemical and Biological Sciences
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Memorandum

To: Montgomery College Community
From: Dr. Nawal Benmouna, Vice President for STEM and Health Sciences
Subject: **Appointment of Interim Dean of Chemical and Biological Sciences**
Date: July 28, 2025

I am pleased to announce the appointment of Dr. Vedham Karpakakunjaram as the interim dean of chemical and biological sciences. Dr. Karpakakunjaram will assume the duties and responsibilities of interim dean on July 19, 2025.

Dr. Karpakakunjaram has served Montgomery College for over 16 years in a variety of impactful roles. Most recently, he served as the acting chair of the biology department on the Rockville Campus, where he led student-centered initiatives to promote academic excellence, equity, and a sense of belonging across the department. He has also been the principal investigator of a \$530,000 NSF-funded grant that built a national network of STEM faculty from more than 45 community colleges.

Dr. Karpakakunjaram's leadership includes serving as co-chair of the Collegewide Curriculum Committee, where he led efforts to improve operational efficiency and strengthen institutional collaboration. He has managed grant and departmental budgets exceeding \$1 million, demonstrating his strategic approach to resource planning.

As a first-generation college graduate, Dr. Karpakakunjaram brings deep empathy and understanding to his student-centered leadership. He has co-led numerous high-impact practices, including implementing Open Educational Resources and expanding course-based undergraduate research experiences to increase student access and success.

Dr. Karpakakunjaram currently serves as the president-elect of the National Association of Biology Teachers and has cultivated partnerships with institutions such as NIH and industry leaders through the National Institute for Innovation in Manufacturing Biopharmaceuticals to expand experiential learning and workforce development opportunities for students.

Dr. Karpakakunjaram earned a both a bachelor and master of science in zoology from Loyola College, Chennai, India, and a doctor of philosophy in zoology from University of Madras, Chennai, India.

With his exceptional experience and dedication to advancing the College's mission, please join me in welcoming Dr. Karpakakunjaram in his new role as interim dean of chemical and biological sciences.

