

Montgomery College Strategic Plan

July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2028

Our Mission

Montgomery College is where students discover their passions and unlock their potential to transform lives, enrich the community, and change the world.

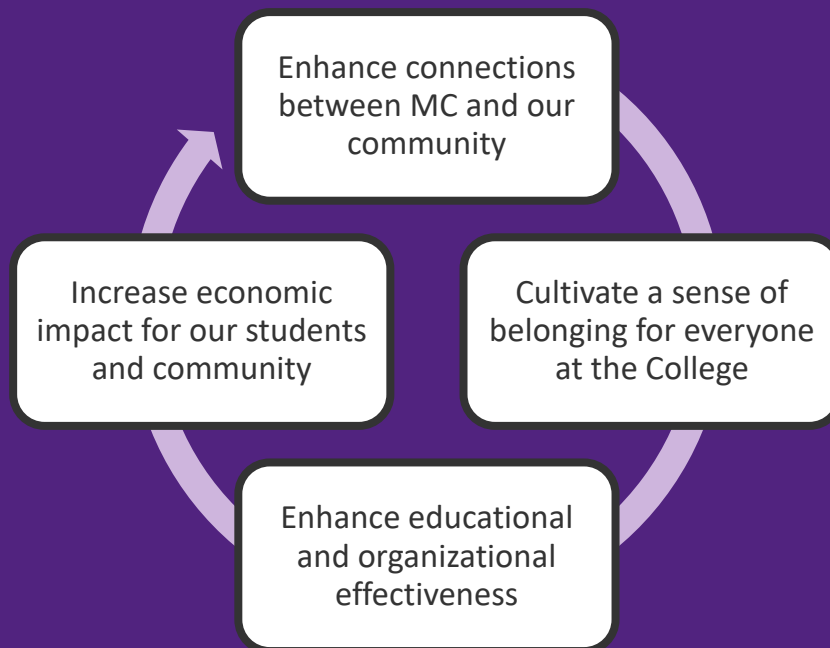
Our Vision

Montgomery College will serve as the community's institution of choice to transform the lives of students and Montgomery County.

Our Values

*Equity and Inclusion ♦ Excellence ♦ Integrity ♦ Respect
Innovation ♦ Adaptability ♦ Sustainability*

Our Strategic Plan



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MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I want to convey our appreciation for the extraordinary efforts that produced this refreshed strategic plan. It presents a visionary approach for the ambitious work that Montgomery College is charged to fulfill, and its preparation has modeled the inclusive spirit and energy that defines us. Extensive collaboration with stakeholders has contributed foundational perspectives that enriched the planning process and shaped new directions. The monumental planning effort has strengthened existing partnerships, drawn lessons about the impact of recent developments on our students and our communities, and generated new insights for the College's future.

The refreshed strategic plan affirms transformational aspirations—for student access, for completion, and for post-completion success—and it anchors these aspirations in careful planning and rigorous review. The plan is grounded in a commitment to a continual refresh of our strategies as we measure progress toward our aims and learn more. It remains true to our roots of equitable student access and success—enhancing learning, strengthening partnerships, and transforming our community. It affirms everyone belongs.

Creating opportunities that are equitably available will unlock the potential for all of those the College serves. The urgency of this dynamic has always existed but has been accelerated by the conditions of the last few years. The work of the refresh committee has addressed these challenges head on and responded with innovation and creativity that will allow students to transform their lives and, in so doing, further enrich the community.

Dr. Michael A. Brintnall
Chair
Board of Trustees

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Montgomery College has a long track record of developing meaningful strategic plans and then using them to strengthen the College and improve students' experiences. The most recent plan, adopted in 2020, was no exception. It was a visionary plan with important goals that steered College decision-making. While that plan was intended to go through 2025, the world has changed dramatically since it was composed. The College and Montgomery County have been impacted by the pandemic and its influences on health issues and the economy, by a concomitant social justice awakening, as well as by individuals' college-going decisions, career expectations, and more. Through listening and learning about the lived experiences of the members of internal and external communities and their desire for transformation, it became clear that there was an opportunity for our strategic plan to reflect changes brought on by these unprecedented times.

