

# PRESIDENT'S REPORT TO THE BOARD

February 2012





As the country celebrates President's Day, I am spending this time reflecting on how our institution empowers leaders at all levels, both inside the classroom and around our campuses. I believe educational institutions are in a unique position to be able to cultivate leaders. As President John F. Kennedy once wrote, "[l]eadership and learning are indispensable to each other." He never had the opportunity to read those words, as they were part of a speech he meant to deliver the very day of his assassination, but his message still resonates today. Without learning, leadership is not possible.

I have a distinct memory of when I started to learn how to be a leader—a feat that I still aspire to achieve every day. I was 10 years old when my church started Sunday dinners where a different group provided warm meals each week for about 100 people. Without thinking, I volunteered! I gathered all of my friends around a table and asked for their help. I knew that being a leader sometimes meant asking for help.

But there was so much I did not know. I did not appreciate that being a leader meant more than just having good intentions and an eagerness to say, "I'll do it!" It was not until our parents stepped in that I realized all the details we had to hash out: how much chicken we needed for the meals, who would do what, and so on.

Preparing that successful dinner taught me so many lessons that I use to this day: being a good leader means surrounding yourself with people you trust and can rely on to help you succeed; being a good leader means being open to the other people's suggestions; being a good leader means taking a risk, going out on a limb; and being a good leader means realizing that you need to learn from every experience in order to know how to handle the next challenge that comes your way.

My parents were the first of many mentors who helped shape the person I am today. I know firsthand how important it is to have someone else see potential in you that you otherwise may never have seen. It can be a defining moment in someone's life. We, Montgomery College, can be that mentor in the lives of our students, faculty, staff, and administrators.

In order to be mentors, we all must be leaders too. Leadership does not only mean being the first one to raise your hand. Sometimes being a leader means taking the time to listen and weigh in deliberately. Sometimes it means inspiring someone else to take action. Sometimes, being a leader means being involved and working together for the greater good.

There are roles available for every type of leader in our new governance system. Next month, we will hold elections to fill various positions. I have stressed to our College community that the new model provides an opportunity—dare I say, a responsibility—for engagement at *all* levels by *all* community members: faculty, both full-time and part-time; staff, both bargaining and non-bargaining; students, both credit and noncredit; and administrators.



Governance is only one example of leadership at the College. For this month's report, I asked our campus leaders to share examples of people who embody leadership by empowering members of our own community. From leading neighborhood boards to committing to collegewide committees, these stories represent a small slice of the phenomenal leadership evident at our College.

Happy reading!

## Board Discussion Questions

1. What are your expectations of leaders throughout the College?
2. In what ways could the College improve upon its efforts of empowering leadership at all levels?

## Empowering Students

- College student leaders regularly serve on collegewide committees, which is noteworthy considering transportation can be time consuming and expensive for them. For example, students Nathalie Hernandez, Meghan Hughes, and Kabura Wanjeri are serving on the Strategic Planning Steering Committee this year. Cynthia Irazoke is continuing in her second year on the College's Task Force on Governance.
- The [Montgomery College Accelerated Program in Business](#) (MCAP-Business) is a competitive academic program designed for working adults who wish to complete an associate's degree within two years. Students learn essential business and leadership concepts through relevant coursework, including investigating real-world corporations, writing a business plan, and examining today's social and corporate ethics. According to Christina Mak, a current second semester student: "[t]he faculty and the internship experiences have strengthened my desire to be a better leader! By working with other adults in real-life situations, I've learned a great deal about the business world and how to be an effective leader. My professors and advisers have given me the motivation and support to fuel my aspiration to be a top business professional."
- This spring, WD&CE is offering 35 new classes that were developed through the efforts of individual program staff members who are anticipating and responding to community demand. The classes were shaped by interactions with the discipline, student feedback, and faculty observations.
- Many of our students engage in experiential education and [service learning opportunities](#). For example, a tremendously successful partnership between students at the Takoma Park/Silver Spring Campus and ESOL students at Montgomery County Public Schools has decreased truancy and behavioral concerns, which is helping increase academic achievement and retention.
- Professor Dawn Avery and student members of the College's [World Music Ensemble](#) mentor and coach high school students in the Wheaton High School World Music program. Students



from Wheaton High School performed with the World Music Ensemble during the fall end-of-semester concert.

