THEME IV: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Montgomery College will foster community building, civic responsibility, and intercultural understanding, and serve as the place for neutral public dialog to advance social justice and enrich the life of the community.

OVERVIEW

In 2012, Montgomery College began its journey to reimagine the community college required for the 21st century. In striving to remain relevant to the community we serve, the College sought to actively connect with the broader community through an organized and strategic effort to reach underserved and underengaged populations. Achieving enhanced community engagement required partnering and establishing relationships with diverse communities, building a stronger web presence, growing media and public relations efforts, and soliciting dialogues. As one of its major initiatives, the College created localized neighborhood centers that provide cultural programs and events that reach deeper into the community. This is the fourth celebration in our MC 2020 Milestones Marathon series.

MESSAGE FROM MR. SEARS, SVP-ADVANCEMENT AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

"Through the efforts of hundreds of faculty, staff, administrators, MC Foundation board members, alumni volunteers, PIC MC board members, and community corporate and non-profit partners, we have been able to accomplish several elements of the strategic plan and this theme. Since the community engagement office was created in 2014, the vision was that community engagement was and is a holistic responsibility for us all. The vision was also that we would stay student-centered in the approach. That vision has been accomplished by our ability to bring the community to the college and take the college out to the community. The initiatives and successes listed below reflect an expansion on the college's commitment to civic responsibility, intercultural understanding, and social justice. These also reflect on how we have enriched the life of the community and given and expanded opportunities for residents and underserved populations to pursue and engage with higher education in new ways."

INITIATIVE SPOTLIGHT

- Development of two community engagement centers where college, partner, and philanthropic resources provide scholarships and resources for students to better access the college and courses
- Creation of community engagement pop-up centers at the county jail, the Ethiopian Community Center, and at Identity.
- Establishment of new and expanded partnerships, such as FutureLink and Identity to better serve our students and prospective students.
- Completion of a College Town plan and a community engagement assessment for each campus to inform future strategies and initiatives.
- Evolution of the College's communications that provide critical information on various platforms in different languages.

CELEBRATING SUCCESS

- Completed the Web Redesign Project to provide a more user-friendly experience to the community with key pages in different languages.
- Served 12,000+ county residents with services and courses offered at the community engagement centers and pop-up centers.
- Raised more than $30.6 million in scholarship and program support through the MC 2020 Campaign.
- Created the College's first community engagement newsletter, "Engage with MC," and its first monthly e-news called "@MC", which are distributed to thousands of college and county stakeholders.
- Engaged faculty through the Carnegie Classification initiative to incorporate community engaged teaching and learning

In their own words: Student Perspective

"The Community Engagement Center gave me hope for the first time and I was excited. After completing the Early Childhood Education Certification course, I received assistance in working on my resume and job interview preparation. Soon after, I got a job at a daycare center where I was promoted. My life is so much better and productive due to the services I received at Montgomery College's Community Engagement Center. I am deeply grateful to the Community Engagement staff members for the continued support, resources and encouragement I have received. Thank you!

-- Zelela Gulilat

In their own words: Faculty Perspective

James "Britt" Boice, who teaches digital literacy and GED courses at the pre-release center, calls his time in the classroom there a "breath of fresh air." "I get to come in here and help people all day—and then tomorrow, I get to come back and do it all again," says Boice. "When you get your class into a flow, and people are getting their GEDs, other students see that and are inspired to work hard."

---James " Britt" Boice, Workforce Development and Continuing Education Faculty Member