Therefore, a refresh of the strategic plan was needed and the effort to do just that was undertaken in fall 2022. I thank the Board of Trustees for its support and guidance throughout the process. I thank the Strategic Plan Advisory Refresh Committee (SPARC) for its leadership in developing ideas, then drafts, and then the final plan. I thank the many students, faculty, and staff who contributed ideas and feedback. I thank our community partners and business leaders who gave their input as well. The insights and observations informed the final version with new ideas and alternative perspectives. This has been, indeed, a shared effort.

As you read this important refreshed strategic plan, I hope you will take note of the architecture of its content. While it conveys the metrics that the College will use to define progress—specifics that help us benchmark our advancement—it also outlines strategies for reaching these metrics—the how of our shared journey. These approaches are tightly coupled with the larger goals for our institution: enhanced connections, a sense of belonging, innovation, and economic impact. While all of us should see our purpose woven into the shared goals, the strategies and indicators are more specific and help us understand how unique roles and activities will support and advance progress and transformation.

I hope you will find that the plan has been designed to touch all of us at the College and our community. It is based on a belief that the College is a vehicle of transformation for the community we serve. The plan is imaginative and practical; collaborative and individual; empathic and compassionate; inspirational and disciplinary. We are all called to use these approaches in our work at different moments, so this is not a new paradigm. However, if we can work toward and achieve the goals set forth here, I am confident we will create even more student success and community progress, now and in the future.

Dr. Jermaine F. Williams
President
Montgomery College

INTRODUCTION

It is estimated that more than 500,000 individuals have attended Montgomery College since it was established in 1946. Thousands of dedicated faculty members have led learning journeys in hundreds of disciplines where students have transformed their knowledge and skills. And thousands of dedicated staff members have provided services to support and strengthen students' experiences.

The MC of 2023 is a far different institution than it was when the doors opened some 77 years ago. The College has changed and improved as knowledge, technology, and society have advanced. In 1946, the most in-demand job was factory worker. Today it is software developer. In 1946, scientists barely understood DNA. Today, there are whole industries built on DNA technology. In 1946, Montgomery College served only white students, most of whom grew up in Montgomery County. Since 1953, MC has welcomed students of all races and today MC has no majority race with students who hail not only from Montgomery County, but also from more than 150 countries.

Strategic plans have helped the College to navigate these changes, to adapt to new times, and serve our students so that they have knowledge and skills to transform their lives. Such plans serve as the north star for the institution, guiding planning, budgeting, and decision-making.

Refreshing the Strategic Plan

In 2019, the Board of Trustees adopted a visionary five-year strategic plan, which went into effect in July 2020, and was intended to go through 2025. However, the arrival of the global coronavirus pandemic ended the routines we had known as a College. The pandemic led to immediate changes in how the College serves its students and community and supports its faculty and staff. The pandemic kept us home, changed how we connect with one another, and redefined our sense of self and community—but it was one of many critical changes affecting postsecondary education at the start of this decade.

Therefore, in fall 2022, the College undertook an effort to refresh the strategic plan. Through listening and learning about the lived experiences of members of internal and external communities and their desire for transformation, it became clear that there is an opportunity for our strategic plan to reflect changes brought on by these unprecedented times. This “refreshed” strategic plan is designed to guide the College for five years through 2028. The timeline is no coincidence. It aligns with the conclusion of our next re-accreditation during the 2026–2027 academic year, so that—when composing the *next* strategic plan—the institution can take full advantage of what it learns during the accreditation process.

Our experiences during the pandemic have underscored the importance of technology in education and work. We are exploring and investing in advanced tools like artificial intelligence, virtual reality, and learning systems to optimize teaching and learning outcomes and research, test, and adopt flexible learning models to cater to diverse student needs, preferences, and circumstances. We are also deeply committed to creating inclusive learning and working environments for all members of our community. Acknowledging the pandemic's impact on mental health and wellness, we are promoting self-care and creating safe spaces for students and employees to address mental health and wellness concerns. Additionally, we recognize a shift to purpose-focused work and a transition from work-life balance to life-work integration.

