



**Montgomery County Council
Testimony of Diana Gonzalez-Ramirez
Montgomery College Performing Arts Alumni
Monday, April 8, 2024
7:00 p.m.**

Good evening, Council President Friedson and members of the County Council.

I am Diana Gonzalez-Ramirez, a Montgomery County resident and a Montgomery College Performing Arts graduate.

I am here tonight to thank you for your support of MC. I ask for your continued support of the institution that helped launch my theater career.

While I have lived in Gaithersburg for many years, I was born in El Salvador. My family moved to Montgomery County when I was fifteen years old. We moved to Maryland due to its status as a Dreamer-friendly state, as I had been granted DACA status.

After graduating from Richard Montgomery High School, I always knew Montgomery College would be the place to begin my higher education. Coming from a modest background, MC made college possible for me. Without MC's affordable tuition and scholarships, I simply would not have been able to pursue a degree and, ultimately, my career.

I dreamed of working in the theatre since childhood. MC's performing arts program is well known for its incredible faculty. They are strong teachers, visionary artists, and many of them are established professional actors. They perform throughout the DC area and have created a powerful reputation for MC.

My professors prepared me well. I learned to develop my craft but also about set design, lighting, and costuming—all important skills for a well-rounded theater professional. I can walk into any venue with great confidence and knowledge.

Today, I am proud to say I have a thriving career. The DMV has a large theater industry—we are the third largest in the nation, only behind New York and Chicago, so opportunities are abundant.

I'm honored to have performed in a variety of venues including BlackRock Center for the Arts here in Germantown, Gala Hispanic Theater, First Stage, and Chesapeake Shakespeare, to name a few. Currently, I'm set to shoot my first independent film in Silver Spring.

I'm not alone—many MC performing arts alumni are professionals across the area and beyond. MC has a terrific reputation for producing great performers—employers know MC's alumni are skilled, hardworking, and ready to succeed.

I am so proud to be a Montgomery College performing arts alum.

And I'm proud to thank you for supporting MC. I ask for your continued support so more residents can access the arts education we, as a society, so desperately need.