

NTGOMERY
C. UNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

MONTC

ANNUAL REPORT | 2020-2021

to advance equity, opportunity and social justice in the communities we serve.

Provide quality, accessible and sustainable learning opportunities.

Innovate to support student success and the needs of our communities.

Respect our diverse contributions and lived experiences to cultivate inclusion.

Foster a culture of empathy, trust, transparency, integrity and accountability.

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A Message From Our President

Dear Montco Family and Friends,

Just over a year ago you trusted me to lead this esteemed institution as its sixth president and propel our strong Montco Momentum forward toward a brighter future for all. Each day since, I have dedicated myself to earn that privilege and repay that debt of gratitude.

As we close the 2020-2021 school year, we reflect on the journey we've walked together so far. This year revealed the strength of our resolve. Amid a pandemic, our students confronted health concerns, economic strife and social injustices. Yet, we rose to the challenge, using our creative innovation and ideation to support the success of our students and our community. Unsurprisingly,

LEADERSHIP &



INSPIRE. Lead. TRANSFORM.



The installation ceremony was the capstone of a two-week series of events involving the Montco Family and community members.

“We eagerly look forward to this new chapter with Dr. Bastecki-Perez as our president, and the growth of Montco as an institution,” said Frank X. Custer, Chair of the Montgomery County Community College Board of Trustees. “Her leadership and decisive actions have kept Montco at the forefront of higher education during a time when many institutions are struggling. She continues to build upon and strengthen relationships at all levels, while expanding awareness of Montco’s programs and services, but at the heart of everything she does, every decision she makes, is our students. And, after all, isn’t that why we are all here?”

Dr. Bastecki-Perez plans to expand upon Montco’s vision, mission and strategic plan together with the Montco Family.

“Traveling on this journey together, I truly am humbled, privileged and grateful to serve as the sixth president of this remarkable institution where together we will inspire, lead and transform.”

For the ceremony, students Doug Michie, Gordon Michie and Steven Nivan, with faculty and staff members David Ivory, Michael Kelly, Ron DiSilvestro, Louis Rieger, Howie Gordon, Sarah Kane and Matt Porter, created an original musical interlude, “Open up Your Eyes.”

In addition, student-athletes Blaise Blomstrom, Mary Grace MacDonald, Grace Nicodemus and Jake Schalki presented a framed national championship basketball shirt and game net to the new president. Before the pandemic, the men’s basketball team earned the title of 2020 Region 19 champions and advanced to the NJCAA National Tournament for the first time in Montco’s history, and Nyere Miller was named basketball coach of the year.

The celebration events included two community drive-in movie nights and reworks. Galleries Director Patrick Rodgers presented a painting, “Twilight Landscape,” created by alumnus Jackson Moyer, for the President’s office. Montco Radio students held an “Inauguration Marathon” of radio shows, including a podcast interview with Dr. Bastecki-Perez.

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ONE MONTCO



PROPELLING DISCUSSION ON DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

Poet, public speaker, educator and memoirist Richard Blanco served as the keynote speaker for Montco's 2020 online **Presidential Symposium** on Diversity. Blanco captured the attention of more than 325 students, employees and community members through his poems and thoughtful discussion about our nation's current and past injustices, our individual stories, and how the U.S. is a place where all narratives could come together. He also shared poetry from his new book, *How to Love a Country*.

REIMAGINING COMMUNITY SERVICE: MLK DAY TOWN HALL

As the pandemic persisted throughout much of the spring semester, the 2021 Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service activities took on a different format. Montco, collaborating with Movement for Black and Brown Lives in Montgomery County, held a **virtual Town Hall** discussion called "Reimagining Community Service," to discuss ways to serve Montgomery County communities on an ongoing basis.



CONNECT AND INNOVATE

The League for Innovation in the Community College recognized Montco Connect among its 2020-2021 **Innovation of the Year** awards, which honors "significant community college innovations that improve the ability of institutions to serve their students and communities." Montco Connect is an internal communications tool accessible by students and employees when they log in to Montco's web portal. The platform allows users to share announcements and activities. The team members who created and implemented this tool are Mary Beaver, Angela Cavaliere, Holly Ann Clayton, Amelia Fox, Kasey Golding, Molly Hafner, Amanda Hall, Michael Harcum, Sean Hutchison, Joe Mancini, Natalie Palmer, Andrew Rosner, Sarah Schenk, Tyler Steyer, Robert Vogel and Tiffany Webber.