We also recognize the power of collaboration and partnerships between Montgomery College, industry, and government to enhance higher education’s overall quality and impact. We are committed to cultivating adaptability and promoting lifelong learning through diverse credit and noncredit offerings and professional development opportunities. This commitment benefits individual students, faculty, and staff, and contributes to our community and society’s growth and development.

Development of the Plan

This refreshed strategic plan was made possible by students, faculty, staff, community members, and employers who contributed ideas, shared their visions and their needs, and reacted to the draft plan. The work of researching, drafting, and sharing the plan was performed by members of the Strategic Plan Advisory Refresh Committee, also known as SPARC. The committee consisted of over 40 members and functioned through five subcommittees: (1) Student Success Subcommittee, (2) Employees Subcommittee, (3) Community Subcommittee, (4) Workforce and Partnerships Subcommittee, and (5) Mission, Vision, and Values Subcommittee. The work of the committee was reviewed and guided by a Steering Committee.

While the final refreshed plan lists Goals, Supporting Strategies, Intended Outcomes, and Indicators in that order, that is not the order in which they were developed. In fact, SPARC began with the end in mind and focused first on Intended Outcomes (see Figure 1)—what do we want to accomplish? Next SPARC focused on Supporting Strategies that would lead to those outcomes. From there, a Goal statement was developed. The Indicators depend on the Goal, Supporting Strategies, and Intended Outcomes being complete, so SPARC finalized them once the other components were complete.



Figure 1. Development of a goal and its components.

Several key MC resources played an important part of the committee’s research and underscored the needs of our students and our community today. These allowed the committee to build upon what we have already learned through the following:

- The [Presidential Transition Advisory Committee report](#), issued in September 2022
- The [Your Voice, Your MC employee survey](#) results from 2021
- The [Community College Survey of Student Engagement](#) results from 2021
- The transformational aspirations shared during Dr. Jermaine F. Williams’ [inauguration](#) as MC president
- Strategic plans from 30 other community colleges, which were reviewed and evaluated for ideas and best practices
- Scholarly higher education research, for example, *The Great Upheaval*, by Arthur Levine and Scott Van Pelt

The book, *The Great Upheaval*, has received acclaim for its research and insight since its publication in 2022. One of its co-authors, Dr. Arthur Levine, spoke at an MC collegewide forum early in the refresh process. The book’s insights for institutions were considered by the committee in developing the refreshed plan. These include adapting to technological innovations within the higher education sector, considering the new array of content producers and distributors aimed at postsecondary

audiences, preparing students for the knowledge economy through a focus on outcomes and learning, and reimagining the role of degrees, non-degree certifications and just-in-time education.

The first draft of the refreshed plan was posted on a College website in February 2023 and included an online form for feedback. During February, campus and collegewide forums were held for students and employees to discuss the plan with members of SPARC and give more feedback. A student focus group was assembled and provided input before the draft refreshed plan was written and engaged to react to the draft refreshed plan. In addition, forums for community leaders and employers were held as well. All of the feedback has been studied and considered in reaching the final refreshed plan.

Lexicon

Every strategic plan has a vocabulary that reflects its design. The refreshed strategic plan uses terms with these definitions in mind:

- **Strategic Plan:** a roadmap to reach goals
- **Students:** all students, both credit and noncredit
- **Goal:** desired result
- **Supporting Strategy:** a plan of action
- **Intended Outcome:** consequence
- **Indicator:** standard unit used to express the size, amount, or degree of achieving an outcome

Put together, *Goals* will be actualized by *Supporting Strategies* that lead to *Intended Outcomes*, which are tracked by *Indicators*.

A central term—and indeed the focus—of the plan is the word, students. In this plan, “students” means all students. This plan seeks to achieve the same level of institutional attention for credit and noncredit students.

