

**Montgomery County Council**  
**FY28 Operating Budget Public Hearing**  
**Testimony of Professor Karl Smith**  
**AAUP representative**  
**Montgomery College**  
**April 20, 2022**

Dear Council Members,

My name is Karl Smith. I'm a professor of history and political science at Montgomery College. I'm here today as a representative of the Montgomery College Chapter of AAUP.

I came to Montgomery College in 2004 for the work and the career opportunity. I stayed for the remarkable students and the chance to be a part of an institution that shapes lives and is an essential part of the community.

To be at MC is to be immersed in a sea of student success and diligent, persevering faculty and staff. Stories of student maturity and development abound. One such story is a former student of mine who went from MC to UMBC to Virginia Commonwealth University where she got her MS in genetic counseling and is now an investigator of clinical trials at NIH. She and her husband recently bought a house in Bethesda. I can't tell you how energizing it is to see that kind of

growth; from a student taking 100 level courses to a career professional, contributing to the health of our community and the county tax base. Or there's the student who went from MC to UMD to study pharmacy, and after working in Maryland for several years, is now working at an elder care facility in California. I have seen a former student wearing the MoCo police uniform. He joined the force about 10 years ago. Further, I have had several wounded veterans from Walter Reed/Navy Medical facility in my classes at the Takoma Park/Silver Spring campus.

These successes are facilitated by the work we do at the college. For years I have taught in the honors programs. Students do honors work to elevate their academic status. As a result, they become strong candidates (and often winners) of the prestigious Jack Kent Cooke Scholarship for transfer students. These students are applying for and getting accepted to places like Cornell, Columbia, UMBC, Howard, Smith College, and many more. Right now, three of my former students are at Smith College. As far as I know, at least two are planning to return to the DMV when they are done.

Incidentally, I have lived in Montgomery County for about 16 years. I am struck by the number of my neighbors who have taken classes at MC, couples who met at MC, or have family members studying at MC. I believe a few members of this council have also taken classes at MC. This kind of community reach is deep and transformative.

All this success has not wavered in the face of the pandemic. On the contrary, I see all around me faculty, staff, and, most importantly, students, who show grit in the face of overwhelming difficulties due to covid. To their credit, they persist.

With all these achievements in mind, I think this is a good time to express gratitude for the Council's prior financial support of Montgomery College. I sincerely hope that the council will continue to support the college in the future and fully fund MC's FY23 operating budget and fund pay raises for AAUP members and all faculty and staff. With full funding we can continue to be an instrument for achievement, growth, and personal success in Montgomery County.

Thank you for your attention.

Professor Karl Smith  
Montgomery College Faculty  
Humanities Department



February, 2020. Montgomery College students with Professor Smith visit The Gambian Embassy in Washington DC in preparation for a Model African Union Conference.