

Montgomery Scholars Program Newsletter

SCHOLARLY PURSUITS

VOLUME 20 | ISSUE 31 | FALL 2020



The
Creative
Spirit



MONTGOMERY SCHOLARS
MONTGOMERY COLLEGE

SCHOLARLY PURSUITS

VOLUME 20 | ISSUE 31

FALL 2020

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GIVING

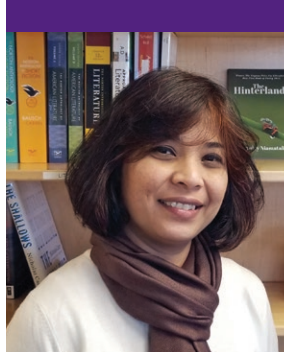
We encourage the Scholars community and friends to give to the program. A gift, no matter its size, is really helpful at a time when educational funding is scarce. You can make your gift at our secure, online giving site: www.montgomerycollege.edu/onlinegiving. Click on "Select an area of support" and then click on "Other" and type Montgomery Scholars in the box.

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Thank you so much!

Cover art by Alexander Baetsen



FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

Dear Scholars, Parents, and Friends of Scholars:

We are living in scary times. BBC reported in August, "Nearly five months since a global pandemic was declared, coronavirus is continuing its spread across the world—with more than 19 million confirmed cases in 188 countries. More than 700,000 people have lost their lives." The effects of the pandemic are as diverse as the people it has affected. For many working in industries like hospitality, entertainment, tourism, and retail, the future appears uncertain and grim. For many others, like the migrant workers in India who walked thousands of miles with children and belongings to return to their villages when the cities shuttered, the situation is dire.

But like any other global phenomenon, this too has another side to it. *The Washington Post* reported a tremendous surge in individual creativity and learning during this lock-down. In *The Washington Post* article titled "From cooking to calligraphy, people stuck at home are finding new space for creativity," it was noted, "Online learning has seen a surge in activity worldwide. The celebrity-led tutorials offered by Master Class and the language-learning program Rosetta Stone reported spikes in users. Global traffic to Duolingo, another language-learning platform, reached an all-time high in March, when new users more than doubled from the previous month, according to the company."

When times are unfavorable, humanity adjusts and finds new ways to cope. In these times of abounding uncertainty, all we can do, therefore, is to look for the rays of light shining through the chinks in the wall that this novel virus has raised around us all. As the pages of this newsletter will reveal to you, the members of the Scholars family do just that—they continue to give each other hope through their noble pursuits, inspirational initiatives, and creative endeavors. Please read the stories to learn more.

Shweta Sen
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2019 Picnic at Harpers Ferry

DESDE EL ESCRITORIO DEL DIRECTORA SALIENTE

Queridos Becados, Padres de Familia, y Amigos De los Becados:

Estamos viviendo tiempos de temor. La BBC reportó en Agosto, "Cerca de cinco meses desde la declaración de la pandemia global del coronavirus, se continúa extendiéndose alrededor del mundo - con más de 19 millones de casos confirmados en 188 países. Más de 700 000 personas han perdido sus vidas." Los efectos de la pandemia son tan diversos como las personas afectadas. Para muchos que trabajan en la industria hotelera, de entretenimiento, turística, y ventas, el futuro luce incierto y oscuro. Para muchos otros, como los trabajadores migrantes en India quienes estaban caminando miles de millas con niños y pertenencias para regresar a sus villas cuando las ciudades cerraron, la situación es terrible. Pero como cualquier otro fenómeno global, este también tiene otro lado. *El Washington Post* reportó un tremendo surgimiento en la creatividad individual y aprendizaje durante este encerramiento. De acuerdo con el artículo de *El Washington Post* titulado "De la cocina a la caligrafía, las personas atascadas en sus casas están encontrando un nuevo espacio para la creatividad, "el aprendizaje en línea ha surgido en actividad en todo el mundo. Los tutoriales liderados por celebridades ofrecidos por Master Class y el programa de aprendizaje lingüístico de Rosetta Stone reportó un incremento de usuarios. El tráfico global a Duolingo, otra plataforma digital de aprendizaje de idiomas, alcanzó su máximo uso en Marzo, cuando mas del doble de nuevos usuarios fueron añadidos a comparacion del mes anterior, dicho por la compañía". Cuando los tiempos son desfavorables, la humanidad se ajusta y encuentra nuevos caminos para hacer frente a la vida. En estos tiempos de abundante incertidumbre, todo lo que podemos hacer es buscar los rayos de luz que brillan a través de las grietas en las paredes que el nuevo virus ha levantado alrededor nuestro. Así como las páginas de esta revista le revelarán, los miembros de la familia de los Becados hacen justo eso - ellos continuan dando esperanza uno al otro a través de sus nobles propósitos, iniciativas inspiradoras y esfuerzos creativos. Por favor lea estas historias para aprender más. [Translated by **Estefany Carillo '09**.]

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Winter Solstice Philo Café

Current and former scholars, please join us for our Winter Solstice Philo Café on Zoom on Friday, December 18, 2020. The Zoom link will be announced later during the semester.

WELCOME, CLASS OF 2022!

