

April 11, 2023

The Honorable Evan Glass
Montgomery County Council
Council Office Building
100 Maryland Avenue, 6th Floor
Rockville, MD 20850

Dear Council President Glass,

Thank you for taking the time to allow me to express my great support for Montgomery Community Media (MCM) as a critical, inclusive resource to the communities of Montgomery County. Whether they participate as viewers or creators, MCM provides our neighbors with the opportunity to connect with each other from anywhere.

The programs that are shown on MCM's channels are not only the authentic voices of our residents but are also vehicles for learning and personal growth. Those facing the daunting life change of recovery can find support in some of the programs. Others, in need of understanding personal finance, can learn the basics of managing their household budgets. Moreover, as our communities struggle with the psychosocial effects of the pandemic, with our most vulnerable populations still shouldering the burden of disconnection and isolation, Montgomery Community Media programs provide a local voice: a lifeline in a familiar language to an otherwise lonely, housebound senior.

The importance of hands on learning and skill-building for our youth cannot be understated. Combined with the need for media literacy skills, the learnings that MCM provides through its Summer Youth Media Camps and other hands-on media making trainings are invaluable. As social media has become a primary driver of information, it is those who understand how media is made who will have a greater knowledge base of what is indeed possible and how to view media with a more critical eye. This, aside from the collaboration, organization, and technical skills learned as transferable to any academic or career endeavor.

The Montgomery County Council should not only continue its current level of support of MCM, but should consider an increase of \$7,000 to create a scholarship for 5 youth from under-resourced communities to participate in all 4 of MCM's Summer Youth Media Camps. This small increase ensures that our most vulnerable youth are able to participate in critical media literacy through hands on learning.

Gratefully,

Veronica Sloan