Implementation of the Plan

Upon the Board of Trustees’ adoption, the refreshed strategic plan is effective July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2028. The Goals of this refreshed plan will serve as the Annual Institutional Priorities with specific Supporting Strategies selected for attention each year. These strategies will be the annual goals of senior leaders whose team members’ annual goals will align to promote progress and completion of the plan’s Supporting Strategies. Intended Outcomes will be tracked regularly, and the progress will be reported annually via Indicators. The Indicators are intended to serve as broad metrics by which we can measure progress toward the goal, not as an assessment of a particular strategy. Further evidence with disaggregated data will be provided in other institutional plans or during the assessment cycle. With this focus and systematic approach, the College will make progress toward its Transformational Aspirations.

In addition, other institutional plans at the College will be reviewed to align with the refreshed strategic plan. The strategic plan will be a living and dynamic roadmap, fortified by consistent review and needed changes. The implementation of this plan will be assessed periodically through formative and summative means that will allow us to analyze the Supporting Strategies, Intended Outcomes, and Indicators and make changes to these (prior to the end of the plan), if needed. A review of strategic plan progress and assessments will be reported to the Board of Trustees periodically.

As the College launches this refreshed strategic plan, we are refreshing our commitment to students and the community. Montgomery College will refresh its infrastructure, modernize technologies, and facilitate seamless pathways for students to accomplish their goals. Montgomery College is committed to remaining agile and innovative, creating an environment where students, faculty, and staff can thrive and positively affect and transform their communities and society.

TRANSFORMATIONAL ASPIRATIONS

The goals laid out in this strategic plan are ambitious and set the College on a path to not just help our students graduate but to do so in ways that will impact the entire county. It is therefore important to have aspirations beyond the five years of this strategic plan. We, as an institution, have the capacity and ability to change society in ways that matter most: reducing poverty, increasing economic and social mobility, and producing students who are ambitious and deeply engaged in society.

The bold set of transformational aspirations that will guide the College today and beyond 2028 can be broken into three components: access, completion, and post-completion success. Specifically, these aspirations are framed as follows:

- **Access** is not simply opening the doors of the institution to those interested in attending. Instead, it is deliberate work in the community to create a college-going culture across the county, and especially in those areas where going to college has historically been the exception instead of the expectation.
- **Completion** is not just about earning degrees. The College must ensure that all credentials that the College offers provide experiences of economic, social, and community impact.
- **Post-completion success** is our institutional ability to transform lives. When students leave MC, whether they are transferring to another school or entering the workforce, they need to have mastered skills that will ensure success on their journey and allow them to earn a family sustaining wage.

Each aspiration is accompanied by aims—that is, specific and measurable targets, which we want to realize in 10 years. These aspirations are ambitious, big ideas that will have a deep and lasting impact on the communities of Montgomery County.

The College is poised to meet the community's needs. The challenges of the last few years—inflation, unfilled jobs, mismatched skills for existing jobs, continued racial and institutional discrimination, and the pandemic's unpredictable turns—have exacerbated income disparities. These transformational aspirations help guide us on our journey to reduce these disparities and center the College's work on embracing the community and growing better together.

OUR MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES

An organization's mission statement is a declaration of why it exists. A community college's fundamental reason for existence is postsecondary education. In different times and spaces, a revised statement of that mission should resonate to instill a sense of purpose for the members of the organization. The vision statement of an organization expresses what the organization aspires to become. And values are the principles on which members of an organization base their behavior, decisions, and actions.

Mission Statement

Montgomery College is where students discover their passions and unlock their potential to transform lives, enrich the community, and change the world.

Vision Statement

Montgomery College will serve as the community's institution of choice to transform the lives of students and Montgomery County.

Values Statement

At our core, we believe in welcoming all students and all employees into a community that emphasizes belonging. We believe in giving every individual what they need to succeed (**Equity and Inclusion**). We believe in conducting our teaching and service duties with distinction (**Excellence**) in an ethical and trustworthy manner (**Integrity**). We are dedicated to being a transformational institution seeking social justice and are continuously updating and improving all our learning environments, the curriculum, and student services (**Innovation**) to meet the changing needs of our community (**Adaptability**). We make decisions about our operations in a way that respects and sustains the environment (**Sustainability**). We conduct ourselves with civility, courtesy, and professionalism in all our interactions (**Respect**).