The Montgomery Scholars program welcomes the Class of 2022. We are extremely sad that we could not hold any of the in-person events to welcome the new class and had to make do with two-dimensional Zoom meetings in place of the brunch, picnic, and off-campus retreat—all those events that make the program special and that keep us connected with the members of the Scholars family.

Magically enough, it all still worked! It seems that the power of human connections makes anything possible. We had a successful virtual welcome meeting for the admitted students in lieu of the brunch, a virtual summer gathering (aka picnic) organized by our "Wonder Woman" student aide and Scholars program alumna, Nao Miura, and a virtual retreat in lieu of the off-campus August retreat conducted by Dr. Cheryl Tobler.

Dr. Cheryl Tobler and
Professor Michael Petty
perform in Core



CONGRATULATIONS CLASS OF 2020

Congratulations, Montgomery Scholars Class of 2020, on your graduation from the Scholars program and Montgomery College and your successful acceptances into your desired institutions of higher education and/or internship programs. This was not an easy year for graduation, and yet you did it with flying colors. We could only have a virtual Skoal and graduation ceremony. Nevertheless, we will forever cherish those moments of togetherness, albeit they happened remotely through a screen. Thank you, also, for continuing the tradition of a class gift to Montgomery College and making a donation to No Kid Hungry.

Congratulations on the Class of 2020's accomplishments and transfer plans, which are summarized below:

Victoria Archvadze (Bethesda-Chevy Chase HS) will attend the business program at University of Maryland (UM) and major in marketing and planning. She also plans to minor in graphic design.

Thifany Braga (Watkins Mill HS) received many scholarship offers, including the PTK Scholarships at Towson University, Dickinson University, and American University; the Founder's Scholarship, Honors College Scholarship, PTK Scholarship, and MC-Hood Partnership Scholarship at Hood College; and the PTK and TSA Scholarships at UMBC. She also was accepted to Johns Hopkins University. Thifany decided to transfer to Johns Hopkins in fall 2020, where she will double major in international studies and political science. She is also planning to minor in Spanish.

Laura DeMarco (Winston Churchill HS) will attend the University of Maryland at Universities at Shady Grove (USG), a part of the University System of Maryland, and major in communication.

Manthan Desai (Clarksburg HS) is working on transferring to the University of Ottawa or Simon Fraser University in Canada, and he intends to major in biochemistry and/or molecular biology.

Yassin Drammeh (Springbrook HS) will stay at MC to finish her degree in civil engineering.

Eleanor (Ellie) Earles (Home School) was accepted into Lee University, a liberal arts school in Cleveland, Tennessee. Ellie received the John D. Nichols Scholarship, which is the highest scholarship Lee University awards to transfer students. She also received the Phi Theta Kappa Scholarship. Ellie also applied to and was accepted into Flagler College, another liberal arts school in St. Augustine, Florida. She received the Presidential Merit Scholarship from Flagler, which is the institution's highest academic merit scholarship. Ellie decided to transfer to Lee University in fall 2020 to pursue a BA in international studies with a minor in Spanish.

Elise Evans (Poolesville HS) will attend St. Mary's College of Maryland. She plans to major in computer science and minor in art history.

Farris Hamad (Northwest HS) applied to and was accepted into University of Maryland in College Park, University of Maryland at USG, Stevenson University, University of Richmond, and NC State University. He decided to transfer to UM and major in accounting and minor in anthropology.

Caleb Kebede (Richard Montgomery HS) is interning with the Borgen Project as a political affairs team member. The organization is a nonprofit, nonpartisan lobbying group that fights extreme poverty by lobbying Congress. The organization mainly advocates for more funding for foreign aid programs that target the most severe cases of poverty around the world. As a political affairs team member, Caleb's job

is to lobby his own congressional leaders (his senators and representative) and fundraise money for the cause, among other things.

Thomas Klaus (Quince Orchard HS) will attend University of Maryland in College Park and pursue a degree in computer science.

Anne-Michelle Lieberson (Sherwood HS) intends to stay at MC through spring 2021 and graduate with an electrical engineering degree. Her plan is to then transfer to University of Maryland and continue toward a four-year degree. Over the summer, Anne-Michelle completed a full-time, remote National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) internship.

Madelyn (Maddy) Marshall (Damascus HS) will attend Towson University beginning in fall 2020 and major in psychology.

