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Serving Montgomery County Community College and the Surrounding Community

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Dear Montgomery County Community  
College students,

Welcome back to those who have already  
braved their first semester at the College, and  
a hearty welcome to those of you who are just  
beginning your journey here at Montgomery  
County Community College. I wish that your  
semester was being conducted under normal

As the year 2020 rages on, the Montgomery County Community College campuses remain closed to most attendees. However, students at the College have found various ways of adapting to learning without a classroom — and are even using it to their advantage.

Although most online classrooms generally lack the flexibility that face-to-face learning provides, students are generally finding that the online alternative to campus classrooms can still work in their favor. One of the biggest factors is that asynchronous online classes, which have no scheduled online meetings, allow students to remain on their own schedule while they complete their assignments, sometimes balancing out-of-school activities such as part- or full-time jobs, or caring for their children. (This would not be true of synchronous classes, where regular class sessions are still held, albeit online.)

One would think the social life of a college student at this time is virtually nonexistent. However, students continue to find new and innovative ways to meet new people and

keep in touch with friends. Student email appears to be the most common form of communication.

According to Olivia Schoenly, a History major and student at the College, “At this time, it’s mostly just emailing. Since the semester just started, most classes do introductions, with names, field of study and interests. So, I try to find people who have similar interests or are studying in the same program, and I try to start a conversation with them.” She added, “Most of the time, though, I ‘hang out’ with older friends. We either have an online game night, or we try to stream movies together, with, maybe, the rare meet-up in an outdoor park.”

Similar to how students continue to find ways to communicate, they have also found their own ways to pay for college, in spite of difficulty finding relatively safe jobs due to the COVID pandemic. Some students have taken out loans, have continued living at home an extra year instead of moving in with friends, or are finding relief through FAFSA (federal student aid) help to cover costs.

Perhaps it is not

talked about enough, but immunocompromised students are at a particularly high risk of contracting severe forms of COVID and have been unable to find jobs not directly on the front lines. These students need safe jobC nlike waiting tables, or working in a nursing home or at their local supermarket. The situation forces them to depend heavily on financial aid for help getting from one semester to the next, despite the spectre of a large student loan bill after graduation.

Dorian Burnell, a Psychology major and student at the college, said, “Actually, I don’t currently work. I’m on disability right now due to this pandemic, which has made it harder for me to go into work because of a compromised immune system. So, I haven’t really been able to look for jobC at this point. Otherwise, I’ve gotten a few scholarships to help pay for this semester and next semester, but yeah, I’ve been cutting it close paying tuition between last semester and the semester coming up.”

Despite the difficulties brought on by the year 2020, Montgomery County Community College Students continue to find new ways to

thrive in a changing world, where virtual schoolC allow students to take classes at their convenience, now literally with the push of a button.

Sometimes, however, the low-tech advice for staying sane and focused is the one most overlooked by students. As Olivia Schoenly suggests, “Go outside, get some fresh air. It’s better than sitting inside all day.”

For more information on getting help during COVID visit Montgomery County Community College Disability Services at [mc3.edu/choosing-montco/academic-support/disability-services](https://mc3.edu/choosing-montco/academic-support/disability-services) and Montgomery County Community College Health & Wellness at [mc3.edu/choosing-montco/resources-for-students/health-and-wellness](https://mc3.edu/choosing-montco/resources-for-students/health-and-wellness).



Pottstown campus, closed.

Photo by Joel DeFilippo

The usually vibrant area around College Hall, at Montgomery County Community College, in Blue Bell, Pa., looks like a ghost town.



According to Yahoo News, COVID-19 is now the second worst pandemic in U.S. history, behind the Spanish Flu pandemic of 1918. Millions of people are dying worldwide, and cases are still rising daily at the time of this writing.

Many people are also jobless and struggling with financial problems, which can lead to anything from chronic stress to homelessness. Schools and colleges are continuing classes online for the fall and are already making similar plans for the spring semester, as Montgomery County Community College announced in September.

COVID-19 can impact anyone, but sometimes lost in the conversation is its impact on college students — financially, academically, and mentally.

Montgomery County Community College has many resources to help students who are struggling during this tough time. Patricia Abdalla, Montgomery County Community College's Director of Academic Support, offers information regarding the resources available for students who are struggling academically.

