## Germantown Child Care New Building Celebration

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A Speech by
Montgomery College President
Dr. DeRionne Pollard

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*Purpose of Event:* Celebrate the October 2012 opening of the new child care building on Germantown Campus.

*Setting:* 35 attendees, including Montgomery County Commission members, enrolled student families, some local officials and families from the past.

Format: 5-8 minute welcome.

*Goal of remarks:* To discuss the importance of providing services like this to empower many generations of students.

## Good morning!

It is my pleasure to welcome all of you to our Germantown

Campus today to celebrate the opening of our new Early

Learning Center. There are so many people to thank for making
this day happen...on behalf of our entire community, thank you!

I want to make sure to thank our Montgomery County Council
for its support of this project...I especially am grateful to

Councilmember Valerie Ervin, who is joining us here today, for
your longstanding support of the College, especially as the chair
of the council's Education Committee.

While this day is a special one for the College, it belongs primarily to the students who we are able to empower because of this center.

First, the parents—our students whose children spend their days here. These parents know that by tending to their own educational needs, they are building a stronger future for their children. They know that the time they sacrifice away from their children to attend classes or meet with professors or study with classmates will open doors of opportunities for their children. They are setting a powerful example ...and they are the heroes who we celebrate today.

But they are not the only heroes here. Thank you to the early childhood educators, some of whom are MC alumni!, who are devoted to nurturing and teaching the many children who spend their days here. I know for me taking care of just one child can

be exhausting! Yet, day in and day out, these men and women come to work excited to care for someone else's children as if they were their own. These teachers make our student parents feel comfortable parting with their most prized possessions every morning.

These educators, and the parents who rely on them, share a mutual desire to empower these young minds today for a successful tomorrow. It is especially appropriate that this event falls so close to the Week of the Young Child, starting on April 14, when we focus on raising the awareness of the importance of quality beginnings for the children of our future. As you heard President Obama mention in his State of the Union, we must as a country focus on early education...on making sure lifelong learning begins well before children formally enter the school system in Kindergarten. I am so proud that this center is

nationally accredited and committed to the Maryland State

Department of Education curriculum, to expose children to
science, math, literacy, and the other subjects necessary for
future success. Coupling this early access to education with the
example set by their parents and we are helping empower two
generations of students to change their lives. That is powerful!

Oh wait, there actually is a third set of students who this center is empowering. Our staff here works closely with our teaching program to create a practicum site where education students receive personal, monitored, hands-on experience as they pursue their degrees.

This center truly encapsulates the type of place Montgomery

College strives to be for our students. Every day, we at

Montgomery College, witness the wonders of working students,

stay-at-home-parents, first generation students, and every kind

of student possible. What they all have in common is that they have a determination to transform their lives through education—despite having an enormous number of priorities tugging on them. They are, quite simply, awe-inspiring.

I passionately believe that being a community college means we have a responsibility to be there for the student in the classroom, as well as outside of it. Having a child or supporting a family should not, *cannot*, be a barrier to personal growth and betterment. Thanks to this center, we are one step closer to actualizing that belief.