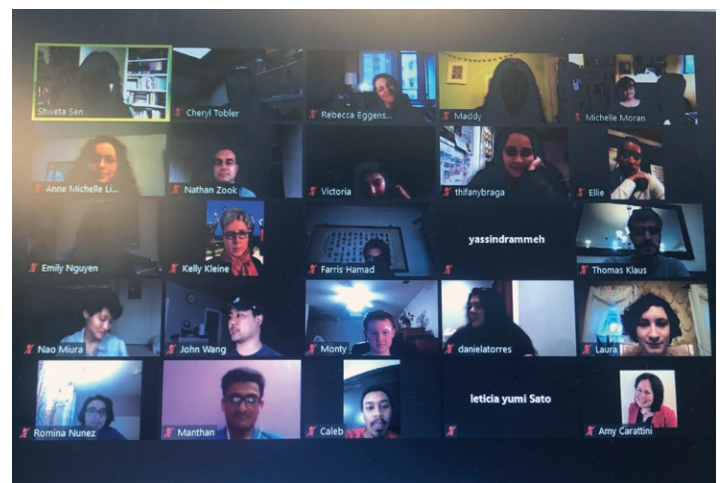
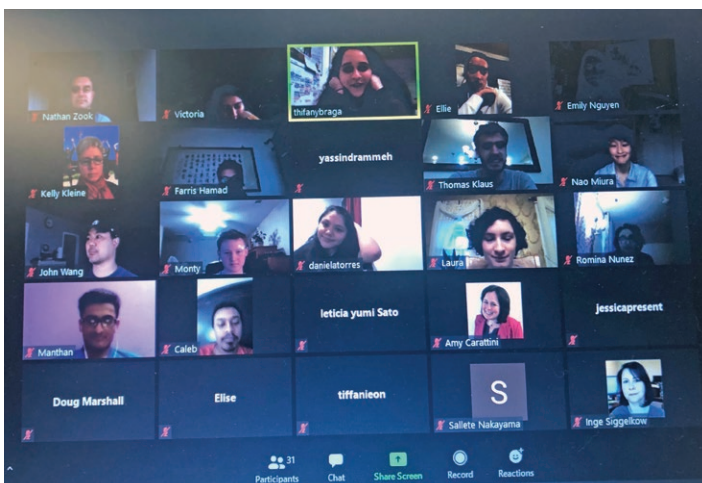
Montague (Monty) Nagel (Wheaton HS) has applied to University of Maryland and intends to major in computer science.

Emily Nguyen (Northwest HS) applied to University of Maryland at both the College Park and USG campuses and was accepted into both schools. Emily received the Frederick Douglass Scholarship, which provides full tuition for two years at UM in College Park. She chose the latter and will major in general psychology.

Romina Nunez (Clarksburg HS) intends to stay at MC and finish her course work in digital animation.

Tiffanie On (Clarksburg HS) will attend the didactic program in dietetics at University of Maryland in College Park. Tiffanie will major in dietetics.

Daniela (Dani) Torres (Clarksburg HS) received the Academic Achievement Award from UMBC. Dani will attend UMBC at the USG campus and major in history.



Zoom screen shots of Skoal 2020



Scholars Colloquium group

Montgomery Scholars Annual Capstone Colloquium 2020

By *Alexzander Baetsen and Kira Ng*
(Class of 2021)

The process of globalization is present in every aspect of our lives, whether we realize it or not. Everywhere we go, the impact of the ongoing spread of culture, information, technology, and consumer goods can be seen, from the culinary dishes we prepare to the methods in which we approach climate change. As we are so accustomed to viewing them in the context of our own lives, it can be difficult to assess these topics on a global scale. This year's sophomore scholars moved beyond the scope of their experiences to expand their worldview by exploring how specific issues have been shaped by the process of globalization.

On Monday, March 2, 2020, the second-year scholars presented their capstone projects at the Montgomery Scholars Annual Colloquium. Allowed the freedom to pursue a subject area of their choice, many students chose to relate their research to their individual interests or connect it to their major, creating projects that explored how globalization impacts our lives in fields such as anthropology, biology, and political science.

The evening began with a welcoming introduction from the director of the Montgomery Scholars program, Shweta Sen, who warmly congratulated the scholars for all of their hard work and encouraged the audience to enjoy their observation of the scholars' culminating research projects. Professor Rebecca Eggenschwiler, one of the capstone mentors for the sophomore scholars, then introduced the four capstone projects that would be on display as posters and invited the

attendees to listen to their presentations. After poster presentations, there was a short but noteworthy ceremony in which scholars were able to honor their high school teachers and mentors. In this brief tradition, the second-year scholars have the opportunity to express their appreciation for those who supported their journey into the Montgomery Scholars program and had helped them blossom into the accomplished scholars they had become. Following this commemoration, the speech presentations began with the keynote speaker, **Farris Hamad** and his project, "General Tso's Last Stand: Culinary Syncretism and Imperialism in Chinese Food."

Farris Hamad chose to examine the relationship between globalization and culinary anthropology, specifically in regard to the development of Chinese cuisine around the world. Along with successfully making every member of the audience hungry as he displayed mouth-watering images, his project analyzed how Chinese food is prepared in various nations such as China, Singapore, United States, and Peru, highlighting how the blending of cultures results in unique dishes that contain elements of both the culture of origin and the culture within which it is being prepared. This process is known as culinary syncretism and occurs "across every genre of food, not just Chinese cuisine." Farris explained that he was inspired to pursue this topic because of his grandparents, who were Chinese immigrants and owned a Chinese-American restaurant in North Carolina for quite a long time. He also noted that members of his extended family also own restaurants across the United States in Missouri, Illinois, and



Farris Hamad gives arena presentation



Yassin Drammeh presents her poster



Elise Evans presents her poster

Virginia, providing him with a firsthand understanding of the variances in Chinese food in different regions. His presentation aimed to demonstrate how culinary syncretism is an inevitable process that influences foodways (that is, the eating habits and culinary practices of a people, region, or historical period) over time and is becoming even more accelerated as globalization continues to integrate cultures and further the spread of culinary practices.

