

FOUNDATION FOCUS

MONTGOMERY COLLEGE FOUNDATION NEWS

SUMMER | 2025

A photograph of two Black female graduates in black caps and gowns. The graduate on the left is smiling and making a peace sign with her right hand. She has a red and yellow stole. The graduate on the right is also smiling, wearing glasses and a purple stole, and holding a smartphone. Her cap is decorated with pink and white flowers. Other graduates are visible in the background.

Celebrating Impact

[\\$50M Comprehensive Campaign Kickoff](#) P.14

ALSO INSIDE

[A Nurse's Bequest,
A Future of Compassion](#) P.12



Dr. Jermaine F. Williams, president of Montgomery College, greets students and guests at the Day of Thanks celebration in March.

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Established in 1982, the Montgomery College Foundation is a 501(c)(3) institutionally related foundation and charitable organization governed by business, alumni, philanthropic, and community leaders. The Foundation's mission is to provide critical financial and nonfinancial resources in advancing the Montgomery College mission to transform student lives and enrich the diverse communities it serves.

Cover design by Joe Weyman



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Investing in Student Success



Mary Pat Alcus

“...we create pathways to opportunity, helping individuals rise above their circumstances, transforming their lives.”

.....

In the world of investing, we focus on returns, risk management, and long-term growth. These same principles, I believe, apply to the investments we make in our community and its future through our support of Montgomery College and the students we serve.

Every dollar invested in education is an investment in our collective future. Each student who graduates and enters the workforce enhances the well-being of our community. They bring new ideas, innovation, and a renewed sense of purpose to the world around them. When we fund scholarships at Montgomery College, we create pathways to opportunity, helping individuals rise above their circumstances, transforming their futures.

When you support a Montgomery College student, you send a message louder than any words can express: “I believe in you. I want you to succeed. I want you to have the same opportunities that I had—or that I wish for my own children.” This message is more than encouragement—it is a vote of confidence that echoes through the lives of the students who receive it.

As members of this community, your support is a beacon of hope, showing students that their dreams are not bound by financial barriers. It is a signal that ambition can be matched with opportunity, and that every student, regardless of their background, has the potential to achieve their goals. You help create a future where dreams are nurtured, not tempered by hardship.

With your continued support, this vision is not just possible—it is within our grasp. Together, we can build a community where every student can thrive, and where our collective investment in education brings lasting change to our future.



As you read this issue of Foundation Focus, you’ll find stories that reflect the energy, ambition, and progress of the past year. Taken together, they represent the spirit of what we can accomplish through our shared commitment to Montgomery College and our students.

This edition captures a year of momentum—accomplishments made possible by your belief in education, in potential, and in the future we are building.



Alcus Family Goes the Distance for Student Athletes

A significant moment unfolded on the Rockville Campus soccer field, where a new chapter in the College's athletic legacy began. A gift agreement supporting athletic scholarships was officially signed, marking a generous contribution by Mary Pat and Darren Alcus, whose commitment to fostering student athletes will leave a lasting impact on the students as well as the College.

In recognition of their support, the soccer field will be named Alcus Field, a tribute to the Alcus family's dedication and vision for the future of athletics. The signing ceremony, held right on the field, underscored the donors' deep belief in the power of sports to shape young lives and provide opportunities for

deserving college athletes. Their generosity enhances the experience for current and future players while standing as a reminder of how community support can transform educational and athletic landscapes.

(Above) Darren and Mary Pat Alcus with President Williams (center) surrounded by MC Raptors from men's and women's soccer teams at the Alcus Field gift agreement signing event on August 22, 2024.

Future in Focus:

Two Student Directors Poised for Greatness



Lauren Chin

General Engineering Major and
Early College Program Student

Lauren Chin's Montgomery College journey began in an unexpected way—through summer courses in math and cooking at just 8 years old. Nine years later, she returned

as an Early College student, who graduated with her associate's degree in general engineering exactly one week before receiving her high school diploma.

While Chin mastered the College's most advanced math courses, her most transformative experiences happened outside the classroom. "At MC, I became a leader and built the confidence to use my voice," she said. She served as an SGA Senator, a student member of the Academic Services Governance Council, and a speaker on a panel hosted by President Williams. She also helped launch the Montgomery College Philanthropy Council alongside fellow student director Eman Saqib.

As a Philanthropy Council founding member, Chin helped lead service projects, host donor events, and allocate Foundation funds—work she hopes to continue. "The Philanthropy Council builds a legacy of generosity and opportunity," she said.

This fall, Lauren will attend Cornell University as a Cornell Tradition Fellow, a distinction awarded to less than 4% of undergraduates for dedication to work, service, and scholarship. She plans to major in electrical and computer engineering, and ultimately pursue a master's in human-computer interaction.

