



**Montgomery County Council  
Testimony of  
Shaquille Stewart, Montgomery College Alumni  
Monday, April 8, 2024  
7:00 p.m.**

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Good evening, County Council members.

My name is Shaquille Stewart. I am a lifelong Montgomery County resident, the Executive Director of the Silver Spring Stage, and a Montgomery College alum.

I am grateful for the opportunity to thank you for supporting MC. Please continue your support of my alma mater—and the place that changed my life—by fully-funding MC’s operating budget request.

I was born and raised in Silver Spring. Like my entire family, I graduated from Einstein High School, where I discovered my passion for acting. I got a scholarship and went away to college to study drama. But shortly thereafter, my family faced incredible challenges: my father passed away and my mother lost her job. I returned home to care for my family. During this difficult time, I turned to MC—which I quickly learned is the best place for anyone to be.

MC’s performing arts program welcomed me then prepared me for a successful career. MC’s affordable tuition made it financially possible for me to pursue my dream. And MC’s faculty are incredible teachers. Most importantly, they work all across the DMV’s theater industry in addition to teaching. They are notable performers, and they are everywhere! As a student, they shared their connections with me as I began to pursue roles. My former professors remain mentors, friends, and connectors.

Because of my MC experience, I am t

he man I am today. I have built a successful career as a professional actor, director, and leader for more than 10 years. I’ve performed in a national tour of Othello, venues in New

York, and across the DMV—places like Ford’s Theater, Olney Theatre, Arena Stage, and Chesapeake Shakespeare.

Currently, I am the Executive Director of the Silver Spring Stage. In this leadership role and beyond, I want to be a model for actors of color. I want all performers, regardless of their background, to know they belong—just like MC gave me the confidence and sense of belonging in the theater.

I’m proud to be a Montgomery College performing arts alum. I’m proud to offer my skills and leadership to my community through my work at Silver Spring Stage. And I’m proud to thank you for supporting MC. Please continue your support to keep MC affordable so more residents can access the education they need to succeed.