After the keynote address, the presentations became dispersed as the individual scholars gave their speeches in different rooms throughout the Theatre Arts Building. The audience was able to freely roam among them and explore the diversity of topics that the scholars had studied.

Many of the speakers chose topics that address concerns important in modern politics. **Thifany Braga** highlighted her project about the importance of political polarization in fights to prevent climate change. She explored how increasing political polarization can result in less action taken to prevent climate change. Her speech focused on three countries—Brazil, France, and the United States—although her research covered an additional three nations. Thifany began by explaining climate change, addressing the need for change and the spread of misinformation, and then moved on to describe political polarization. Thoroughly exploring the three nations’ political responses to climate change, she explained how each nation’s actions supported her thesis, as France was relatively less polarized, while Brazil and the United States were extremely polarized. France also was taking comparatively “better” steps to counteract climate change, while the United States and Brazil were undertaking less intensive measures. Thifany also explored the complexity of politics and how modern events, like elections and natural disasters, have impacted each nation’s response to climate change. Thifany’s project was notable because it explored a side of the issue of climate change that is rarely discussed and illuminated why political polarization must be further explored before climate change can be resolved.

A scientific approach to tackling the issue of climate change was taken by **Montague Nagel**, who researched the benefits of macroalgae, or seaweed, in reducing carbon and methane emissions while advancing an environmentally friendly natural resource. One of the main points of his presentation was how supplementing seaweed in the diets of ruminant animals, such as cattle, has been proven to reduce their methane emissions, thus lowering overall greenhouse gas production. As the United States is one of the largest beef exporters in the world, Montague explained that the “environmental impact of such a simple addition to the feed would be enormous.” Montague’s presentation also touched on the various methods of macroalgae farming that have been implemented across the world, demonstrating how abundant the natural resource is along coastlines and seeking to convince the audience that the seaweed industry is a worthy investment for both the environment and the global economy.

The night of the colloquium was a wonderful exploration of various fields of academic study. The variation in topics made the event thoroughly informative and entertaining, as presenters passionately explored diverse issues that hold significance on the global stage while reflecting their personal interests. Linking these issues together under the umbrella of globalization was the ever-present theme of the colloquium. The different presentations reminded all who attended that the world is interconnected, and repercussions—good or bad—are never felt alone.



High school teacher honorees

ALUMNI HAPPENINGS



Jonathan Jayes-Green with Elizabeth Warren

Panel Gives Back Time and Talent

The scholars alumni continue to extend their support to—and share the knowledge and expertise they have gained in their own fields with—the current Montgomery Scholars. We had another exciting alumni panel in fall 2019. Thank you, **Nick Lovesee '04**, **Victor Ontiveros '04**, **Siomara Parada '11**, **James Swartz '12**, **Sophia Venero '13**, **Jeff Ta '13**, and **Daniel Garay '14** for a fantastic session!



Alumni Journeys

“If You Allow It To, It Will Change Your Life”

by Audrey Hall (Class of 2021)

When we look at our future, it is often heavily clouded with uncertainty and doubt. We look to those who walked on before us and try to measure up to their footsteps, while figuring out where we want to go and whether the choices we are making are the right ones. In the Scholars program, we are blessed with a plethora of alumni who assure us that the path ahead of us may be a difficult one but worth it. One such alumnus who works to change the world every single day in his life is **Jonathan Jayes-Green '12**.

After graduating from MC with the Scholars Class of 2012, Jonathan transferred to Goucher College in Baltimore where he graduated with a BA in sociology in 2014. After graduation, Jonathan went on to work for former governor of Maryland, Martin O'Malley. Then, after working for a small business for a time, he started a national organization called UndocuBlack. This wonderful organization works on the integration of immigration and criminal justice. It's an organization for black immigrants (both undocumented and documented) that pushes for policies that decriminalize immigration and includes a mental wellness initiative. He led this organization for three to four years, and it is still going strong, currently aimed at raising funds to assist those in need during the COVID-19 crisis.

Last fall, Jonathan had the honor to work on the Elizabeth Warren Presidential Campaign as director of National Latinx Outreach. When asked what it was like to work on a high-profile presidential campaign, Jonathan revealed that it was a “true honor.” He explained that it took a true “exercise of faith” to believe in the idea that “this country can be better than it is,” as the Warren campaign believed. He appreciated how her campaign pushed for the notion that the government could work for all of us and emphasized how it was “an incredible honor to believe in” what the campaign represented.

After Warren stepped down from the race, Jonathan took a break from work. He is currently starting a new job in Seattle. In this position,

Jonathan will work as vice president of the Marguerite Casey Foundation. This private foundation uses its endowment to support organizations across the country whose mission is to work against economic injustice and support low-income families. The foundation currently gives grants to such organizations in the South, West, and Midwest, and under Jonathan, it will continue to support and impact those with need in our country.

Jonathan's passion for such work has motivated him since his early years, he said. “Advocacy had always been a part of my work, even at MC.” When asked about his entry into the Montgomery Scholars program, he revealed that “MC was not my first option—or even my second,” but it helped him gain an open mind and “see the world from a new lens.” He believes the program represents a wonderful economic opportunity for students and gives them access to a high-quality global education. As a Maryland Dream Act recipient himself, Jonathan revealed that growing up as an undocumented immigrant was especially difficult. During his time in the program, his passion for advocacy and his own experiences led him to organize MC students to fight immigration injustices and push for the DACA [Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals] Dreamers program.