- The [Montgomery College Chapter of Engineers Without Borders-USA](#) (EWB-USA) empowers students by developing their abilities in public speaking, fundraising, and grant proposal writing. EWB-USA aims to assist communities in providing basic needs and growing understanding in engineering and community service. An example is their proposal for a water and sanitation project in Belize.
- In late January 2012, the Takoma Park/Silver Spring Office of Student Development hosted the Youth Leadership Greater Washington Orientation and Arts Program Day in The Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation Arts Center and the Cultural Arts Center. Approximately 60 of the region's top high school student leaders participated in a day-long leadership development program.
- [Rockville Summer Dinner Theatre](#) has 10 to 12 interns each year who serve in leadership training positions, such as assistant stage manager and assistant choreographer.
- The [Takoma Park/Silver Spring Office of Student Life](#) uses the Social Change Model of Leadership Development: student leaders are empowered to think about making choices through reflection on self, self in groups, and self in community. The problem-solving method develops from personal reflection on an inconsistency, the presentation of the issue to a group and, finally, the resolution of the situation in the community setting.
- This semester, the [Germantown Office of Student Life](#) will hold its inaugural First Year Student Overnight Retreat to give first year students the opportunity to gain valuable leadership skills and to connect with other emerging student leaders. The retreat is a two-day combination of workshops, service activities, and a sightseeing trip to Washington, D.C. All of the workshops and activities are created and led by current student leaders.
- Students participating in clubs and organizations learn to take control over their lives and contribute to the community. For instance, the [Rockville Office of Student Life](#) sponsored the Involvement Fest to give students the opportunity to discover the numerous student clubs and organizations on the Rockville Campus and to learn how to start a club.

## Empowering Faculty, Staff, and Administrators

- During the January 2012 peak registration period, faculty counselors at the Germantown Campus worked with several instructional faculty members to enhance their understanding of the counseling and advising process. Each instructional faculty member was paired with a counseling faculty member to shadow individual advising and counseling sessions to learn about the academic and registration processes. By the end of the month, instructional faculty members became new leaders in the areas of general advising and basic college questions, such as class selection, educational planning, and other student development resources.



- Workforce Development & Continuing Education created a workgroup to celebrate individual achievements and contributions at the unit level. Customer service recognitions for the most helpful customer service representative over the prior year are honored at an annual in-service get-together.
- A recent collaboration with the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services provided Early Childhood Education child care provider certification training to current Temporary Assistance to Needy Family recipients while they are searching for employment. Courses were delivered around client-time availability and more than 80 percent of the students persisted and passed the certification exams.
- The College continuously introduces new technology to keep programs and offerings current and meaningful, such as Workforce Development & Continuing Education infusing “green” technology into the technical training fields of construction trades, automotive alternate energy vehicles, solar energy training, and HVAC energy efficiency techniques.

## Examples of College Leaders

- [College alumna Marga Fripp](#) is a walking model of leadership. In 2001, she emigrated from Romania and quickly became an active member of our College and our community. In 2004, she earned a spot on the All-Maryland First Academic Team as well as on the All-USA Academic Team as one of the top 60 scoring students in the nation, out of more than 1,500 nominations. Ms. Fripp was also named a 2004 New Century Scholar and received a \$2,000 scholarship.

Ms. Fripp has worked as a counselor and advocate at the DC Rape Crisis Center, as well as Americorps. After transferring to the University of Maryland, where she completed her B.A. in communications and journalism, she founded [Empowered Women International](#), a nonprofit that helps women immigrants and refugees in the metropolitan area achieve economic sufficiency and self empowerment through the creative arts.

- In January, Professor Jackie Middleton, chairperson of accounting, business administration, paralegal studies, and management, was the keynote speaker at the retreat for the senior leadership of the deputy mayor of the Washington, D.C., Office for Safety and Justice. Professor Middleton spoke on “How to Create a Motivating Agency,” which included topics such as decision making, ethical leadership, and critical constructive feedback.
- The American Council on Education awarded Dr. Esther Schwartz-McKinzie, the Takoma Park/Silver Spring interim associate dean of arts, humanities, and social sciences, a Fidelity Fellowship to participate in the 78th National Leadership Forum, held this past December in Washington, D.C. The National Leadership Forum is designed for women administrators who have recognized leadership ability and accomplishments as well as potential for continued growth and advancement.



- Instructional Supervisor Maureen Kohl is a board member of the Takoma Foundation, which supports local nongovernmental organizations and schools. She also serves as the chair of the grants committee.
- Art Professor Joyce Jewell was chosen to serve on the Fan Advisory Board of the Washington Wizards, a division of Monumental Sports. Monumental Sports is particularly interested in having input from college communities in the Washington area.

