

Meeting of Montgomery County Workforce Development Board*
January 4, 2023
8:30 AM

A full recording of this meeting can be accessed via [Zoom](#) with passcode: 93NAA5%

Board Attendees: Jewru Bandeh, Sonya Bruton, Mark Drury, Barbara Ebel, Chris Gordon, Steve Greenfield, Courtney Hall, Yamil Hernández, Amelia Kalant, Mary Lang, Beth Lash, Omar Lazo, Susan Marks, Michelle Bell Smith, Christa Tichy, Bill Tompkins, Diego Uriburu

Non-Board Attendees: Dr. Jermaine Williams, President of Montgomery College, and Bill Tompkins, President & CEO, MCEDC

Staff: Anthony Featherstone, Executive Director; Cristina Escobar, Executive Assistant; Naté Gordon; Deputy Director of Administrative Services; John Hattery, Deputy Director of Workforce Services; Sarah Van De Weert, Director of Government & Board Relations & Ernestine Chambers, Director of Performance & Compliance.

Member Introductions

- Mr. Omar Lazo introduced himself as the new chairperson of the WDB. Mr. Lazo's parents opened a restaurant in Wheaton, Maryland, and he has since been working civically, including on the Wheaton Redevelopment Advisory Committee, Salvadoran American Chamber of Commerce, Vice President of Wheaton Kensington Chamber of Commerce, and the Board of Trustees for Montgomery College. All other members present on the zoom call had to introduce themselves and their job titles.

Montgomery College Update (informational) – Dr. Jermaine Williams

- Dr. Williams has been in higher education for 20 years in many different states and has dedicated his career to ending societal injustices. Dr. Williams has been in Montgomery County for less than a year. He has two kids and lives in Gaithersburg with his partner. He reports to Trustee Lazo and has a great board. He will share a little bit about Montgomery college and what's going on.
- Dr. Williams expressed enthusiasm for learning about the board's activities, offering advice to the county executive, and assisting in the formation of strong partnerships between local economic education and workforce partners. MC has strong ties to WorkSource Montgomery, the East County Education Center, and noncredit students who are receiving MCs scholarships via that organization. Montgomery College has familiarized itself with everything that is going on in the federal government as well as locally, regionally, statewide, and even federally.
- Dr. Williams is reflecting on the new components of social transformation and listening to the county's talent needs. They are looking at educational partners, identity, interfaith works, and partnerships with Work source Montgomery,

Montgomery County Economic Development Corporation, and community partners to help residents get the education and training they need. They are emphasizing the good work that is happening in this space and the need for more.

- Montgomery College is a federally designated Hispanic serving institution and a federally designated Asian American Native American, Pacific Islander Serving Institution. It has 144 degree and certificate programs, almost 80% of its students identify as individuals of color, and an average age of 24. It has 155 countries represented, and about half of its students stay in the state for post-secondary education.
- The most important details in the presentation conducted by Dr. Williams are the FY 21-degree enrollment numbers, cybersecurity training, biotech, health sciences training, homegrown talent, and employer-driven programs. The US Chamber of Commerce Foundation and signaling system are two methods for identifying what's needed, what's needed in the workforce, and whether are we meeting the current needs. To meet the need, the greater Washington partnership is leading an effort to provide signaling to talent to the talent pipeline, and community colleges are providing baccalaureate degrees specifically to meet workforce demands and timely ways.
- A report by AACCC, the American Association of Community Colleges, and Harvard Business School highlighted the partnership imperative to ensure that programs fit with students' lives and industry hiring.

Chairperson Welcome

- Mr. Omar Lazo welcomed all board members and new members present. Motion to approve January minutes w/ no opposition.

Vice Chair Nomination/Vote

- Omar Lazon nominated Christa Tichy as vice chair. All members motioned to approve Christa as a vice chair. Christa expressed her gratitude for the nomination and her passion for education, training, and getting the word out about the opportunities available to the community.
- Ms. Tichy is a small business owner, the first female master electrician, and has trained many of the youth in her area. Ms. Tichy mentioned that she would love to work with Omar and the rest of the members to establish these pathways. All attendees congratulated Ms. Tichy.

Committee Membership & Meeting Requirements

- Sarah is introducing a packet to volunteer to be on a committee or one of their new committees. They are over on time and will be reaching out to the chairs individually to schedule an orientation with the four of them. She would like to start to get the meetings underway beginning in February.

Montgomery County Economic Development Corporation (MCEDC) Update

- Mr. Bill mentioned that in his presentation the most important details in this text are the details of the county's economic development strategic plan, which was developed last year. The plan focuses on creating a one-voice-focused approach to economic development in Montgomery County and focuses on four areas of priority: workforce development, educational opportunities, work source, and incentives. The plan also highlights the partnership between the county and the organization, which is critically important for the success of the plan.
- Montgomery County has five priorities: building livable communities, creating an inclusive economy for shared prosperity, economic development, research, and promoting the county's businesses and the business climate. The most important thing is focusing on businesses that can grow here who are going to stay here and then attracting businesses and creating new jobs. The committee's alignment is somewhat aligned, but not 100% aligned, so if you look at construction and transportation, which WorkSource Montgomery focuses on you don't see that listed here.
- Montgomery College has a program for youth and young adults, which is in alignment with the types of companies that they are working with. Additionally, the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Montgomery County has a great opportunity for startups, businesses, and people who want to be in business for themselves. Finally, the fourth goal is to take a lot of the things that are happening in the economic development strategic plan and develop the purple line and red line strategies to help underserved businesses succeed and thrive in Montgomery County.

Measurable Equity Update

- Ernestine Chambers presented a slide show with important details and data. The Department of Labor has reported that 51.67% of all residents in Montgomery County are in the labor force and that 16,696 of those individuals are unemployed, bringing the county to a 3.1 unemployment rate.
- This is a significant increase from last year when the county was at 30,931 unemployed individuals and a 5.1% unemployment rate. Additionally, 13.3% of the unemployed individuals are being served in the work source Montgomery program through one of our services.
- The overarching mission is to ensure that all Montgomery County residents have career pathways that lead to equitable and sustainable economic mobility. The most important details in this text are the clear impact scorecard created by Adam, an equity scorecard for Montgomery County, and the plan to pull key

measures and host them live on the county's website by the end of this year.

- The equity scorecard validates Montgomery County's efforts and promotes accountability, while the key measures will be used to drive decisions on where to refer individuals and ensure strategies are effective. Anthony Featherstone was determined about measuring the effectiveness of Montgomery County's workforce by all factors, including race, location, age, sex, disability, barrier remediation, and service connections. Anthony Featherstone wanted to measure the effectiveness of barrier remediation and service connections for individuals who may be homeless, single-parent households, ex-offenders, and other factors that come into the workforce.
- Lastly, the ED wanted to use the data to guide a factor analysis to guide decisions to target communities that need to be more present and to establish strategies.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 10:09 AM.

The next meeting will take place on March 1, 2023, at 8:30 AM in person w/ Zoom available for virtual participants.