THE PLAN

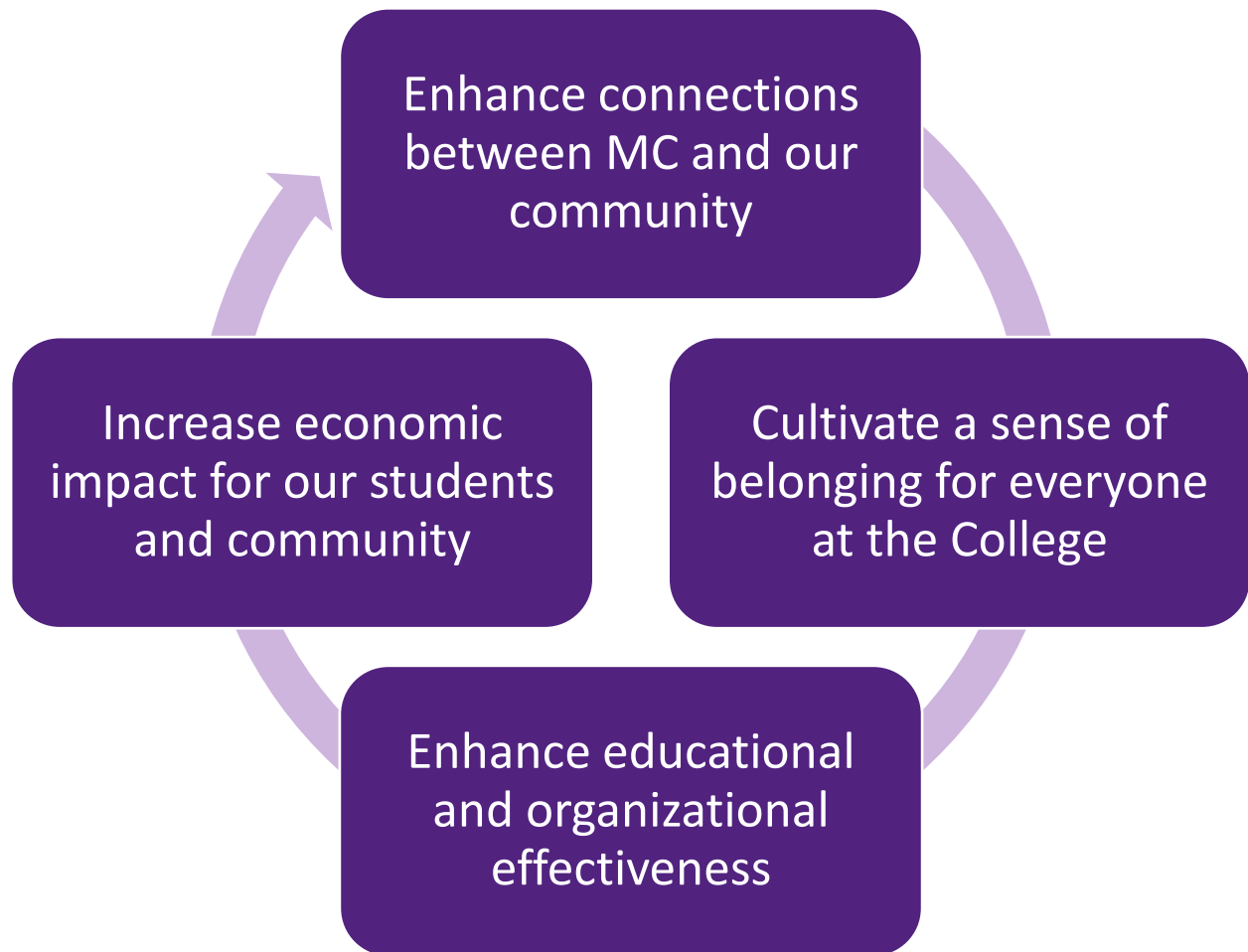
The strategic plan is built around four broad goals with the intent of making the Montgomery College's vision a reality. Each goal can be seen as a step along a cycle of continuous improvement. The order of the goals is not intended to imply any prioritization. They are ordered here to reflect student's relationship with the College, which begins before they are a student. The cycle is similar for Montgomery College students, employees, community and workforce partners.

