

Testimony

Victoria Baldassano

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Montgomery County Council

FY25 Operating Budget Hearing

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Good evening. My name is Victoria Baldassano. I am the Director of the Part-Time Faculty Union at Montgomery College under SEIU Local 500. In 2007, I organized a grassroots campaign that led to the formation of our union in 2010, and since then I have played various leadership roles in the union. In the Fall 2024 semester, I will celebrate 19 years of teaching English as a part-time professor at MC.

Tonight, I urge the council to fully fund Montgomery College's Fiscal Year 2025 budget request.

As the Council knows, MC has a very diverse student population, and most of our students work to cover tuition and costs of living. Montgomery College gives these students the opportunity for a better life through affordable college education and workforce training. MC continues to expand its ability to reach students in need through projects such as the recently opened East County Education Center. Full funding would allow this work to continue.

Full funding would also support the hard-working faculty and staff of Montgomery College, particularly the part-time faculty, whom I represent. MC has over 900 part-time faculty on its three campuses who teach many of the core courses students are required to take for graduation. We are the tutors and coaches that students turn to for extra support.

However, part-time professors are at a disadvantage since we earn less than our full-time colleagues for teaching the same courses. During times of low enrollment, such as the COVID pandemic, part-time professors are the first to lose their courses. Less than full funding would have a disproportionately negative effect on the part-time faculty at MC.

Our students deserve high quality, affordable college education, and our faculty deserve the support we need to do the demanding job of teaching.

Thank you so much for listening to my testimony and for your continued support of Montgomery College, its students, its faculty and staff, and its mission.