



**MONTGOMERY
COLLEGE**

Testimony of Hedy Valentine Hosford
Montgomery College Student, Rockville Campus
Montgomery County Council
FY25 Capital Budget Hearing
February 6, 2024

Hello, Council President Friedson and Members of the County Council.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you this evening.

My name is Hedy Valentine Hosford. I am a lifelong resident of Montgomery County and a Montgomery College student on the Rockville Campus.

Thank you for all of the support you provide for MC. I am here tonight to ask you to please continue by supporting MC's capital budget request, especially the renovation of the Theatre Arts building on the Rockville Campus—the place that changed my life.

I am happy to make this request because Montgomery College turned my life around.

My journey to becoming a proud MC Performing Arts major has been challenging. Three years ago, I dropped out of Poolesville High School in my junior year. I had extreme mental health issues that left me unable to go to school, unable to do theatre, and most importantly, almost unable to continue living. That period of my life was extremely painful. I had lost faith in myself. I was no longer able to take the steps I needed for the future I wanted—to have a degree and to become an actor. Acting had been part of my life since I was a child. I was good at it and full of the magic that comes with believing you can do anything. That magic died when I could not do anything. As all my friends went to college, I was lost and directionless—until I found my way to Montgomery College.

My growth at MC has been exponential, thanks to the Performing Arts program. With the support of professors and academic coaches, my confidence has been replenished. To my surprise, I have found success. My introduction to MC was the day I walked into the Theatre Arts building to audition for the Summer Dinner Theatre musical. As a student, I spend most of my days in Theatre Arts learning to act, rehearsing, and preparing costumes and props along with many other critical components of a performing arts degree. MC has helped me give my life and my education another shot. Now I know, with more confidence than I've ever had, that I'm going to pursue my dream and become an actor. I'm going to have a rich and purposeful life.

I am here to ask you to support the renovation of the Theatre Arts building, where I spend so much of my time as a student. The building could use some attention to support the amazing faculty as they work with students like me. It would be so helpful to have more spaces for small groups of students to study and rehearse. A new stage would make it easier for students to offer successful performances. And another Black Box would give us so many more opportunities for learning and performing—so students can better discover their abilities and passions.

Because of MC, I can pursue my future career as an actor by earning a Performing Arts degree. The faculty and staff have been essential to my success. With the renovation of the Theatre Arts building to be more functional to support our studies, students like me will be able to reach their dreams and launch successful careers. Please help our Theatre Arts building. I don't know where I would be without it.