Though not a scholarship recipient herself, Lauren deeply values the impact of donor support. "Scholarships allow students to focus on growth rather than financial stress," she said. "To our donors—thank you for believing in us and helping turn our dreams into reality."



Eman Saqib

Criminal Justice Major

Student directors charting distinct career paths share a common thread: they came to MC seeking opportunity—and found it.

After leaving everything familiar behind in Pakistan—her home, friends, and the life she had always known—Saqib moved to the U.S. four years ago. "Back home, I was passionate about

advocacy, but my opportunities to engage were limited. Coming to Montgomery College changed that."

A self-described nerd often found in the library, Saqib's biggest challenge wasn't academics—it was opening herself up to new experiences. "I was shy and introverted, but I knew I wanted to grow. MC gave me the opportunity, space, and encouragement to do just that."

She began joining clubs and councils, serving as a student representative on the Equity and Excellence Committee, chairing several cultural and service organizations, and acting as secretary of the Rockville Campus Council. These leadership roles led to her selection as a student director and co-founding chair of the Philanthropy Council.

Her growth extended beyond campus through internships at the Library of Congress and the District Court in Rockville, supported by the Paul Peck Humanities Institute. She made the Dean's List every semester, joined Phi Theta Kappa, became a Renaissance Honors Scholar, and won the prestigious Coca-Cola Silver Scholarship.

"My greatest achievement is the person I've become," she said. "MC gave me a home, a voice, and the courage to step into the world." This fall, Saqib will transfer to George Washington University on a full scholarship to study criminal justice.

At the scholarship luncheon, she told donors, "Your generosity is a belief in our potential. Thank you for investing in our futures."

►► **Student representatives** serve a term lasting through the current academic year. The opportunity is extended to two students each year.

New Philanthropy Council



Inspired by the generosity and vision of philanthropist Kimmy Duong, the Montgomery College Foundation publicly launched the Philanthropy Council during the inaugural MC Foundation Day of Giving on November 14, 2024. This event, which took place in the Long Nguyen and Kimmy Duong Student Services Center on the Rockville Campus, highlighted the Foundation's commitment to fostering a culture of giving and connecting donors to meaningful causes.

The council focuses on five key areas:

- Allocating grants to support impactful community projects.
- Capturing inspiring stories of generous donors.
- Creating awareness of the MC Foundation's work.
- Leading Philanthropy Day.
- Collaborating on MC Serve Days, inspiring volunteerism, and fostering a stronger culture of service.

Kimmy Duong (pictured above, center-left along with her husband, Dr. Long Nguyen), a pioneer in business and philanthropy, has dedicated her life to empowering others. Her journey from humble beginnings to a successful career reflects her resilience, determination, and an unwavering commitment to making a difference. Her advocacy for education and personal generosity have opened doors for students from underserved populations, making her an ideal inspiration for the council.

Through its efforts, the Philanthropy Council ensures Kimmy Duong's legacy continues to inspire kindness and transformative change for generations to come.

Foundation Welcomes New Executive Director

In the wake of Joyce Matthews' departure in January, the Montgomery College Foundation welcomes Bernadette L. Maldonado as its new executive director. Maldonado brings almost 20 years of higher education experience to the role, coupled with personal experience as a community college student. Maldonado started her academic journey at a community college before going on to earn a bachelor's and a master's degree from the University of San Diego.



Throughout her career, Maldonado has successfully overseen large-scale campaigns and developed strong donor relationships across multiple institutions. Maldonado's experience in

strategic fundraising and leadership roles has uniquely prepared her to oversee the MC Foundation's \$50 million campaign. As assistant vice president of university relations and campaign at the University of Maryland, College Park, she played a key role in the \$1.5 billion *Fearless Ideas* campaign, where she helped the university achieve 90% of its fundraising goal.

Under her leadership, Maldonado will help drive the Our College, Our Community, Our Future Campaign to new heights, ensuring its success in supporting students and strengthening the College's impact on students for years to come.

"I am excited to give back by leading our fundraising efforts to ensure that all students have the support they need to succeed and transform their lives," says Maldonado. She started at the College on January 8.

Reflection and Gratitude



Joyce Matthews

“...we believe with all our hearts that Montgomery College is a place where your financial contributions can go a long way and make a big difference.”

I have always known that philanthropy is deeply personal. When we are fortunate enough to have worked hard and been blessed to have some discretionary income, we have many choices. When we want to give back, pay something forward, leave a legacy, and make a difference, we have almost unlimited options. There is great need everywhere you look.