To future and current scholars, Jonathan says, “Please don't give up.” He explained that the Scholars program “was one of the most transformative experiences” and truly helped foster a community. “I didn't expect it to be as transformative,” Jonathan said. “I didn't realize how special it was and how incredible it was to have this type of education for free.” Though it was not his first or second choice, he came to appreciate the incredible opportunities that the program provided. As he said, “In so many ways there is something so beautiful about Scholars existing at MC. Community colleges are some of the [most important] institutions that hold up and make the American Dream possible. They keep the dream alive.” Through MC, and specifically through the Scholars program, there is much more economic opportunity that allows people to “climb the ladder” and succeed beyond what they may have previously thought possible.

He, like most Scholars program students, has learned just how impactful the Scholars community is. He was able to meet some of his closest friends through the program, like Mariame Sylla with whom he did a lot of work on immigration and still keeps in contact. He



has actively kept in touch with some of his professors and met with Dr. Mary Furgol, the immediate past director of the Scholars program, at last year's brunch. The relationships and connections he formed are just some examples of the many benefits to the program.

“If you allow it to, it will change your life,” Jonathan said, speaking of the program. One of his most memorable experiences while in the Scholars program was the day that the Maryland Dream Act was signed into state law. Jonathan and a friend who had been working with him on advocacy at MC both walked into class a little late—as many of us have awkwardly done. When Dr. Furgol, who was lecturing at the time, saw him come in, she stopped the entire class and began to make a connection to the current material they were studying to what had happened that day with the monumental signing of the act. Taking a truly interdisciplinary perspective notable of the program, Jonathan and his class were able to see an example of the text they were studying as their lives were being changed before their very eyes. He admitted that such an experience may not seem like something highly important, but coming into class, being able to make those connections, and celebrating the event with the rest of his classmates is something he clearly remembers to this day.

As Jonathan Jayes-Green steps into the next phase of his life, continuing to advocate for and assist those in need, he has left behind a remarkable impression on the Scholars community and has become an amazing role model. He is living proof that all of us can change the world if we set our hearts to it, and for that example, I am extremely grateful.

SUMMER SOUNDS—2019



Scholars at the Swannanoa Gathering



Scholars at the Swannanoa Gathering



Scholars at Biltmore Estate

Oh, Swannanoa! Gathering the Limbs

by Dr. Swift Dickison

"Oh, to be in Asheville, as summer dawns." More properly, to relish the Swannanoa Gathering on the campus of Warren Wilson College (WWC), just 12 miles to the east, nestled in the mountains of western North Carolina, between Asheville and Blackmountain. For nigh on ten years now, Montgomery Scholars have ventured down to the Gathering each July for a travel study course, and I have had the good fortune to accompany students and faculty there for the past nine summers. For this privilege, I must salute the late, great professor Clif Collins, who relinquished his role to me when he elected to take his son to a baseball camp up in Cooperstown in lieu of the MC trip. Besides being grateful to Carolyn Terry for her spot-on recommendation of the Swannanoa Gathering, I must also salute her for her dedicated support and advocacy for the Montgomery Scholars Summer Travel Study program, particularly regarding its critical funding.

Carolyn was right. Scholars who participate in the Swannanoa Gathering find themselves transported to a wooded wonderland echoing with song. Since 1991, WWC has featured a continuing education program of "folk arts

workshops," from "Fiddle Week" in late June to "Contemporary Folk Week" ending in early August. Historically, the scholars have attended these classes during "Traditional Song Week," which was added to the workshops 12 years ago. The scholars then stay an additional week on the WWC campus, embarking on field trips, engaging in service projects, and in the evenings, soaking up the sweet sounds of "Celtic Week," which features "the musical traditions of Scotland and Ireland." It is worth noting that, as the Gathering catalog points out, "Many of western North Carolina's early white settlers were either Highlanders or 'Ulster-Scots'—the Scots-Irish." Whereas "Trad Song Week" tends to be small in numbers, focusing on singing as a central element of traditional music, the following week invariably brings the "Celtic Invasion," with a happy horde of Scots-Irish musicians and singers.

Raise every voice, one often hears. So, what does it mean that Montgomery Scholars are performe thrown in among inveterate warblers, passionate crooners, and tune-struck "olds" who spend a week of every summer in vocal exhilaration? Suffice it to say that our students find themselves loved by the world-class Swannanoa instructors and by their classmates in song, who hail from all over the country, even from abroad. And in turn, the scholars discover that they love the experience, as they surprise themselves by developing singing voices, and much more importantly, revel in the unforeseen camaraderie of song. The result is both therapeutic and, as with much travel study, broadening.

The extraordinary thing about Swannanoa is this: one sits in class at the feet of musical giants, instructors who are not only world famous in their musical stature but also probably very difficult to catch in concert, so much are they sought after by fans of these popular genres. And yet, students can receive one-on-one instruction from these stars, dine with them in Gladfelter Hall, chat with them at the coffee break, and otherwise enjoy heretofore unimagined connections with "gods" and "goddesses" of these traditional arts. Lest we get the wrong impression, though, these singers, songwriters, and instrumentalists should not be compared with pop stars. For, as Irish piper extraordinaire and part-time stand-up comic, John Skelton, has argued: "This is honest music." Still, when all the instructors gather to perform at the staff concerts or dances during the week, one has the distinct impression that one is enjoying the best concert on the planet. Each superstar instructor normally plays with his or her own band, and only at Swannanoa, once a year, do they get the chance to play together, creating magic.

