

OFFICE OF INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE AND BELONGING

EQUITY WEEK 2026



Advocacy in Motion:

Courageous Dialogues,
Collective Belonging

— April 20–24, 2026 —

Equity Week 2026

Schedule of Events

Equity Week Opening Keynote: Memory, Courage, and Collective Belonging with Jason G. Green

12-1 p.m. | Hybrid - In-Person, Rockville Campus, Building SW 301 and via Zoom

Equity Week 2026 opens with a powerful keynote from author and Montgomery County leader **Jason G. Green**, whose memoir uncovers the hidden history of Quince Orchard and a courageous decision to merge one Black church and two white churches at a pivotal moment in American history. His story shows how truth-telling, faith, and moral leadership can transform communities.

Aligned with this year's theme, **Advocacy in Motion: Courageous Dialogue, Collective Belonging**, Green will reflect on how confronting difficult histories and building relationships across difference can move advocacy into action. Grounded in Montgomery County's own past, this inspiring keynote invites the Montgomery College community to consider our shared responsibility to create spaces where dialogue fosters understanding, connection, and belonging.

Join us as we launch Equity Week with a story that reminds us that advocacy begins with memory, grows through courage, and flourishes through collective action.

In-Person Registration: [Equity Week 2026 - Opening Keynote - Fill out form](#)

Zoom Registration:

https://montgomerycollege.zoom.us/meeting/register/7muPkRgCRKmh3dEs4_VMIA

Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness: A Conversation on What It Means to Be American

3:30-5 p.m. | In-Person, TP/SS Campus, ST Building, 2nd Floor Atrium

As the United States approaches its 250th anniversary, students at the Takoma Park/Silver Spring Campus are invited to a dynamic conversation, moderated by Professor Karl Smith, on the ideals that have shaped the nation. Hosted by the TPSS Office of Student Life in partnership with the Office of Inclusive Excellence and Belonging, this student-centered event will explore how life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness connect to students' lived experiences today.

Part of **Equity Week**, this gathering will offer space for reflection, shared learning, and connection as students exchange perspectives and consider how their experiences shape the nation's ongoing story.

Enjoy light refreshments and pick up a "U.S. Constitution and Declaration of Independence, available in multiple languages" as we reflect together on the past, present, and future of American democracy.

In-Person Registration: [Life Liberty and The Pursuit](#)

Sense of Belonging Workshop facilitated by Megan Calvert

10-11 a.m. | via Zoom

A sense of belonging is one of the strongest predictors of student motivation and persistence, and one of the most fragile. This workshop explores what research tells us about how belonging develops in the college classroom and what instructors can do to strengthen it. Drawing on key ideas such as stereotype threat, belonging uncertainty, and wise interventions, participants will examine how subtle cues, instructor messages, and course design can either heighten or reduce students' sense of belonging. Together, we'll identify practical, low-effort ways to signal care, normalize struggle, and communicate high expectations and trust.

By the end of this workshop, participants will better understand the psychological science behind belonging and its connection to student learning and engagement, recognize common classroom cues that influence whether students feel they belong, and explore evidence-based strategies, such as belonging messages, transparent course structures, and inclusive feedback, that can help foster stronger connections, confidence, and persistence among students.

Point of Contact: Megan.Calvert@montgomerycollege.edu

Zoom Registration: <https://montgomerycollege.zoom.us/my/megancalvert>

Equity Walk/Run and Pickleball 101

12-1:30 p.m. | In-Person, Rockville Campus Track & Pickleball Courts

Equity Walk/Run and Pickleball are for Students and all Employees, Spouses, and Retirees.

Come and stay for as little or as long as your schedule permits. Options are to run a 3K or walk. Prizes for fastest running times will be given and raffled off for all attendees. **Walk-ins will be accepted; pre-registration is recommended.**

If you need accommodations based on a disability, please get in touch with megan.cooperman@montgomerycollege.edu

In-Person Registration: [2026 Walk/Run for Equity - Fill out form](#)

The Dignity Index: A Tool to Elevate Classroom Dialogue facilitated by Megan Calvert

2-3 p.m. | In-Person, TP/SS Campus, Building CM 114

Dignity is the foundation of trust, belonging, and authentic engagement in the classroom. This session introduces the **Dignity Index**, an eight-level framework that helps educators reflect on the tone of their communication, course policies, and classroom interactions. Participants will use the Index to

analyze their own teaching language and explore ways to foster more respectful, curious, and collaborative student dialogue. By viewing teaching and learning through the lens of dignity, we can create classroom cultures where every student and every instructor feel seen, valued, and heard.