Six years ago, I came to Montgomery College after working at a large university for 32 years. Three key factors played into my decision. I knew there was visionary and ethical leadership here. I knew there was a student-focused mission that was compelling and impactful. And I knew there was a community that was engaged and was already working to uplift students and by extension to improve the world. That's not an exaggeration. Montgomery College is such a place.

When we ask you to support this College, to continue improving our community, and to continue focusing on a better future for all of us, we believe with all our hearts that Montgomery College is a place where your financial contributions can go a long way and make a big difference. A gift of \$500 can support a student through one class.

A gift of \$5,000 can cover a student's tuition for a full year. A gift of \$25,000 can establish a named endowment in perpetuity. And gifts above that amount can change lives, change a community, and change the future.

As I prepare to leave Montgomery College and return to Pennsylvania, I do so grateful for the extraordinary opportunity to have worked for a college that is truly dedicated to student success. I am grateful to colleagues who share this dedication, and to a community that continually reminds me of the difference one person, one family, or one organization can have on the lives of many. It has been a privilege and a joy to work for Montgomery College. It will hold a permanent place in my heart.

Joyce Matthews' last day at Montgomery College was January 22, 2025.

► **Joyce Matthews was honored** by members of the Montgomery College Foundation and her colleagues with an endowed scholarship in her name. If you'd like to contribute to the Joyce Matthews Leadership Scholarship, please use this QR code.



Professor Continues To Impact Student Access and Success



Professor Charles Holland

Higher education forever changed the life of Professor Charles M. Holland. It was the promise of a better future that brought his family from rural South Carolina to Washington, D.C., where he attended Howard University and went on to open his own legal practice. He credited receiving a quality education as the biggest break of his life. While at Montgomery College, he discovered a passion for teaching that fueled his desire to ensure others have access to the same opportunities that helped him.

After 29 years serving as a dedicated educator, Professor Holland retired from MC in 2017. He served as chair of the Business Department; co-chair of Business, Management, and Information Sciences; and coordinator of Business, Management, and Paralegal Studies at the Takoma Park/Silver Spring Campus. He was also a mentor to both full- and part-time faculty. His commitment to the College and its students continues through the generous support of his estate.

Professor Holland passed away on March 18, 2024. The College was notified that he left the entirety of his retirement

fund of \$1,009,152.61 to the Montgomery College Foundation. Professor Holland felt compelled to name the College in his estate plans because many of his students' backgrounds mirrored his own, first-generation college students from low-income households. Moreover, he stated that someone had helped him along the way, so he felt that he should help others.

In recognition of the generous gift made by the late Professor Holland, the College will name the Math & Science Learning Center in the Catherine and Isiah Leggett Math and Science Building in his honor.

To learn more about how to include the Montgomery College Foundation in your estate planning, please contact the Montgomery College Foundation. Our expert and caring staff work with you to create a plan that appeals to your interests and meets your goals. montgomerycollege.edu/foundation.

Full Circle: Jane Smith '76 Gives Back to MC Students and Alumni

By Ezra Pine



Despite graduating from MC more than 40 years ago and now residing in North Carolina, **Jane Smith '76** remains deeply connected to MC. In addition to continuously giving back to its students and alumni, Smith serves as an academic coach for college success and Coach2Coach at the Achieving the Promise Academy, where she helps students navigate their academic paths. Smith's connections to MC also include her tenure as a business professor since 2012, past president of the MC Alumni Association, and past member of the MC Foundation Board of Directors.

Smith's dedication to MC is deeply personal, rooted in the transformative impact the College had on her own life. After leaving the University of Maryland for personal reasons, she faced uncertainty about her future. MC became her second chance, offering a supportive environment to rediscover her purpose. This foundation propelled her into a successful 35-year career in technology and sales, working with the Department of Defense and federal contractors.

In 2008, Smith's journey with MC came full circle when Judith Vaughan-Prather, then executive director of the Commission for Women, encouraged her to join the MC Alumni Association Board of Governors. Smith quickly became one of the board's most active members, leading initiatives to raise funds and grow alumni engagement. One of her proudest achievements was working as co-chair to enhance the mentoring program, which connects students with mentors to guide

them through their academic journeys.

"I want students to know they can get to the finish line," Smith says. "Most students, coming out of high school, need someone to help them navigate the college experience. Mentors and coaches are there to provide a guiding light."

Smith later joined the MC Foundation Board, inspired by the Foundation's strong commitment to supporting students financially. She remains a generous donor and a tireless advocate for giving back, urging fellow alumni to support critical programs and initiatives that empower students to succeed. "In the past 12 years, having worked with so many students, I've seen how important it is to give," Smith emphasizes. "There are so many students out there who need all the support they can get. MC provides so many programs to meet the needs of students, but it can't be done without financial backing."