Apart from singing and taking in great concerts, then, what do scholars do in this travel study program? They continue to build rapport, living in a dorm and collaborating on studies and musical projects, including comic performances presented during the week; they hike the wondrous trails around the hilly, forested campus; they visit the farm or the garden; they stroll through pastures to the Swannanoa River, visit the gym or



Scholars tour the Museum of the Cherokee Indian



Anne-Michelle Lieberson on the Cherokee Reservation



Swannanoa Gathering Showcase

pool, or knock a ball about on the soccer green. For field trips, they visit the famous Biltmore, the largest private family home in the country, incorporating their tour into studies of American history; they gain entry to the Thomas Wolfe House, integrating their reading of Wolfe's short stories about Asheville with the author's strange upbringing and contentious relationship with his hometown; they ride the bus to Cherokee, tour the Museum of the Cherokee Indian, and are even admitted into the backroom archives, where a Cherokee curator, along with anthropologist Dr. Lucy Laufe of MC, offer them a "cook's tour" of Native American artifacts. Students are often astonished to see the same curator, Mike Crowe, playing the lead role in the outdoor drama that night, "Unto These Hills," about the tragic Trail of Tears. Nor is all of the learning strictly scheduled: after exploring the Wolfe House in Asheville, students find themselves free to roam the exotic streets of this tourist mecca that boasts some 160 independent restaurants, a fabulous bookstore, and all manner of buskers, a drum circle, and alternative street performers.

But all roads lead them back to the bucolic security of Swannanoa, as they retreat once more to soak up the welcoming atmosphere, wandering among the Celtic jam sessions and friendly staff of the Gathering, perhaps attending a lecture on sustainability, permaculture, and eco-conscious living. They reflect with classmates as they enjoy a meal at Gladfelter, whose cafeteria serves locally sourced, farm-to-table fare, including produce from the college farm and garden. And later,

as they update their journals and consider the wealth of their experience in western North Carolina, they may extrapolate back to the highlight of the trip: that moment when they, heretofore shy about performing and loathe to sing, found themselves on stage at the student showcase at the end of their wonderful week of classes. Yes, they soared to momentary stardom, thrilled to join classmates in song and to be exuberantly celebrated by the entire body of the Gathering, culminating their sojourn amid wild applause.

In the end, the scholars return to Montgomery County, transformed by travel study. Rolling up Interstate 81, many may think on Wolfe's famous dictum: "You can't go home again." Or they might dwell on that T.S. Eliot line that WWC President Emeritus Doug Orr always utters at each opening meeting of the Gathering: "We shall not cease from exploration, and the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we started and know the place for the first time."

A final word is in order regarding the Asheville trip. Many fine faculty have accompanied the students to Swannanoa over the years, too many to name. All have enriched the students' experience immeasurably. But one professor in particular must be acknowledged for her inspiration and leadership; she may well have initiated the trip itself some 10 years ago, and she is personally acquainted with many of the musicians, superstars, and modest amateurs alike, particularly those of the Celtic persuasion. In any case, without her indefatigable efforts,

her conscientious attention to detail, and her advocacy for music itself, the travel study to Warren Wilson College would not have come to fruition. So, I must salute her here: that professor is Dr. Cheryl Tobler. Many, many thanks, for all you have done and continue to do to make Swannanoa such a success for so many Montgomery Scholars.



Dr. Swift Stiles Dickison has lived in Damascus, Syria, St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands, and Guadalajara, Mexico. He grew up in California and moved to Maryland in 1996; Dr. Dickison has been a professor of English at Montgomery College since 2001. He enjoys writing fiction and poetry and plays guitar and percussion in the MC World Ensemble.

MAKING MEANING DURING

Illustrating Elders' Stories

by Alexander Baetsen (Class of 2021)

Over the summer, I was really interested in volunteering to keep myself busy, especially because the pandemic continued to limit how much people could travel and socialize with others. I decided to participate in the Illustrating Elders' Stories program through Creative Connections at Montgomery College. Creative Connections is a partnership between MC and the Charles E. Smith Life Communities that forges a connection between students and senior citizens through creative projects. In this year-round program, volunteers are connected with a group of elders at Charles E. Smith who have dementia and are tasked with illustrating the creative fiction stories that they write.

As an unfortunate result of dementia, many seniors experience memory loss and have difficulty connecting with family members when attempting to reminisce about past events. This can lead to many family members feeling disconnected from their relatives and unsure of how to move forward in their relationships. However, when elders are provided with opportunities for creative expression that doesn't require the recollection of memories, a new pathway for connecting and showing care is created. The Illustrating Elders' Stories program is an amazing opportunity for students to interact with seniors and build relationships through a shared creative expression, which significantly improves the happiness of the elders living in residential care.

