

**Testimony of Lori Ulrich, AFSCME, Montgomery College**

**Montgomery County Council**

**FY23 Operating Budget Public Hearing**

**April 11, 2023**

**7:00 p.m.**

Good evening, County Council Members. My name is Lori Ulrich, and I am the president of AFSCME Local 2380, the staff union, at Montgomery College.

We continue to be exceptional partners with the County. We are conscientious stewards with County funds, conservatively asked and graciously allocated, to operate so that we can change thousands of Montgomery County student residents' lives. We provide services to one of the most diverse community college populations in the country...in multiple modalities...simultaneously.

Some people might think Montgomery College is just a two-year institution, a place to fulfil gen ed requirements before transferring to a four-year institution. We are so much more than that! As an open-enrollment community college, we accept *everyone* who applies, regardless of what neighborhood they are from, what school they attended, or how they performed in it, and we meet them where they are. We serve those in need of developmental coursework as well as

academic rock stars. We provide mentoring, coaching, and career acquisition services. We assist non-traditional students with career changes, job skill development, or re-entry to the world of academics, when their paths may have bypassed it the first time around.

My father was hired to coordinate the Fire Science Program at MC and ended up teaching English in the 70s, 80s, and 90s. I was a student for a *long* time and worked as a student aide, tutoring students with learning disabilities. Thirteen years later, I was hired by MC to supervise that same program, coming full circle, and I have been there ever since. That is my story, but I'll bet that everyone in this room and most people throughout the County have their own or their family's or their friends' stories about Montgomery College's classes, programs, or activities. It is that kind of institution with a rich history and a deep reach into the lives of Montgomery County residents.

The members of AFSCME Local 2380 strongly hope that the County Council remembers the fiscal stewardship partnership with Montgomery College. Most of our hard-working bargaining members work behind the scenes, keeping facilities clean and in good working order, providing student support services, financial aid, and office

support, undergirding an exceptional infrastructure to support student success.

We are asking you to recognize our fiscal prudence and conservative budget requests by fully funding the College's FY24 budget. And please reject the County Executive's additional \$2.9M reduction to the MC capital budget.

Thank you for your time this evening!