

2011 STRATEGIC PLANNING CONFERENCE/ ROCKVILLE CAMPUS  
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# Let's Get Strategic

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A Speech by  
Montgomery College President  
Dr. DeRionne Pollard

Good morning!

We are here today to talk about being strategic, to plan for our College's future in a strategic way. So what do we mean by that?

You all know that I am, and will always be, an English professor at my core. So, whenever I sit down to tackle a subject, I often think about the origin of words to help frame my objectives.

The dictionary will tell you being strategic means quote "carefully designed or planned to service a particular purpose or advantage," and "relating to the gaining of overall or long-term military advantage."

We are not here today to wage a technical war of course, but we are here today to sharpen our own cache of weapons...our brains...in our fight for educated, skilled, and trained Maryland students. We are here today to hear from experts in our field about educational and workforce changes and trends so we are better armed to empower our students. We are here today to discuss the ways we can gain an overall advantage in the fight for a stronger local workforce and community by discussing the ways we as a College can respond to their needs.

The changing economy needs us more than ever. NBC News late last week told the story of how, even in this economy, companies are looking to fill their rosters, but finding only empty benches...there simply are not employees trained to meet their needs. Watch:

<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/3032619/vp/44196418#44196418>

The College is committed to meeting this challenge. Just Monday, I unveiled our new mission statement approved by the Board of Trustees: *We empower our students to change their lives, and we enrich the life of our community. We are accountable for our results.*

To actualize these words, we articulated the following vision: *With a sense of urgency for the future, Montgomery College will be a national model of educational excellence, opportunity, and student success. Our organization will be characterized by agility and relevance as it meets the dynamic challenges facing our students and community.*

These statements will inform every decision we make as we embark on creating an ambitious and realistic strategic plan. The crux of who we are as an institution depends on us having a laser-sharp focus on the needs of our community and, in turn, remaining flexible to adapt to those needs.

Our Board of Trustees has show its commitment to strategically planning *now* for what Montgomery College will look like in *2020*. The members have identified board goals “informed by environmental scanning and data on the social, economic, and political impacts and implications” facing our community. In addition to taking stock of the College’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, our Board is dedicated to ensuring we explore innovation, entrepreneurialism, and other untapped resources.

To help us in our strategic pursuit, it is my pleasure to welcome distinguished members of our federal, state, and local educational and business communities here. Our keynote speaker certainly is a one-man wealth of knowledge about the changing social, economic, and business realities of our state.

Stephen Fuller has been a faculty member at George Mason University since 1994 as a professor of public policy and regulation development. He currently serves as director of the center for regional analysis.

Prior to his position at GMU, Dr. Fuller spent 25 years at the George Washington University, where for many years he served as chairman of Department of Urban Planning and Real Estate Development.

Everyone in this room likely has heard..or read...Dr. Fuller's insight to our areas economic health, as he has penned more than 500 articles, papers, and reports about urban and regional economic development.

He has received too many board appointments and awards to name here today. But trust me, they confirm what we all know: Dr. Fuller is a true economics guru! So without further ado, please welcome Dr. Stephen Fuller – here to arm us with the latest knowledge about the trends in our own community that we need to appreciate to be fully relevant and strategic.