For this session of Illustrating Elders' Stories, it was more important than ever that elders were able to participate in this creative opportunity. As a result of COVID-19, senior living facilities were forced to suspend outside visitations completely as well as any social activities planned for the residents, leaving many elders isolated in their rooms. This program made it possible for them to build relationships with students outside of their facility and engage in meaningful artistic expression with others despite COVID-19 restrictions.

Through the program, seniors would create their own fictional story based upon themes



Illustrations by Alexander Baetsen

COVID-19

that the program had predetermined, such as "A Trip Under the Sea," "A Ride in a Hot Air Balloon," and so forth. The elders would then be paired with a staff member who would transcribe their stories into Word documents. These stories were sent to our volunteer coordinator, Nik Sushka, and from there, volunteers were assigned a specific story to illustrate. We had about a week to illustrate the main elements of the story, and then we took

pictures of our illustrations and sent them back to our volunteer coordinators.

As a result of the pandemic, we were unfortunately not able to meet with the elders in person as we would have been under normal circumstances. In addition, they were unable to participate in our Zoom meetings because of identity security concerns. However, at the end of the program, we compiled all of the stories

and illustrations into a small anthology that we were able to print and ship to the residents! Through this collection of illustrated stories, they would still have a tangible representation of their experience even though most of it had to be virtual.

Pictured with this article are three illustrations (the 3rd illustration is on the cover) that I created as part of the Illustrating Elders' Stories program.

Digital Storytelling with the Scholars *by Amy Carattini*

In ANTH 201, Introduction to Sociocultural Anthropology, scholars are learning how to translate the principles of anthropology into a language and skill set that is applicable to all majors and careers. The application of articulating these learned skills is important because culture touches every dimension of our professional and personal lives.

Scholars are using the platform of digital storytelling to accomplish this aim in conjunction with Montgomery College's Digital Storytelling Community of Practice at the Paul Peck Humanities Institute. Mark Siegrist, a current MC student and digital storytelling intern, is embedded support for the class; in this role, he shares his tips for digital storytelling techniques as well as his passion for anthropology. In addition, the class also benefits from Nyrene Monforte's experience. Nyrene is both a current scholar in the class as well as a digital storytelling intern with a focus on documentary filming.

In the first part of this project, scholars begin a participant observation project in which they analyze a cultural phenomenon at a place of their choosing, for example, at a workplace, a farmers' market, a multicultural event, a hobby setting, or a café. During the spring semester, scholars started investigating an array of cultural experiences from a skateboard park to an engineering firm, and even on stage with actors preparing for performances. In light of the current coronavirus threat, students are now taking this assignment online to conduct digital ethnography by exploring web forums, blogs, facebook groups, youtube videos, and other discussion boards to explain, for example, the cultural impact of social distancing on education or how we circulate our memories with one another.

Through participation, observation, and interviews, they collect primary research data in the form of field notes, transcriptions, photographs, and audio and video recordings. Scholars then use these primary data to analyze and interpret their chosen cultural phenomenon. They write a five- to seven-page paper in which they reference anthropological concepts to better articulate their understanding of ideas such as cultural relativism (how people all over the world are doing similar things but differently) or how to avoid ethnocentric thinking (the idea that, without critical analysis and reflexivity, one can fall into the myth that one's own culture is superior to others; rather, one should acknowledge the complexity and holism inherent in each culture). Another objective is to more fully articulate how cultures are dynamic

and are fluid in response to cultural interaction over time—meaning that culture is not a vestige of the past but ever-changing in the present.

After scholars submit their papers, the second part of the semester is devoted to turning their analyses into a three- to five-minute digital story in which they integrate their field data into a visually narrated depiction of what they learned, taking the anthropological jargon out of the script. The goal is to be able to show the video to a friend or family member, a future employer, or other audiences so that their analyses and interpretations can be understood in language that is accessible to all and that clearly reflects the skills they have learned.

To this end, scholars are asked to be reflexive in their storytelling and to include their own lived experiences by identifying their own cultural norms and values as well as the commonalities and differences that exist between these experiences and those they participated in and observed. They are also asked to reflect on variables, such as socioeconomic class, gender, and country of birth, as well as to look more closely at their own cultural interactions. Finished stories work to incorporate all of these elements. The scholars then showcase their stories at the end of the semester!



Dr. Amy Carattini, a faculty member at MC, holds a PhD in sociocultural anthropology from the University of Maryland with a research interest in social class and comparative migration experiences. She coordinates anthropology courses at MC's Rockville and Takoma Park-Silver Spring campuses. She also collaborates with the Organization of American States (OAS), is a research consultant for the Society for Applied Anthropology, and co-edited the journal *Practicing Anthropology*.



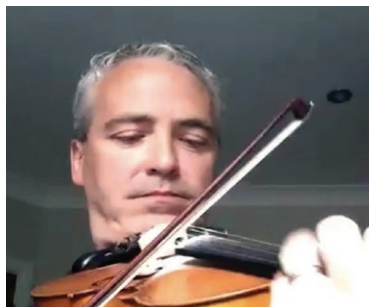
Brian McDonagh



Cathy Jordan



Liam Kelly



Tom Morrow

Virtual Performance by Dervish, the Irish Band

Even though the Swannanoa Gathering scheduled for the summer of 2020 was cancelled, the Montgomery Scholars, along with the Renaissance Scholars and other honors students at Montgomery College, still got a unique opportunity to virtually meet and interact with not just one of the instructors, but with her entire band—Dervish. This special event was organized by the collegewide Honors Program under the guidance of Dr. Lucy Laufé.