OUR COMMUNITY'S COLLEGE

RESOURCE HUB FOR ALL

As an innovative leader in higher education, workforce development and economic revitalization, Montco serves as a vital resource hub for the community, helping people of all ages, at all stages of their lives. Throughout the pandemic and now as the economy begins to recover, Montco is here, focused on doing what is best for students and the community.

HELPING UNEMPLOYED RESIDENTS

To help residents who are unemployed due to the pandemic, Montco started the Montco Recovery Tuition Waiver Program to provide last-dollar tuition waivers, beginning in the spring 2021 semester and continuing through summer 2022. As of June 2021, more than 100 students received tuition waivers.

The program is available to any Montgomery County resident who experienced full- or part-time employment loss on or after March 6, 2020, the date of Pennsylvania Gov Tom Wolf's Emergency Disaster Declaration. Applicants need to enroll in and attend a degree, certificate or financial-aid eligible non-credit program and follow the application guidelines.

SERVING THE COMMUNITY'S NEEDS

As the community's college, Montco is flexible and responsive to the educational and resource needs of the communities it serves. During 2020-21, Montco helped students and residents by:

CHAMPIONING PUBLIC HEALTH

Montco is proud to participate in the White House and U.S. Department of Education's COVID College Challenge. As a **Vaccine Champion College**, Montco is committed to:

- 01** **ENGAGING** students, faculty and staff members to ensure that they know they are eligible for the vaccine and have the resources to get vaccinated.
- 02** **ORGANIZING** the college community by implementing a plan to encourage everyone to get vaccinated.
- 03** **DELIVERING** vaccine access for all by bringing vaccine clinics to its campuses.

To support this effort, Montco partnered with Montgomery County Immunization Coalition, JBS Foods of Souderton and Giant Pharmacy to host COVID-19 vaccination clinics for the Montco Family and greater community. The clinics were held in August 2021 at each campus and promoted through multiple media channels to reach as many people as possible.

In addition, Montco's 2021 Presidential Symposium on Diversity will feature Kizzmekia S. Corbett, Ph.D., the lead research scientist on the development of the Moderna vaccine. For her visit on Oct. 21, 2021, Montco is holding a contest for students to create public service announcements encouraging vaccinations.

EXCELLENCE IN LEADERSHIP

Montco was pleased to announce the appointment of Dr. Gloria Oikelome as the next Vice President of Academic Affairs. Over her 18-year career in higher education, she has focused on building innovative STEM and health science programming and curriculum, while helping students discover their passions and advance their careers in the sciences.

Dr. Oikelome is a committed educator with experience in academic leadership roles at Reading Area Community College, Lincoln University and University of York (Hull York Medical School) in the United Kingdom. She also has extensive experience in the classroom, teaching biology, microbiology, nutrition and biomedicine. She credits committed faculty who helped her see potential in herself during her college experience as a driving force in her decision to pursue a career in higher education.

During 2020-21, Montco also welcomed four new deans: Dr. Timothy Brown, Dean of the Liberal Arts Division; Cheryl DiLanzo, Dean of the Health Sciences Division; Kyle Longacre, Dean of Workforce and Economic Development Division; and Terence Lynn, Dean of the Business & Professional Studies Division.

Montco was pleased to announce that Diane E. O'Connor, M.S., PHR, SHRM-CP, CBP, CCP, was appointed as the Vice President of Administrative Services. Ms. O'Connor brings 29 years of experience in education as well as a strong focus in strategic management to her vice presidency, where she will lead the development of the College's plans and protocols for a campus environment focused on safety, efficiency, stewardship, and sustainability.

Joining Montco in 1996, Ms. O'Connor previously served as Montco's Executive Director of Human Resources; acting as a strategic visionary responsible for management of the College's recruitment strategy, benefits programs, compensation programs, trainings, policies, and employee relations. She also has held prior positions as the Benefits

KERBAL MATH AND PHYSICS LAB TAKES FLIGHT

Learning complex math concepts shouldn't have to feel like rocket science. By applying them to real-life scenarios, like space flight, students better understand how they work and inspire further exploration. That's why Montco and Math Assistant Professor Christopher Scott Vaughen used the Kerbal Space Program – a space flight simulation video game – to launch a pilot program called the Kerbal Math and Physics Lab during 2020-21.