By the end of this session, participants will be able to describe what dignity means in the context of teaching and learning, use the Dignity Index to evaluate their own communication and course design, and model dignity-based dialogue that encourages respectful engagement in classroom discussions. Participants will also identify one specific strategy they can implement to “raise the level” of dignity in their courses, helping to strengthen trust, belonging, and meaningful participation in the learning environment.

Point of Contact: Megan.Calvert@montgomerycollege.edu

In-Person - Register in Workday: [Workshop on the Dignity Index](#)

Brave Campus: Power, Belonging, and Conflict facilitated by Dr. Katya Salmi and Mr. Lance White

10-11 a.m. | via Zoom

Conflict on campus is shaped by power dynamics, identity, and institutional roles. This interactive session examines how these factors influence experiences of tension and care within a college community. Using real-world higher education scenarios, participants will consider multiple perspectives, reflect on alternative responses, and explore how moments of conflict can either disrupt or strengthen belonging. The session centers lived experience, promotes cross-role understanding, and highlights the connection between equitable responses to conflict and campus climate.

Participants will:

- Engage with real-world college scenarios from multiple perspectives
- Reflect on how these situations might have been handled differently
- Identify barriers that can complicate responses to conflict
- Explore how belonging can be strengthened or disrupted during moments of tension

Zoom Registration:

<https://montgomerycollege.zoom.us/meeting/register/CUL4YzQhQ3uM8MCJbavosg>

Film Screening: A Tale of Three Chinatowns with Director Lisa Mao

12-2 p.m. | In-Person, GT Campus, BE 151-152

A Tale of Three Chinatowns is a feature-length documentary examining how urban development and demographic shifts are reshaping historic ethnic neighborhoods. Focusing on Chinatowns in Washington, D.C., Chicago, and Boston, the film highlights starkly different realities; from Chicago's expansion to Washington's dramatic decline, with Boston navigating pressures in between. Through the voices of residents, activists, developers, and public officials, the film explores gentrification, displacement, rising costs, and competing interests over land, identity, and survival.

The screening will feature the film's director, Lisa Mao, who will be present to watch alongside the audience and participate in a live Q&A discussion following the film, offering unique insights into the filmmaking process and the issues facing these communities today.

[Trailer: A Tale of Three Chinatowns](#)

In-Person Registration: [Film Screening: A Tale of Three Chinatowns - Fill out form](#)

Safe Zone 101 Self-Paced Training Information Session

11 a.m.-12 p.m. | via Zoom

Join members of the Center for Teaching and Learning and MC Pride and Allies for an overview of our brand-new training, "Safe Zone 101: A Beginner's Guide to LGBTQIA+ Inclusion at MC!" The training is a concise, fully online and self-paced LGBTQIA+ awareness and ally training for MC employees. This info session will introduce you to the self-paced training, how to sign up, and what to expect from the learning experience. We'll also share campus and community resources and preview future in-depth learning opportunities around LGBTQIA+ inclusion.

Zoom Registration: <https://montgomerycollege.zoom.us/j/96821714156>

Employees with Disabilities Panel

3-4 p.m. | via Zoom

Explore the complexities of disabilities in the workplace, how the culture can make people with disabilities feel, and the lasting impact.

Zoom Registration:

<https://montgomerycollege.zoom.us/j/99205887513?pwd=UvjnMKRdJlIdCWK3cEfVOeaDo0dDgj.1>

Inclusion by Design Summit: "Inclusion Begins with Access: Designing Learning Environments Where Accountability Opens the Door to Belonging"

9 a.m.-3 p.m. | All sessions will be offered via Zoom

Inclusion by Design Summit Theme: Inclusion Begins with Access: Designing Learning Environments Where Accessibility Opens the Door to Belonging

The Inclusion by Design Summit is a virtual gathering of educators, industry professionals, and advocates dedicated to universal design, accessibility, and equity. The summit features interactive workshops that will enrich your understanding and skills in inclusive design practices, as well as the opportunity to connect with like-minded professionals passionate about fostering inclusivity in all aspects of life and work.

The summit is held bi-annually in April and October and is open to the MC community and the public. If you have any questions or are interested in presenting at the summit, please contact [Dr. Paul Miller](#).

In-Person Registration: [Spring 2026 Inclusion by Design Summit - Universal Design Center](#) - Free and Open to Everyone!