In Memoriam: Camille Kendall



Camille Kendall, a visionary philanthropist and champion for Montgomery College students passed away on April 16, 2025. She was a deeply generous and devoted supporter of the College's mission, and her legacy will continue to uplift generations of students for years to come.

As a scholarship recipient herself and as a long-serving member of the Montgomery College Foundation's Board of Directors, Mrs. Kendall knew first-hand the power of education to change lives. Alongside her late husband, Cliff Kendall, she established transformative scholarships that have opened doors for hundreds of Montgomery College students—many of whom have gone on to earn bachelor's degrees and build successful careers.

The Kendall Transfer Scholarship has been especially impactful, enabling students to seamlessly continue their education beyond Montgomery College. Through their scholarship support, the Kendalls built a community of Kendall Scholars.

"I am forever thankful to the Kendalls for their scholarship," said Melqui Diaz. "It arrived at a time when I needed it most. After Montgomery College, I transferred to the University of Maryland College Park, where I had a double major in marketing and international business. I currently work as an operations manager at Amazon. None of this would have been possible without the initial scholarship I received from the Kendalls."

Mrs. Kendall's philanthropy reflected both vision and compassion. She understood that removing barriers to education could create ripple effects of opportunity across families, communities, and generations. Her strength, grace, and deep sense of purpose touched everyone who had the privilege of working with her or benefitting from her generosity.

"Camille Kendall was a true friend to Montgomery College and to the students we serve," said Dr. Jermaine F. Williams, president of Montgomery College. "Her legacy is one of opportunity. The scholarships she and Cliff funded have had transformational impacts on the lives of our students. Her absence will be deeply felt."

Camille Kendall's impact on Montgomery College—and on the broader Montgomery County community—is profound and lasting. As we remember Mrs. Kendall, we celebrate a life lived with purpose, generosity, and an enduring commitment to helping others achieve their dreams.



A Nurse's Bequest, A Future of Compassion

By Anaia Peddie

*Her planned gift to the Montgomery College Foundation
will benefit future health care professionals, educators,
and community leaders.*

NEARLY 40 YEARS AGO, Barbara Marchwicki '81 accepted a work-study position in the Financial Aid Office on Montgomery College's Takoma Park Campus. She watched staff like Arlene Morette manage a constant flurry of activity, often going the extra mile to help students meet their basic needs. Those daily acts of care and generosity left a lasting impression on her, reinforcing her own commitment to helping others.

As a nursing student at Montgomery College, Marchwicki found inspiration in her professors, who became her role models. Their dedication extended far beyond the classroom, as they provided students with hands-on experiences in surgery rooms, behavioral health institutions, and more. She recalls mentors like Helen A. Statts, the nursing program's first director, and Mrs. Wartman, who tirelessly guided students through early morning clinicals. Many of her professors were seasoned nurses who chose to teach out of a deep passion for mentorship. Reflecting on their impact, Marchwicki says, "When you're a student, you think your professor just has a job, and then you realize the incredible dedication they have. To see that in action, it becomes a part of you."

After MC, Marchwicki attended The Catholic University of America and then began her nursing career at Georgetown Hospital. Her curiosity and drive led her through various specialties, from geriatrics to the neonatal intensive care unit. In 2003, ready for a new challenge, she applied to be a substitute teacher for Montgomery County Public Schools. Just two weeks before the school year started, she was hired as the medical careers teacher at Einstein High School in Kensington, Md. The program later moved to Kennedy High School, where she spent 16 years mentoring students, many of whom went on to become

“I remembered what it felt like to be a student trying to make ends meet, living in a small apartment along University Boulevard, relying on work-study and grants...”

doctors, pharmacists, and physical therapists. Inspired by her MC professors, Marchwicki dedicated herself to creating opportunities for her students to explore, grow, and succeed.

Her passion for mentorship and community service deepened as she saw firsthand how access to education could transform lives. “I remembered what it felt like to be a student trying to make ends meet, living in a small apartment along University Boulevard, relying on work-study and grants,” Marchwicki says.



.....

Those experiences shaped her belief that financial barriers should never stand in the way of determined students. This led to her making a meaningful decision to support the next generation of Montgomery College nursing students by formalizing a planned gift to the Montgomery College Foundation, a powerful expression of her long-standing values and belief in the College’s mission. By including MC in her estate plans, she joins a special community of donors who have:

- Remembered the Foundation in their will or trust;
- Named the Foundation as a beneficiary of a retirement plan, life insurance policy, or bank account;
- Or established a charitable gift annuity with the Foundation.

When she met with Noah Saposnik, senior campaign director at the Montgomery College Foundation, she realized that MC’s affordable tuition meant her planned gift could go further than she ever imagined. That made including the Montgomery College Foundation in her estate plans an easy decision.

