

What: Remarks, MC Alumni Awards

When: Friday, April 15, 2011, 6:30 p.m.

Where: Theatre Arts Building

Thank you Sue. It is a pleasure, and an honor, to be here today to recognize our distinguished alumni. I believe all of the students who pass through Montgomery College are distinguished in their own way – but the men and women in this room have excelled in a way that makes them truly exceptional.

We are here to recognize the accomplishments of tonight's honorees; Among them, we have the president and CEO of one of the most successful woman-owned businesses in the region, a man who worked his way from the showroom floor to vice president of local car dealerships, the CIO/CTO for the federal agency who handles civilian U.S. broadcasts abroad, and a Montgomery College department chair who built the College's

first Apple Macintosh lab before Apple was *Apple*! Our new athletic hall-of-fame members include a College track-and-field record-holder, a first place College wrestler turned high school wrestling coach of the year, an all-American soccer state champion, and a football lineman of the year turned college football coach. Phew- what an outstanding group!!

Now it's time for me to put on my English professor hat—once a teacher, always a teacher. I can feel my family members rolling my eyes out there—Robin and Myles are quite used to my professorial mode kicking in from time to time! Did you know the origin of the word- *alumnus*? Let me tell you. It comes from the Latin word meaning “foster son” and “to nourish.” This is especially fitting for each of our alumni.

Here at Montgomery College, we do feel as if we are the “othermother” to our students. We all know being a proud

member of a community college means being part of a family; we are more than just a place of classrooms and lectures. We cater to the whole person. We “nourish” our students to become resilient, strong, and smart members of society who leave our community colleges a more complete person.

In exchange, our surrogate children reciprocate by filling us with the same pride, hope, and dreams we see in our own children. We are thankful for your contributions to the campus both as students and, now, as alumni. You continue to give back to the College; with every success you accomplish, you represent the power of Montgomery College. By nourishing our community – as well as our College – you earn the title alumni and that gold badge and corsage you wear this evening.

But, as with any super hero, “with great power, comes great responsibility.” I urge you to remember the place that helped

make you the successes they are today. Give back, become a mentor, a role model, an extra hand to one of our students.

Remember how you ended up where you are and the helping hands that led you there.

I read an anecdote by a woman named Joann Jones that I wanted to share with you. It goes, quote: "During my second year of nursing school our professor gave us a quiz. I breezed through the questions until I read the last one: "What is the first name of the woman who cleans the school?" Surely this was a joke. I had seen the cleaning woman several times, but how would I know her name? I handed in my paper, leaving the last question blank. Before the class ended, one student asked if the last question would count toward our grade. "Absolutely," the professor said. 'In your careers, you will meet many people. All are significant. They deserve your attention and care, even if all

you do is smile and say hello.’ I’ve never forgotten that lesson. I also learned her name was Dorothy.”

So I leave you with that message. No matter how many awards you receive, no matter how many ladders you climb – no doubt all well deserved – always remember to take the time to smile, say hello and return the attention and care you received along the way.

You make the entire College proud. Thank you, and congratulations.

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