"The service we are currently providing for our students is individual tutoring, which is done by both Montgomery County Community College and Tutor.com tutors, and [these tutors] are being offered to all registered students via Tutor.com," Abdalla said. "The College's tutors are available to work with students during our regular tutoring hours."

The College's tutors are available 7 days a week, during the following hours:

- Monday – Thursday, 8 a.m. – 7 p.m.
- Friday, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.
- Saturday, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.
- Sunday, 1 p.m. – 5 p.m.

Outside of the College's tutoring hours, students can contact [Tutor.com](https://www.tutor.com) for tutoring support by a Tutor.com tutor at any time they choose, and on any day.

Students can also drop off their essays at any time and on any day, to be reviewed by one of the College's tutors, or by a tutor from Tutor.com. Essays are returned within 12 hours.

However, according to Abdalla, "Students typically receive them back long before that!" If students need feedback more quickly, they can always connect with a writing tutor live to receive feedback on a paper at any time of day.

"Students are also able to receive study skills support from both our College's and Tutor.com's tutors, through Tutor.com, which can help them with their study strategies, time management, organizing their material and a host of other study skills strategies," Abdallah said. "Our tutors have also created very helpful and short success strategy videos for students to check out tips, from avoiding procrastination and improving memory skills. There are even three videos on how to write essays with unity, support and coherence!" The videos can be viewed on Montgomery County Community College's YouTube page.

[Group tutoring sessions](#) are also offered for some popular classes with which students often struggle — such as Chemistry, Math and CIS — using Blackboard Collaborate Ultra. To get the link on how to attend one of those sessions, students can simply go on the College's Tutoring Website and check out the section "Find a Montco Tutor or Group Session." There is also Supplemental Instruction, which is for students in courses such as Anatomy & Physiology.

According to Abdallah, "Students have support from a Supplemental Instruction Assistant at the College,

who attends their classes. They also offer several support sessions for students each week in which they review strategies to better learn material, ultimately helping them succeed in the course."

Abdallah said that, for students who are planning to take the TEAS test, "We offer group tutoring sessions each week to help students learn effective reading and test strategies." Tutorial services offers a new support service to aid students who are working on their writing.

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# WANTED

## Student Journalists

The Montgazette is looking for Central & West Campus writers.

**Report on a wide range of content:**

- news
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For more information, email [montgall@montgomerycollege.edu](mailto:montgall@montgomerycollege.edu)

## Let Your Voice Be Heard!

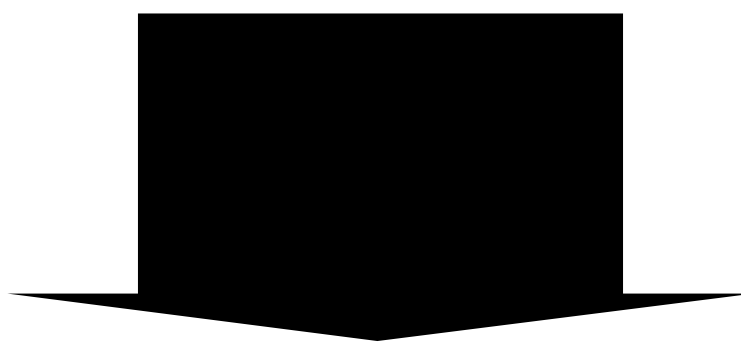
The alarm goes off and it is 6 a.m., and as much as I want to sleep longer or just lay in bed for 15 more minutes, I know that I only have 3 hours to get myself ready, make breakfast for my entire family, and get the kids up and ready. Even though kindergarten is being held virtually, we still treat it like a normal school day.

At 8:45 a.m. I log into my son's virtual classroom and test the links to make sure we are good for the day. But that can change in an instant: The internet can drop out, a password could be required to enter the Zoom room, or there can be an unknown error out of my control, like no sound coming from the iPad.