From a determined nursing student to a generous supporter planning for the future, Barbara Marchwicki’s legacy is one of mentorship, compassion, and belief in the transformative power of education. Her planned gift will help ensure that future students have access to the same educational opportunities that helped shape her own extraordinary journey.

Barbara Marchwicki graduated from the MC nursing program in 1981. Years later, she remembers the amazing dedication of professors and mentors at MC who encouraged her. Her planned gift will support students who, like her, struggle to make ends meet while pursuing education and career training.



Celebrating Impact

MC Goes Public with \$50M Campaign

By Anaia Peddie



ON A CRISP FALL AFTERNOON, the newly unveiled Catherine and Isiah Leggett Math and Science Building at Montgomery College's Takoma Park/Silver Spring Campus shone as a beacon of progress. Inside, an energized crowd of supporters, alumni, faculty, and community leaders gathered on October 30 to celebrate the kickoff of the Montgomery College Foundation's most

ambitious campaign yet. The Our College, Our Community, Our Future campaign aims to raise \$50 million to meet critical student needs, including scholarships, technology, and essential resources like food and housing assistance.

The event was a celebration of Montgomery College's enduring legacy and its vision for the future. With heartfelt remarks, shared memories, and a collective commitment to

equity and opportunity, the atmosphere was electric. "This campaign is about the transformative power of philanthropy and the lives it touches," said Joyce Matthews, then executive director of the Montgomery College Foundation.

The event highlighted a profound truth: Montgomery College's success is inextricably tied to the strength of Montgomery County.



The Power of Opportunity

Dr. Jermaine F. Williams, Montgomery College President, underscored this connection in his remarks, emphasizing how the campaign will expand opportunities for student success at every stage. “Opportunity has the power to transform lives,” he said. “It creates ripples that touch families, neighborhoods, and entire communities. That is the power of what we’re building here together.”

Dr. Williams outlined the College’s recent achievements, such as the launch of the East County Education Center and initiatives shaped by listening to students’ struggles and aspirations.

“From bilingual tutoring to lactation stations for student-parents, our students teach us how to meet their needs,” he said. “Their resilience inspires us to do more.”

The room erupted in applause as Dr. Williams announced the campaign’s \$50 million goal.

“This is a call to action,” he said. “Together, we can create more opportunities and build a stronger, more connected community.”

A Legacy of Access and Opportunity

The \$50M Our College, Our Community, Our Future Campaign reflects Montgomery College’s long-standing commitment to equity and excellence. For decades, the College has been a cornerstone of the community, creating pathways for students of all backgrounds to achieve their dreams.

Whether supporting a high school senior starting their educational journey, a working parent returning to school, or an entrepreneur acquiring new skills, Montgomery College has consistently opened doors and changed lives.

The campaign focuses on three key stages of a student’s journey: Access, Completion, and Post-Completion Success. Through scholarships, cutting-edge technology, and workforce readiness tools, the campaign seeks to address the most pressing challenges students face today.

Mary Pat Alcus, chair of the Montgomery College Foundation board of directors, emphasized the campaign’s significance.



“By supporting this campaign, you’re empowering students to achieve success,” she said. “Your investment builds a bridge between talent and opportunity, creating brighter futures for our community.”

A Community Effort

Longtime advocates for education and equity, Catherine and Isiah “Ike” Leggett have lent their names and leadership to the campaign. Catherine, a dedicated supporter of



Our College

►► **Members of the MC Foundation Board of Directors** celebrated the campaign launch in the new Catherine and Isiah Leggett Math and Science Building. Pictured (back row, left to right): Dr. Jermaine F. Williams, Chris Saca, Bill Foote, Connie McGuire, Mary Pat Alcus, Bill Keating. [front row, left to right] Ken Becker, Erica L. Webber, Eman Saqib, Joyce Matthews, Marty Colburn.

education and the arts, and Ike, former Montgomery County executive, share a deep belief in the transformative power of education.

Ike spoke of the importance of investing in future generations.

“Montgomery College is a lifeline for our community,” he said.

“It nurtures potential and provides the tools for success. That’s why Catherine and I are committed to this campaign and to the students whose lives it will change.”

Catherine echoed this sentiment. “This campaign ensures that Montgomery College continues to be a pillar of opportunity in Montgomery County, reaching every corner and touching every life.”



Our Community

Stories of Transformation

The heart of the event was hearing directly from those whose lives have been profoundly shaped by Montgomery College's mission and the generosity of its donors. Brendan Johnson, senior vice president and chief human resources officer at Adventist HealthCare, shared why his organization has chosen to invest in the College and its students.

