From: The President
To: MC Communications!
Subject: 2013 Employee Engagement Recommendations
Date: Thursday, February 21, 2013 12:35:52 PM

MONTGOMERY COLLEGE
Office of the President

February 21, 2013

MEMORANDUM

To: Montgomery College Colleagues

From: Dr. DeRionne P. Pollard, President

Subject: 2013 Employee Engagement Recommendations

I recently met with the Employee Engagement Advisory Group (EEAG) to review the four recommendations that they forwarded to me after reviewing the employee engagement survey conducted in October 2012. The EEAG consists of College governance and labor union representatives who are committed to furthering employee engagement at Montgomery College and ensuring that faculty, staff, and administrators understand how the work they do furthers the mission of the College.

Upon consideration of the EEAG's recommendations, I have decided to adopt their four recommendations:

Recommendation 1: Establish a dashboard, which shall be made widely available to the College community, with tasks and timelines to measure the progress of adopted engagement recommendations. Be sure to update this dashboard on a regular basis, at least once every three months, and communicate these updates to the College community. This tool will promote transparency and accountability during the implementation of engagement recommendations adopted by Dr. Pollard. Utilize the dashboard for 2012 engagement recommendations, which are in progress as well as 2013 engagement recommendations.

> **Adopted.** Much effort is expended conducting the employee engagement survey, analyzing and discussing results, considering recommendations, and implementing the recommendations I adopt. These adopted recommendations often commit the College's effort and resources over a number of fiscal years.
>
> Employees, however, are often unaware of the attention and effort given to these adopted recommendations. To increase the visibility of the engagement efforts and to further foster transparency and accountability, I will task the Office of Institutional Research to work with the Office of Information Technology, the Office of Human Resources, Development, and Engagement, and the EEAG to create a web-based dashboard. This dashboard, which will be updated regularly, will monitor the progress of the engagement recommendations adopted in 2012 and 2013. It is my expectation that this dashboard will be available to the College community by the end of the fiscal year.

Recommendation 2: Further enhance the 2012 engagement recommendation on improving communication (recommendation #4) by adopting and utilizing the following guidelines when the input of the College community is sought by a governance council, committee, or senior leadership:

- explain, at the time the input is first solicited, how the information will be utilized, make it clear what issues are up for discussion and what decisions have already been made; clarify the process by which a decision will be made and who will make the decision; and inform the College community and individual stakeholders as to the timeline for decision making.
- announce decisions first to groups and/or individuals from whom input was solicited, with explanations of why any recommendations are or are not adopted. The communication should include an explanation of how the decision is consistent with the mission of Montgomery College, the process followed in arriving at the decision, and an explanation as to why other proposed alternatives were not selected to assure individuals who made suggestions that their input was considered. Next, announce decision to the College community. The communication to the College community should include the same points that were communicated to the group from whom input was sought.

> **Adopted.** To operationalize this recommendation, I will charge both the President's Executive Council (PEC) and the College Council to develop a systematized approach for ensuring that communications of senior leadership with governance councils includes the "closing-the-loop" spirit in this recommendation. I also anticipate that the communications audit, which was recommended as a result of the 2012 employee engagement survey, will be completed this spring. It is my expectation that an action plan will be developed to close gaps in communication that may be identified by the audit. Senior Vice President for Advancement and Community Engagement Dave Sears has been tasked with this audit project.

Recommendation 3: Further explore and develop opportunities (or better utilize those already in place) to honor, support, and recognize the contributions of faculty, staff, and administrators, to move toward a culture of gratitude in which employee contributions are recognized on a frequent basis.

> **Adopted.** To operationalize this recommendation, I will charge both the PEC and the College Council to consider and identify opportunities to foster this improvement. Additionally, the Employee Services Council is currently reviewing the College's procedure on recognition, 38001CP–Recognition Awards, to enhance formal opportunities for employee recognition. I look forward to hearing the council's input on this important matter.

Recommendation 4: Provide institutional support for the continuing work of faculty, staff, and administrator stakeholders to explore the creation of an integrated conflict management system, including the possible establishment of an ombuds or other neutral resource to assist employees in resolving workplace issues, in accordance with best practice.

> **Adopted.** I will charge the Office of Human Resources, Development, and Engagement to continue to support the exploration of an integrated conflict management system to assist in the resolution of conflict. As one component of that

system, I will commit to providing organizational support for an employee ombuds. In accordance with best practice, the ombuds will serve as an independent, confidential, impartial, and informal resource where employees can obtain information about options available to resolve conflicts or problems. The ombuds will also collect data and identify trends to draw administrative attention to areas of concern. The ombuds will be a part-time temporary-with-benefits position that reports to the Chief of Staff/Chief Strategy Officer in the Office of the President. Because this is a new role, I will charge the Chief of Staff with assessing its effectiveness to determine whether or not to seek support for a permanent position in the fiscal year 2016 operating budget request.

In addition to reviewing the four engagement recommendations, the EEAG also noted its appreciation of the inclusion of two measures of engagement in the *Montgomery College 2020* performance canvas.

The EEAG and I also had a conversation about changing the frequency of the survey to a biennial basis. Such a frequency will allow the institution to reflect on survey results, implement changes, and then have time for the impact of those changes to be felt before the next survey is done. Therefore, the next employee engagement survey will be conducted in fall 2014, and then every other year following.

I am grateful for the continued dedication of the members of the EEAG:

- Elizabeth Brandenburg, president, AFSCME;
- Joanne Carl, past chair of the Academic Assembly;
- Terry Evelyn, administrator representative;
- Julie Foster, past chair of the Staff Senate,
- Tammy Peery, Faculty Council chair;
- Rick Penn, president, AAUP;
- Dean Angie Pickwick, administrator representative;
- Rodney Redmond, Administrator Council chair;
- Jason Rivera, College Council chair and Staff Council chair; and
- Carl Shorter, vice president, AFSCME;

I encourage you to speak to members of the EEAG to learn more about the employee engagement initiative, and please share your ideas with them and with your governance leaders. Thank you for doing your part to keep involved in making Montgomery College better for our students and for all faculty, staff, and administrators.