From: Cain, Stephen on behalf of The President
To: MC Communications!
Subject: Montgomery County Executive"s Operating Budget Recommendations
Date: Friday, March 16, 2012 1:33:17 PM

MONTGOMERY COLLEGE
Office of the President

March 16, 2012

MEMORANDUM

To: Montgomery College Colleagues

From: Dr. DeRionne P. Pollard, President

Subject: Montgomery County Executive's Operating Budget Recommendations

While I do hope you are enjoying your well-deserved break this week, I wanted to share the good news about the Montgomery County executive's operating budget recommendation for fiscal year 2013. At his press conference yesterday afternoon, Isiah Leggett announced that he supported the College's request for level funding—$94.4 million in operating budget funding, the same amount that the College received this year.

The county executive's support of our request demonstrates the value he places on higher education in our community. His recommendation is also recognition of the hard work by members of our own College community, who have demonstrated a commitment to student access and success throughout these challenging economic times.

Using prudent fiscal management, the College has managed a decline in both state and county funding over the past two years through constrained spending and cost reductions. At the same time, we have successfully accommodated the growing enrollment in our credit courses. Nearly 27,000 credit students enrolled last fall, which has made the College the largest undergraduate institution in the state of Maryland.

Limited resources have led to difficult decisions, and I recognize it has been a professional and personal sacrifice to forgo salary increases for several years and to take up to eight days of furloughs last year. I recognize that the one-time, lump sum payment made at the end of December, coupled with the lump sum payment scheduled for June, do not make up for those sacrifices. However, those payments are a fiscally prudent step in the right direction and an acknowledgement of your dedication during these challenging times.

In addition, the county government has since negotiated one-time payments for its employees, and the Board of Trustees has authorized the College negotiators to discuss how we might achieve parity. And yet, as I shared in my memorandum before winter break, our FY13 operating budget does not include any salary increases or cost of living adjustments.

The College's budget request did propose a modest tuition increase: $2 per credit hour for students who reside in the county or recently graduated from Montgomery County Public Schools, $4 per credit hour for Maryland students, and $6 for out-of-state students. While

tuition increases are not the preference, the increase is less than in years' past.

While the county executive supported our request, I remain cautious because there are a number of unknown factors that could imperil the county operating budget next year and in years to come. The proposed shift of state-funded pension costs to the counties and the pending legislation that would tighten requirements for counties to fund the maintenance of effort (a state-mandated cost per student) at school systems could drastically impact the College. In addition, the executive called for lifting the sunset on the energy tax increases, but that action requires approval by the county council.

Our budget request is now before the council and, with continued unknowns at the state and county levels, we could experience much more change before the council's budget vote in May.

As we move forward in this process, I will keep you informed, and I will look to you to lend your voices to our advocacy efforts. Thank you for everything you do to ensure Montgomery College continues to empower students to change their lives.