"We are honored to be the largest health care provider in Montgomery County. As we look to the future of

caring for our community, it's important to us that those who grow up in Montgomery County can have the opportunity to receive a world-class education right here and can stay and work for a world-class institution in MoCo," said Johnson. "As such, we committed 350 nursing scholarships over the next six years at MC. I'm excited to say that we have 100 of those scholarships being used today."

Ryan Jones, a current student, brought the audience to their feet with his inspiring journey.

►► **Above: Isiah Leggett and Catherine Leggett toured the newly opened math and science building at the Takoma Park/Silver Spring Campus, which bears their name. The Leggetts have been staunch supporters of MC students, particularly first-generation and underrepresented students. Right: Dr. Jermaine F. Williams and Dr. Maggie Williams with student Ryan Jones. The Williamses recently established a scholarship to support students in the Presidential Scholars Program.**

Leading by Example

During the campaign celebration, Dr. Williams shared that he and his wife, Maggie, established the **Willie Williams and Peggy Griffith Endowment Scholarship**. This scholarship will honor Dr. Williams' father, who overcame illiteracy to earn a bachelor's degree and two master's degrees. It also honors Maggie's mother.

The endowed scholarship supports the Presidential Scholars Program, which reflects the Williams family's belief in the power of education and opportunity. Open to students of all backgrounds, the Presidential Scholars Program was developed to increase the representation of men of color in high-wage/high-demand careers. Students in the program receive individualized financial aid support, academic support services, and connections to a network of internal and external mentors.

Dr. Williams shared that he and Maggie selected this program because "it embodies the values we strive to nurture in all our students: a commitment to community and public service."

He went on to say, "The Presidential Scholars Program is more than an investment in individual success; it's an investment in the future of our entire community. Like my own family, many have experienced multiple transformations through opportunity. Maggie and I are proud to contribute to building this pipeline of opportunity."

"Through their actions, the Williams family advocates for our students while actively working to ensure they have the tools and support they need to thrive academically and personally, and we could not be more grateful," said Noah Saposnik, senior campaign director.





"I am proud to speak on behalf of more than 2,000 students this year alone who are at MC because of the generosity of scholarship donors," Jones began. "I'm extremely grateful and honored to be the recipient of the Ruth and Lou Williams Scholarship, which has helped me pay for tuition this semester."

Jones described his long and challenging path to Montgomery College.

"I'm a Disability Support Services student who suffers from traumatic brain injury and epilepsy. My journey began back in 2008 when I didn't graduate high school, but I would not let that stop me from pursuing my dreams. Thanks to MC's Workforce Development and Continuing Education program, I was able to obtain my high school diploma. The very same day, I passed my GED

and signed up for fall classes," Jones shared.

He credited the Presidential Scholars Program for helping him find his footing. "The program's mission is to increase the representation of Black and brown men in high-paying careers and leadership opportunities. It transformed my experience at MC and gave me opportunities like speaking to you this afternoon," he said.

Jones closed his remarks with a powerful message to future students: "My plans after MC are to transfer to the Universities at Shady Grove to pursue my bachelor's degree in communications and eventually a career in public relations, while also pursuing my passion for motivational speaking. I will use my talents to

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 24]

"Montgomery College is a lifeline for our community," he said. "It nurtures potential and provides the tools for success."

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*—ISIAH LEGGETT, DONOR,
FORMER MONTGOMERY
COUNTY EXECUTIVE*

► **Above: Classroom and lab space in the new three-story Catherine and Isiah Leggett Math and Science Building at Takoma Park/ Silver Spring, provides students top-notch tools for hands-on learning. This environmentally sustainable building accommodates cutting-edge laboratories, a planetarium, a greenhouse, educational hubs, and versatile function spaces. It replaces Falcon Hall, Science South, and the original greenhouse.**

Infusing Hope: Don and Ellen Stanton's Vision for Education

When Don Stanton taught political science at the University of Colorado at Denver, he saw dreams slipping away. Many of his students struggled to afford tuition, with few financial aid options available.

For Don and his wife, Ellen, those struggles were all too familiar. Both had worked their way through college, balancing jobs, scholarships, and family support to pursue their education. They understand the stress and uncertainty of trying to make ends meet while in school because they experienced it themselves.

As lifelong educators, the Stantons are passionate about helping students overcome barriers to education. After relocating to Montgomery County, they were inspired by Montgomery College's innovative curriculum and diverse student body. They saw in the College a reflection of their own values, particularly its commitment to first-generation and working students.

Their partnership with the Montgomery College Foundation led to the creation of a scholarship with a unique focus. They chose to support the **Achieving Collegiate Excellence and Success (ACES)** program, which provides underrepresented students with academic coaching, mentoring, and assistance in applying for financial aid and scholarships.