Goal 1: Enhance connections between Montgomery College and our community

Goal 2: Cultivate a sense of belonging for everyone at the College

Goal 3: Enhance educational and organizational effectiveness

Goal 4: Increase economic impact for our students and community



Goal 1

Enhance connections between Montgomery College and our community

SUPPORTING STRATEGIES

Scale up outreach efforts in the community to raise awareness of the academic, cultural, and civic opportunities available at the College.

Leverage and expand partnerships with community-based organizations addressing mental health, food and housing insecurity for students and employees.

Expand collaborations with county students who are in elementary and middle school.

Strengthen our collaboration with MCPS, the University System of Maryland (USM), and other regional educational institutions enhancing students' academic journeys.

Develop East County expansion plan to meet the community's educational needs.

Improve alignment and communication of workforce advisory committees in all programs.

Engage with key county and regional civic, nonprofit, and faith-based organizations.

INTENDED OUTCOMES

Meaningful engagement with MCPS students and their families by 7th grade

Continuous enrollment growth, across demographic characteristics, to be the community's college

Integration of civic engagement in the College's practices

Greater sense of unity between the College and the community

Greater awareness of mental health and basic need supports for MC students and employees

INDICATORS

Unduplicated fiscal year headcount

Unduplicated students taking courses at the East County Education Center

Students enrolled in dual enrollment

Percentage of 6th grade MCPS students that have attended an MC outreach event

Percentage of students with an academic plan for the current year

Voting rate of MC students

Percentage of MC students facing any basic needs insecurity

Goal 2

Cultivate a sense of belonging for everyone at the College

SUPPORTING STRATEGIES

Develop and promote activities for students and employees that foster a sense of belonging for everyone.

Assure alignment of College policies and practices with antiracist principles.

Leverage innovative teaching and delivery models to ensure equitable access and success for all students and employees.

Develop milestones for all students at key points along their pathway, with alerts to notify students who met the milestone and supports for those who did not.

Expand focused, equitable student supports for unique populations.

Foster a culture of professional growth among all College employees.

Implement ways to validate students' experiences by streamlining the transfer-in processes, the awarding of credit for prior learning, and pathways between credit and noncredit programs.

Make data-informed decisions based on engagement and satisfaction survey results to develop timely action plans, implement change, and evaluate progress.

Expand the opportunities for just-in-time and workforce-essential learning such as micro-credentials and badging of students and employees.

INTENDED OUTCOMES

Students who feel a sense of belonging at the college, regardless of demographic characteristics

Employees who feel a sense of belonging at the college, regardless of demographic characteristics or position

Academic and career advising experience at key milestones for all students

INDICATORS

Graduation rate

Transfer rate to baccalaureate institutions

Employee engagement and student satisfaction surveys

Percentage of students participating in extracurricular or cocurricular activity

Annual retention rates for students and employees

Goal 3

Enhance educational and organizational effectiveness

SUPPORTING STRATEGIES

Streamline the student registration process for all students.

Adhere to a strategically designed and inclusive enrollment management plan.

Implement a common technology to advise and counsel students along their entire academic pathway.

Expand and innovate high impact teaching practices.

Expand the use of data to effectively monitor student enrollment and the progression through their academic journey, including post-completion success.

Implement a work culture that meets the changing needs of students, employees, and the College.

Revise employee performance evaluation procedures to support institutional goals and more frequent conversations with supervisors.

Align staffing with student and institutional needs to help the College to be a destination employer.

Explore options for students desiring to earn a baccalaureate degree at Montgomery College.

INTENDED OUTCOMES

Academic excellence in all programs

An effective learning environment for all students

Efficient registration process for all students

Data-informed program development, recruitment, scheduling and student support services

Increased, equitable student retention and completion rates

Consistent student support services available to all students, regardless of location or program

Competitive compensation packages for all employees

Large pools of qualified candidates for job postings

INDICATORS

Annual average number of qualified applications per position advertised

Annual retention rates for students and employees

Percentage of positions filled by current college employees

Annual general education proficiency rates

Number of sections cancelled during ongoing registration

Annual number of employee non-retirement separations from the College

Goal 4

Increase economic impact for our students and community

SUPPORTING STRATEGIES

Identify employment needs and relevant skills that prepare students for the future and incorporate those skills into appropriate pathways.

