

JASMINE WHITE, MONTGOMERY COMMUNITY MEDIA  
GOOD AFTERNOON, COUNCIL PRESIDENT FRIEDSON AND COUNCIL  
MEMBERS:

AS THE CEO OF MONTGOMERY COMMUNITY MEDIA, I HAVE THE  
DISTINCT HONOR OF LEADING THIS ORGANIZATION INTO ITS 40<sup>TH</sup> YEAR  
OF SERVICE TO THE COUNTY AND ITS RESIDENTS. MCM IS THE ONLY  
NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION THAT PRODUCES RELIABLE,  
MONTGOMERY COUNTY NEWS EVERY SINGLE DAY. WE PROVIDE  
MULTIMEDIA EDUCATION THROUGH CAREER DEVELOPMENT  
PROGRAMS, AND ACCESS TO PUBLIC INFORMATION TO FOSTER AN  
INFORMED AND ENGAGED POPULATION.

TYPICALLY, THIS WOULD BE A GOOD OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE OUR  
SUCCESS STORIES AND TALK ABOUT OUR AWARDS – WHICH WE LOVE  
TO MENTION, BECAUSE WE’RE VERY PROUD OF THOSE ACCOMPLISH-  
MENTS, BUT GIVEN THE CURRENT CLIMATE, IT’S TIME TO MOVE THIS  
CONVERSATION IN A DIFFERENT DIRECTION.

WHEN I CAME BACK TO MCM A LITTLE OVER A YEAR AGO, IT WAS  
CLEAR TO ME THAT IT WAS TIME FOR THE ORGANIZATION TO START A  
NEW CHAPTER...

- CABLE FRANCHISE REVENUES WERE STEADILY DECLINING
- OUR APPROACH TO PROGRAM CREATION AND  
DISTRIBUTION WAS NOT IN ALIGNMENT WITH THE CURRENT  
NEEDS OF THE COUNTY AND
- OLO’S REPORT “COMMUNICATIONS FUNDING IN AN ERA OF  
DECLINING CABLE REVENUES” CLEARLY SPELLED OUT WHY THE  
CURRENT FUNDING STRUCTURE IS NOT SUSTAINABLE.

SO, IT BECAME CLEAR TO ME PRETTY QUICKLY THAT IT WAS NOT TIME FOR MCM TO START A NEW CHAPTER, BUT WE MUST ACTUALLY WRITE A NEW BOOK.

AFTER 40 YEARS OF MANAGING THE COUNTY'S PUBLIC ACCESS CABLE CHANNELS, EQUIPMENT AND STUDIOS, ITS TIME FOR A DIFFERENT APPROACH TO OUR DELIVERY OF SERVICES.

FOR EXAMPLE, WE'VE SHIFTED FROM A RESOURCE-INTENSE, INDIVIDUAL USER TRAINING MODEL TO FOCUSING ON MORE EQUITY AND JUSTICE-BASED EDUCATION PROGRAMS LIKE OUR BIPOC AND LGBTQIA+ JOURNALISM FELLOWSHIPS. RE-AFFIRMING OUR COMMITMENT TO AMPLIFYING VOICES OF UNDERREPRESENTED COMMUNITIES IN THIS COUNTY.

IN 2023 WE PROVIDED OVER 4,900 HOURS OF TRAINING TO INTERNS WHO PRODUCED CONTENT **WITH AND FOR** MCM, WHILE GAINING REAL WORLD, ON-THE-JOB CAREER TRAINING.

WE'VE INCREASED OUR SUPPORT OF SMALL BUSINESSES AND NONPROFITS, BY PROVIDING CUSTOMIZED TRAINING AND LOW-COST PRODUCTION SERVICES TO MEET THEIR MULTIMEDIA NEEDS.

WE ARE REVIVING OUR SMALL BUSINESS NETWORK PROGRAM.

AND WE ARE ACTIVELY SEEKING GRANTS, UNDERWRITING, AND FOUNDATION FUNDING TO SUPPORT THOSE ACTIVITIES, AND REDUCE OUR DEPENDENCY ON DIMINISHING CABLE REVENUES.

I CAN'T TELL YOU TODAY WHAT THE NEXT 40 YEARS WILL LOOK LIKE, BUT OUR IMMEDIATE PLANS INCLUDE ..

MORE MULTI-LANGUAGE, COMMUNITY ENAGEMENTMENT CONTENT

LIKE HOLA MONTGOMERY,

MORE REPORTERS FOCUSING ON EDUCATION, GOVERNMENT, AND  
COMMUNITY STORIES,

AND MORE EQUITY AND INCLUSION WORK.

I'VE SHARED WITH SOME OF YOU PREVIOUSLY THAT OUR CURRENT  
FUNDING CHALLENGES HAVE NOT DISCOURAGED US. THIS MOMENT IS  
AN OPPORTUNITY. WE HAVE THE CHANCE TO CREATE THE FUTURE OF  
ACCESSIBLE COMMUNITY MEDIA IN THIS COUNTY.

MCM'S WORK IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE **THIS** COMMUNITY IS  
IMPORTANT. WE DEEPLY APPRECIATE YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT OF  
OUR MISSION, AND YOUR COMMITMENT TO ENSURING THIS  
AMAZING, DIVERSE, COMMUNITY CONTINUES TO HAVE A VOICE.

WE LOOK FORWARD TO CELEBRATING OUR 40TH ANNIVERSARY WITH  
ALL OF YOU. THANK YOU.