In addition to providing tuition assistance, the Stantons' gift also helps clear prior balances, allowing students to move forward in their education. "We wanted our gift to infuse hope," Ellen says. "Hope is so important. It lets people know they are not alone."

The Stantons see their scholarship as an opportunity to create ripples of change that will uplift individual students and strengthen entire communities. They believe education is a powerful tool for creating positive change. "We wanted to help as many people as possible," Ellen says.

"When someone earns an education, they improve their life and their community."

Through their scholarship, the Stantons are doing more than supporting students. They are giving them the gift of hope and the opportunity to dream again.

—Anaia Peddie

- **Don and Ellen Stanton hope to create "ripples of change" through the scholarship they established. By helping individuals, they are helping build a stronger community.**







Campaign ►► Priorities

Presidential Scholars Program

We will make specific, comprehensive investments and deliver evidence-based solutions that effectively address the particular challenges facing African American male students to ensure they enroll in college and remain in college through completion of a degree.

Achieving Collegiate Excellence and Success (ACES)

We will build on investments that increase college degree completion and professional success for students who have been historically underrepresented in higher education.

Honors Programs

We will provide unique learning and growth opportunities, and significant scholarships, for our brightest academic stars and most motivated high-potential students.

Student Parent Programs

We will help to create the conditions for parenting students to complete a college degree. Support could include early education, child care, and peer groups.

Athletics and Program Support

We will ensure that the student-athletes competing in sports on campus have the scholarships and financial assistance they need to earn a degree.

Transfer Scholarship Fund

We will provide funding for scholarships that unlock opportunities for students transferring to a four-year institution in Maryland or an out-of-state college or university.

Industry Certification and Credentialing Fee Assistance Fund

We will assist students who have completed a course of study at MC and who are required to sit for exams that confirm their skills and knowledge before they can begin their chosen career.

Student Wellness Center Food Security Programs

We will support our Fuel for Success programs (i.e., mobile market, food pantries, and grab-and-go programs) to address food insecurity on each campus.

Emergency Assistance

We will help students respond to financial difficulties that have the potential to end or derail their college dreams.

Experiential Learning and Career Connections Fund

We will provide opportunities (internships, externships, and fellowships) for student graduates to learn by doing and to make vital connections with others in their industry.

►► To contribute to the College's campaign, please visit montgomerycollege.edu/foundation or montgomerycollege.edu/online-giving

empower the next generation of students, showing them that they, too, can reach for the stars. Most importantly, I want them to know—never give up on your dreams.”

Jorge Torres, a Montgomery College graduate and dental school student, shared his story of transformation, which began with uncertainty but was fueled by the support of the College and its programs. “I didn’t see higher education as a path for me until I met my ACES coach,” Torres said, referring to the Achieving Collegiate Excellence and Success program. “Montgomery College opened doors I didn’t even know existed.”

With the help of scholarships and guidance from mentors, Torres graduated with honors from the

University of Maryland and was accepted into multiple dental schools. “Every step of the way, I felt supported,” he said. “This College didn’t just give me an education. It gave me confidence, purpose, and a future.”

A Vision for the Future

As the event drew to a close, Joyce Matthews encouraged attendees to think deeply about their philanthropic goals and how they could align with the campaign’s vision. “We thank you for your engagement today and hope to work with you to achieve transformational goals for our students, our community, and our future,” she said.

With the \$50 million campaign now in full swing, the Montgomery

College Foundation invites alumni, community members, and corporate partners to join this historic effort. As Matthews and other speakers affirmed, the power of philanthropy lies in its ability to uplift students while strengthening the entire Montgomery County community.

The Our College, Our Community, Our Future campaign represents more than a milestone. It’s a movement to create a brighter, more equitable future for all. ■

Our Future





► Jean Phillips showcased her photography at the Gas and Steam Engine Show at the Agricultural History Farm in Derwood, Md., in April 2025.

Jean Phillips: Montgomery County Farmer, Photographer, and... Philanthropist

Since the 18th century, the Phillips family has called Maryland home. Jeanne Phillips says her family history weaves through Montgomery County's colonial beginning and its expansion. She recalls her dad's description of the landscape in Germantown: "This is a king's view, he said." His words inspired the naming of Kingsview Knolls, which later became Kingsview Road and eventually lent its name to Kingsview Middle School.

In 2018, when Jean joined a giving circle of neighbors who provided small stipends to help students afford tuition and books, she felt inspired to continue supporting adults pursuing their education.