'MONTCO@HOME' OFFERS VIRTUAL TICKET TO ELECTRONIC MUSICIANS

Coinciding with the launch of The Language of Digital Media course, two faculty members launched a web series called "Montco@Home" featuring interviews with musical performers from around the globe. From as far away as London and Paris, to those with ties closer to our area, Computer Science Professor Kendall Martin and Sound Recording and Music Technology Instructor Jen Mitlas sat down with electronic music producers from around the world as part of their interview series. Their hard work paid off.

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“During the past year, we’ve met with business and community members, students, faculty and others to explore possibilities for the Pottstown Campus,” said Therol Dix, J.D., Vice President of Pottstown Campus and Educational Partnerships. “We listened to their ideas and are using that feedback as we make improvements.”

At North Hall, 16 W. High Street, Montco will convert the existing macadam parking lot into a grass-covered area with tiered rain gardens. The new design will provide both live learning laboratories for students and a public green space for the community.

At South Hall, 101 College Drive, Montco is renovating the student support spaces to improve the overall educational experience, providing greater access to basic needs services.

Along with construction, Montco is offering new programs at Pottstown, including Tourism and Hospitality Management and Sound Recording and Music Technology with a new

BLUE BELL

TRANSFORMING STEM INTO STEAM

Renovations are underway inside the Science Center Theater to transform the facility into a state-of-the-art performance space.

Modernizing our campus learning spaces gives us the flexibility to meet the needs of our students, allowing them to be successful now and in the future,”

said Dr. Celeste Schwartz, Vice President of Information Technology and Institutional Effectiveness. “Additionally, these enhancements provide new and innovative opportunities to engage our community.”

Renovations to the theater began in fall 2019 with an anticipated opening in October 2022. Highlights of the new theater will include:


- ▶ A new balcony with a gathering room
- ▶ Larger stage to accommodate a wider variety of performances
- ▶ Increased seating capacity
- ▶ New theater technology that will enhance sound quality and the visual experience
- ▶ New and improved seating for audience members
- ▶ New lobby and bathrooms
- ▶ Increased wheelchair accessibility

These improvements will elevate the arts as a means of teaching and learning, and will provide new and creative opportunities for our students and the community.

In May, *Diverse: Issues in Higher Education* magazine announced its 2021 Arthur Ashe Jr. Sports Scholars Award list of recipients, including Mustangs eSports student-athlete Kiratika Ariyamitr. In addition, Athletics released a [new video](#) featuring several student-athletes performing on the field and in the classroom.

Montco received its largest gift in its 56-year history of \$3 million from Kenneth D. Baker, a dedicated advocate of Montco and its mission, for the creation of the [Baker Center of Excellence](#) for Employee Ownership and Business Transformation.

The Baker Center, coming to Montco's



In a typical school year, Montco would only hold one Commencement ceremony to celebrate the accomplishments of the graduating class. This year, however, was no typical year. Due to the pandemic, Montco held multiple drive-in ceremonies at Blue Bell Campus— first in the fall and then again in the spring.

The 53rd annual Commencement ceremony celebrating the Class of 2020, was held Friday, Oct. 2, 2020, with two drive-in ceremonies. Each ceremony also was livestreamed online for those unable to congratulate the 1,669 graduates in person.

FOR ALL



High school students looking to get a head start on college should consider the **Dual Enrollment/Early College** program at Montco.

DUAL ENROLLMENT/EARLY COLLEGE SUCCESS

For students 15 years old and older (or younger with permission and when requirements are met), the program offers a low-cost opportunity to earn transferable college credits by taking classes taught at one of Montco's campuses, online and/or at their high school by certified teachers.

In addition to an affordable price and opportunity to earn college credit, the Dual Enrollment/Early College program provides other opportunities for students.

FOR MORE STORIES

MONTCO CAMPUS

“The College continues to put the safety and wellness of our students, employees and the community we serve at the forefront of what we do,” said Dr. Victoria L. Bastecki-Perez, President, in an email to the Montco Family. “As conditions change, we will continue to respond accordingly.”

While capital construction projects are underway at both campuses, Montco’s diligent facilities crew continues to keep the grounds looking beautiful and the buildings clean for everyone’s safety. The custodial employees received training in disinfecting and sanitizing.

They continually clean all high-contact areas, as well as common areas and designated eating areas. They also clean and sanitize classrooms and offices after each use.

With construction, College Hall in Blue Bell will be closed for fall 2021. Student services and other offices will be relocated to other

\$477.1 million

impact to

* Source: The Economic Value of Montgomery County Community College to Montgomery County report, May 2021, prepared by Economic Modeling Specialists Intl.

** Alumni status is awarded to those with 30 credits or more.



