

February 10, 2026

President Natali Fani-Gonzalez
Montgomery County Council
Council Office Building
100 Maryland Avenue, 6th Floor
Rockville, MD 20850

Topic: Request to support the County Executive FY 27 and FY 27-32 Capital Improvement Program to renovate the Theater Arts Building, Rockville Campus

Good evening Montgomery County Council President and Councilmembers,
Thank you for letting me speak tonight.

I am Anita Neal Powell, 1st Vice President of the Montgomery College Alumni Association, Board of Governors. I am here to respectfully request your support for full funding of the County Executive's FY27 and FY27-32 Capital Improvement Program, to renovate and expand the Theater Arts Building at the Rockville Campus and to invest in our student's future.

Enrollment in theater arts has grown, and our facilities must be updated to meet current academic, and industry standards. Modernized spaces, technology, and equipment are essential for student success, and will also benefit community use.

Attending theater classes in performance space at the facility is very critical because it offer students' an opportunity to participate in acting, showcasing their talents, through specialized training and developing technical skillsets, which will last beyond their Associate of Arts degree. It actually prepare the students for performing on stage and stage carpentry/stagehand, etc.

Using the theater stage for events and performances hosted by the community has provided opportunity for individuals to move beyond that space, including high school students. A former high school student who is now a current student at Montgomery College had the opportunity to audition on "American Idol" He is very talent and continues to sing at programs, county and national events across the country. I will share a

quote with you by —Shaquille Stewart, Montgomery College Alum Class of 2015 who stated, “I built a successful career as a professional actor, director, and leader and performed in a nation tour, venues in New York City, across the DMV, and beyond.”

In closing, I share the two stories with you because it is important that we realize that students who attend or graduate from Montgomery College through various performing mechanisms shines a light on the college as well as our county; particularly when their achievements gain recognition beyond the institution.

I have many more stories that I could share but I will stop here and ask that you fully fund the capital budget request provided to you on behalf of the Montgomery college, faculty and students.

Thank you and good night.

Respectfully,

Anita Neal Powell
1st Vice President
Montgomery College Alumni
Board of Governors