At 9 a.m., when my kindergartener starts his





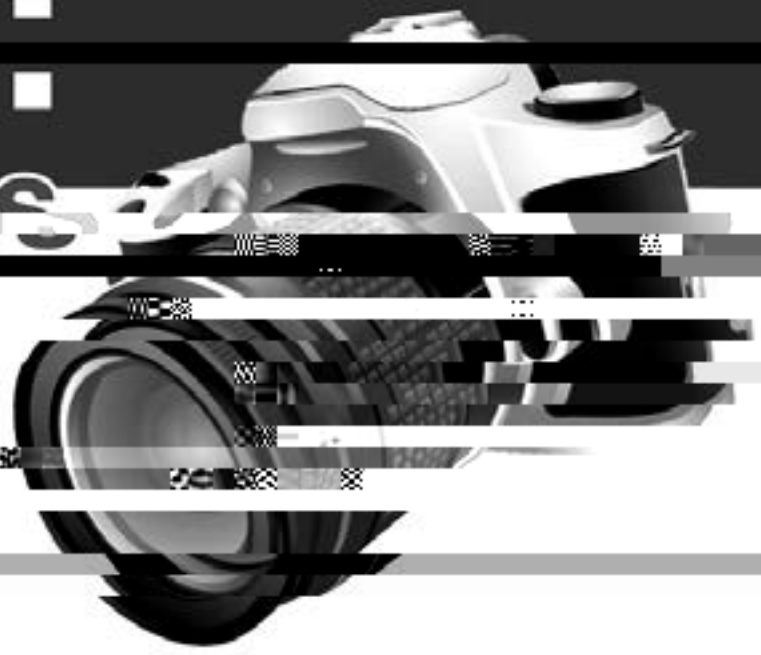






It is called the "Writing Study Room" and is

# Wanted: Photographers



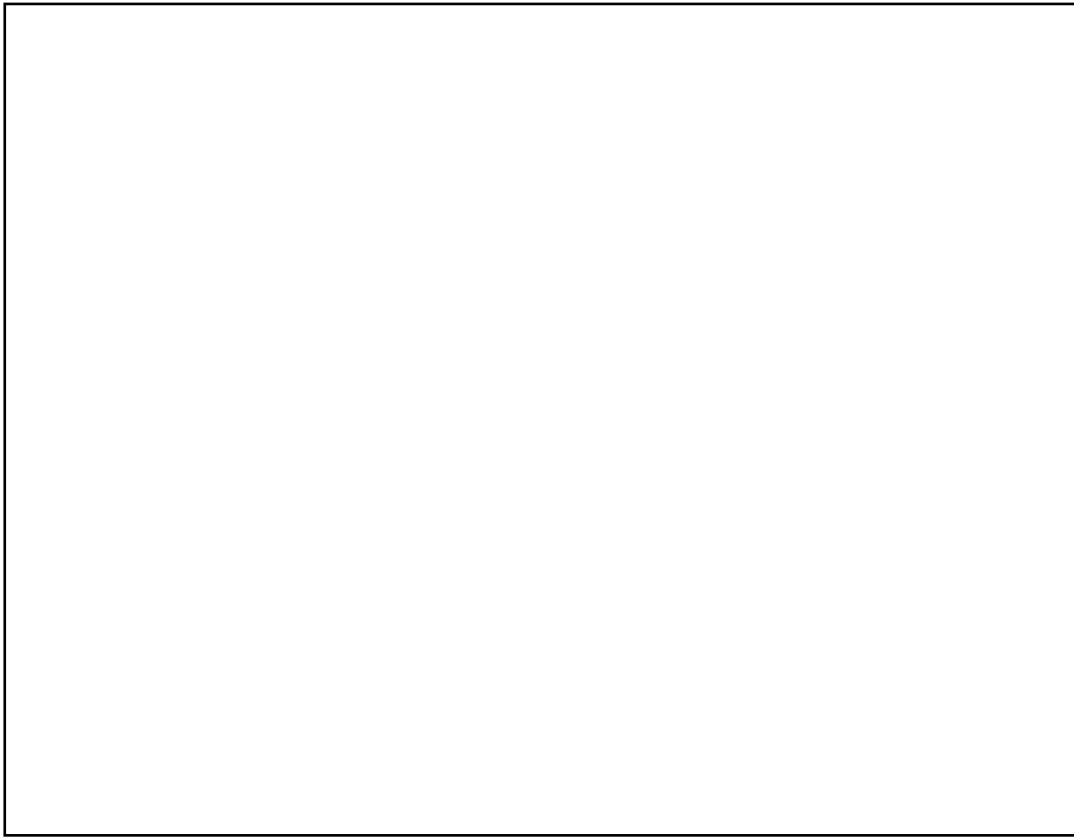
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The  
**Montgazette**  
The Students' Voice



The Montgomery County Community College eSports Rocket League team isn't just battling with the Internet connection. Now it is also experiencing a lack of real-life connection due to the pandemic.

The team's captain Daeqwon Wise-