Like many working parents, Jean understands the importance of a supportive community that fills in the gaps. While managing her family's farm in Germantown, she raised her sons, Samuel ("Sam") and Russell ("Russ"). She later expanded the farm's operations, developing it into the beloved children's attraction, Phillips Farm. Jean managed the farm for nearly 40 years before retiring. During this time, Jean discovered a love of photography, which led her to take courses at Montgomery College. In fact, she

was following in the footsteps of her son, Russ, who took advanced math courses at MC while still in high school. With Russ's encouragement, **Jean chose to make a generous gift to MC** because she believes it is an institution with staying power.

For Jean, this gift is an extension of her lifelong commitment to helping others and embracing new learning experiences. "You must put yourself out there in such a way that allows good things to happen to you," she says. Today, Jean continues to enjoy the outdoors, hiking, teaching youth about photography, and sharing her work on her website, phillipsfarmphotography.wordpress.com.

—Anaia Peddie



“I give to the Montgomery College Foundation to honor the legacy of my godson.”

MARTY COLBURN
MONTGOMERY COLLEGE
FOUNDATION DONOR



WHY I GIVE

When my godson, Jordan Denion, passed away at the age of 20, a light dimmed in the lives of all us who had the good fortune to know and love him.

Jordy was a devoted son, brother, friend, and teammate. He was kind, hard-working, and bright. His greatest joy was football—playing it, watching it, or just thinking about it.

As a long-time director on the Montgomery College Foundation Board, I have the privilege of interacting with students who sometimes remind me of Jordy—

through their determination, infectious positivity, or love of sports. I established the Jordan Kyle Denion Endowed Scholarship to support the academic journeys of Montgomery College students, while honoring a young life that was dedicated to perseverance and passion.

Each time I receive a thank you letter from one of Jordy's scholarship recipients, I am reminded that, for generations to come, students who aspire to greater things are able to pursue their education at Montgomery College as Jordan Kyle Denion Scholarship recipients. It is a way to turn grief into hope.

I give to the Montgomery College Foundation to honor the legacy of my godson.

I hope you will join me.

MARTY COLBURN

►► **MAKE A LASTING DIFFERENCE:** Join others like Marty who support Montgomery College as donors by contacting Bernadette L. Maldonado at bernadette.maldonado@montgomerycollege.edu or 240-967-1661.

montgomerycollege.edu/give



Joining the Club: Scholarship Recipient Volunteers with Lions Club that Supported Him



Between his shifts working at the Student Services Center on the Rockville Campus, **Matt Sulio '20** tirelessly searched the Montgomery College website for scholarships. He applied for as many as 50 each day, believing that despite his average GPA there was no harm in trying to secure funding for his education.

During his search, Sulio came across the Rockville Lions Club Scholarship, which required recipients to volunteer. It was a perfect match for him, given his extensive background in community service; he had logged 400 hours during high school.

Raised by his grandparents who instilled in him the value of education, Sulio chose Montgomery College because it offered him the best quality and most affordable path to higher education—especially after a football scholarship offer fell through. “I know the value of a dollar,” he said. “I transferred to Montgomery College, and I received an education that was equivalent to or better than what I would have gotten at a four-year college.”

A month after he applied, Sulio was awarded the Rockville Lions Club Scholarship. At the awards ceremony, he learned more about the club's values and its impact on the Rockville community. In his remarks at the event, he expressed his gratitude and the novelty of receiving support from people who did not know him.

“It was new to have people invest in me like that.” This experience deepened his commitment to helping others, leading him to continue volunteering with the Lions Club even after graduating from Montgomery College in 2020. Unexpectedly, the scholarship provided him with a valuable network of successful professionals and business owners, inspiring him to join the Lions Club as their youngest member.

Today, Sulio remains an active member of the Rockville Lions Club, regularly engaging with other members and attending biweekly meetings. Since earning his real estate license in 2020, he has joined his family's brokerage, Richardson Realty, and has launched his own business, M & M Roofing and Siding. His journey from a determined scholarship seeker to entrepreneur and community leader exemplifies how a single opportunity can ignite a lifelong dedication to giving back and achieving success.

—Anaia Peddie

Members of the Rockville Lions Club joined Javiera Alarcon, annual fund manager (third from left), and foundation director Connie McGuire (far right) for a tour of the McGuire Family Food Pantry on the Rockville Campus. Located in the Student Services Center, the pantry is open Monday through Friday. All three campuses and the East County Education Center have a pantry stocked with snacks, food, personal hygiene products, and household items. The pantries are continually in need of snack foods as well as nonperishable items that can be taken home.



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Help Students

Access Higher Education
and Build Skills—On the
Court and In Life

Scholarships can make college accessible to talented athletes who might otherwise struggle to afford tuition and other expenses. Many student athletes use their sports experience to build successful careers. Athletic scholarships help develop valuable skills like discipline, teamwork, and leadership, which are transferable skills for any career field.

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