From:	The President
To:	MC Communications!
Subject:	Political Activity and Events at the College
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Importance:	High

MONTGOMERY COLLEGE
Office of the President

April 16, 2014

MEMORANDUM

To: Montgomery College Colleagues

From: Dr. DeRionne P. Pollard, President

Subject: Political Activity and Events at the College

With state and local elections taking place this year—the primary is on June 24, and the general election on November 4—it is important to remind ourselves of our rights and responsibilities during this time. Now that the Maryland annual legislative session is over, we expect the election season to kick into full gear.

As members of the Maryland community, each individual employee and student enjoys the freedom of speech and expression, and has a right to express himself or herself with regard to candidates and issues. We are fortunate to live in a country where these rights are cherished and protected.

When exercising our expression, individuals have a responsibility not to imply that Montgomery College supports or opposes anyone or any issue. In addition, public resources (including, but not limited to, employee time, computers, printed material, and rooms) cannot be used by an individual to advance a candidate or issue with the College's explicit or implied support. College-sponsored events should generally be structured so that all candidates or representatives of all sides of an issue have an opportunity to be heard. Please note that our student organizations are not bound by the same obligations and can organize information events according to their interests.

The classroom is and always has been a special place for the exploration of ideas, which include political issues. The academic freedom accorded to faculty provides for freedom of discussion and research; College Policy 58003 expresses our commitment to this value. As a faculty member myself, I hold academic freedom dearly, and will always protect that of my faculty colleagues.

Attached please find a more detailed memorandum from General Counsel Rocky Sorrell on the matter of political activity and events at the College. I asked Mr. Sorrell to prepare this communication several years ago to provide information in the legal matters related to political activity in a public institution. This memorandum is still relevant and is consistent with similar communications to the College community in past election seasons.

Your attention to these matters is appreciated. Questions regarding any legal matter related to political activity should be directed to Rocky Sorrell or Tim Dietz in the Office of General Counsel. Interim Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs Sanjay Rai can address questions regarding academic freedom.

I thank you for your civic engagement and your help in maintaining our institutional role as a steward of public resources that provides a fair environment for discussion, discourse, and debate.