

Statement By Dr. Brian K. Johnson, President of Montgomery College, on the Montgomery County Council's Approval of the FY 2010 County Operating Budget

In response to today's approval of the Montgomery County fiscal year 2010 operating budget, Dr. Brian K. Johnson, president of Montgomery College, issued the following statement:

"Despite these difficult economic times, the Montgomery County Council today reaffirmed its commitment to offering exceptional higher education opportunities to the residents of Montgomery County. We are pleased that the County Council has approved 99.4 percent of our requested operating budget.

The economy has driven Montgomery College enrollment to record levels, and strained the ability of the College to meet the increased demand while maintaining academic excellence and expected student services. Working with employees and unions, Montgomery College renegotiated contracts and employees will not receive cost of living adjustments (COLAs). In addition, the College eliminated 10 positions and reduced expenditures. The College instituted a budget savings plan for this current fiscal year, which included a hiring freeze, a deferment of major purchases, and the reduction in temporary staff. These actions allowed Montgomery College to develop a sustainable operating budget that reflects these difficult economic times.

The budget approved by the County Council ensures that the College will meet its top three priorities for the next fiscal year: provide affordable access to higher education, meet the increasing costs for energy and employee benefits, and fund the opening of new facilities.

On behalf of the Montgomery College Board of Trustees, the College community, and our 60,000 students, we are grateful to our Councilmembers for recognizing the value of a college education. We know that in the days and months ahead, Montgomery College will be a solution generator, helping the county and its residents emerge from these challenging economic times stronger and more successful."

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