Embed career advising and readiness competencies into academic programs and co-curricular learning.

Partner with industry representatives, where appropriate, to inform students, faculty, and staff of best practices and current trends.

Expand equitable access to internships, experiential learning, apprenticeships, and employment opportunities for all students.

INTENDED OUTCOMES

Affordable postsecondary education offerings

Post-completion success through greater preparation and employability

Career development integrated into the student experience

Increased connections between workforce and academic programs

All degrees, certificates, and micro-credentials are designed for economic, social, and community impact

Increased economic mobility through decreased gaps in earning potential among all students

INDICATORS

Graduation rate

Licensure pass rate

Annual number of students participating in internships, experiential learning, or apprenticeships

Annual number of students having completed both credit and noncredit courses at MC

Percentage of credentials that map to family sustaining wages within five years of completion

THE REFRESH TEAM

Steering Committee

Dr. Monica Brown, Senior Vice President for Student Affairs

Dr. Stephen Cain, Chief of Staff/Chief Strategy Officer, Co-Facilitator of SPARC, Executive Sponsor of Refresh Project

Mr. Sherwin Collette, Senior Vice President for Administrative and Fiscal Services

Ms. Joyce Matthews, Interim Senior Vice President for Advancement and Community Engagement

Dr. Sanjay Rai, Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

Mr. John Hamman, Chief Analytics and Insights Officer, Co-Facilitator of SPARC

Dr. Nawal Benmouna, Co-lead of SPARC Community Subcommittee

Dr. Zenobia Garrison, Co-lead of SPARC Student Success Subcommittee

Alton Henley, Co-lead of SPARC Workforce and Partnerships Subcommittee

Mr. Javon Lamar Inman, Co-lead of SPARC Workforce and Partnerships Subcommittee

Dr. Paul D. Miller, Co-lead of SPARC Employees Subcommittee

Dr. Clevette Ridguard, Co-lead of SPARC Mission, Vision, and Values Subcommittee

Ms. Karla Silvestre, Co-lead of SPARC Community Subcommittee

Mr. John “Erik” Swanson, Co-lead of SPARC Employees Subcommittee

Dr. Alla Webb, Co-lead of SPARC Student Success Subcommittee

Ms. Charmaine Weston, Co-lead of SPARC Mission, Vision, and Values Subcommittee

Strategic Plan Advisory Refresh Committee

Ms. Tonya L. Addleman, Administrative Manager, *Office of Vice President & Provost, Germantown Campus and Collegewide STEM Unit*

Ms. Vanessa A. Aderibigbe, Administrative Assistant, *Biology Department, Rockville Campus*

Dr. Munther F. Alraban, Professor, *Mathematics*

Alice-Ann Beachy, Special Program Director, *Workforce Development and Continuing Education*

Dr. Nawal Benmouna, Acting Dean, *Science, Engineering, and Technology*

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Ms. Jin H. Choi, Adjunct Professor, *World Languages and Philosophy*

Ms. Amanda Darr, Counseling Faculty, *Counseling and Advising*

Angela Dawson, Initiative Program Coordinator, *Office of Student Affairs*

Mr. Ramón Luis De La Cruz, Assistant to the Director of MC Facilities, *Office of Facilities*

Dr. Zenobia Garrison, Counseling Faculty, *Counseling and Advising*

Dr. Lucinda Grinnell, Writing Center Director, *English and Reading Program, Rockville Campus*

Ms. Lisa Hackley, Director of Student Life, *Office of Student Life, Rockville*

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Ms. Shawn Sanders, Leadership Coordinator, *Office of Student Life, Germantown*
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Mr. John “Erik” Swanson, Director, *The Institute for Part-Time Faculty Engagement & Support*
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Dr. Alla Webb, Chair, *Department of Science, Engineering, and Technology*
Ms. Charmaine Weston, Chair, *Department of English and Reading*
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