Dervish—one of the most decorated, recognized, and popular Irish bands in the world—has developed a new online program for university students, beginning this fall, and Montgomery College, specifically the honors students at MC, were the test audience for the band's pilot program.

It took place on Zoom on Friday, July 24, 2020. Students watched the performers speak about their instruments, the connection between Irish history and music, and how they created their own business and recording studio so they could perform music their own way.

It was an interactive event, and the audience could ask questions during the program. For their part, the band members were quite excited to have the audience's feedback.

Here are a few facts about Dervish (www.dervish.ie):

- Received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the BBC in 2019
- Performed around the world for over 30 years
- Each member considered the best in their musical field
- Performed for crowds numbering over 250,000

WHERE ARE YOU NOW?

Below is a list of some of the scholars from the first 20 classes and their whereabouts. If anyone from the classes of 2001–2020 has an update for the newsletter, just drop us a line and we will include the information in the next newsletter.

Class of 2001

Mariano Ramos, BS (UMBC), AA, is working at Carlos Rosario International Public Charter School as Food Services Manager. Mariano continues to be involved in the Scholars program and offer intellectually stimulating, aesthetically appealing, and gastronomically exhilarating workshops for the Scholars classes and events.

Class of 2004

Kristen (Hand) Smoker, MMS (Arcadia University), BS (UM), AA, works as a primary care physician's assistant (PA). Her office has transitioned to primarily doing virtual visits during the COVID-19 pandemic, and it opened a drive-up testing clinic behind the office earlier this spring.

Class of 2006

Malcolm Royer, MS (cybersecurity, UMUC), BS (UMBC), AA, is a captain in the Army stationed at Fort Hood, Texas, with the 3rd Security Force Assistance Brigade. He just returned from his third deployment (the second one to Afghanistan). This time, he served in Laghman and Nangarhar Provinces, where he made some good Afghan friends among the linguists and



the officers of the 201st Corps of the Afghan National Army, as well as with some fellow advisor officers from the Polish Army. He also began learning Dari, which is the Afghan version of Persian/Farsi. Malcolm is also being promoted to major in September. In December, Malcolm will have been in the Army for 12 years and will have only eight more years in the service until retirement. Malcolm is currently in Harker Heights, TX, with his family of five: Sarah (his wife), Evelyn (age 10), Hazel (age 5), Vera (age 3), and Gloria (age 1). He will soon be moving to Fort Gordon, Georgia, where he will be working in the U.S. Army Cyber Command.

Class of 2007

Lindsay Schattenstein, BS (Cornell U), AA, is working as the event and meeting manager at the National Football League Players Association in Washington, DC. Lindsay currently sits on the board of the local chapter of the Meeting Professionals International, as well as the Cornell Hotel Society. She is also on the Dean's Council of Young Alumni for the Cornell School of Hotel Administration.

Josephine Ta, RN, BS (UNC, Chapel Hill), BSN (UM, Baltimore), AA, is currently in her last year of the Nurse Anesthesia DNP (doctor of nursing practice) program at the University of Maryland, Baltimore, and is set to graduate in May 2021. Josephine and her husband Tito have been married for seven years and have three children: Landon is 11, Lana is almost 4, and Penelope is 2.5 years old. They live in Clarksburg, MD.

Class of 2008

Jessica Cedillo, JD (American U), BA (UM), AA, has been working as an immigration attorney for the past couple of years. Her primary area of focus is removal defense, which involves

representing and advocating for immigrants facing deportation from the United States.

Timothy Costales, MD (UM), BS (Georgetown U), AA, is currently in his fourth year of orthopedic surgery residency at the University of Maryland Shock Trauma Center. He was accepted to the adult reconstructive surgery fellowship at Massachusetts General Hospital/Harvard Medical School for 2021–2022. He is currently living in Hanover, MD. Timothy was supposed to be married on June 6, 2020, but the wedding had to be postponed due to the COVID-19 crisis.

Aaron Kaufman, BA (UM), AA, joined The Jewish Federations of North America's (JFNA) Washington, DC, office in January 2016 as a senior legislative associate. He focuses on disability and poverty issues. Aaron came from the Arc Maryland, where he lobbied members of the Maryland General Assembly and the Maryland congressional delegation on issues affecting Marylanders with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families.

As an individual with cerebral palsy, Aaron feels he brings a unique perspective to JFNA's efforts on behalf of people with disabilities. Outside of advocacy, he was the instructor in Project SEARCH Montgomery, a job-training program for young adults with significant disabilities.

Aaron graduated from the University of Maryland in College Park with a bachelor's degree in American studies and with several honors. He is on the executive committee of the Jewish Foundation for Group Homes and is the former vice chair of the Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council. He also served on the Board of the National Association of Developmental Disabilities Councils as well as the Board of Disability Rights Maryland.

Rachel (Robb) Hoover, MS (Loyola U of Maryland), BS (UM), AA, has been working as a speech therapist since 2013. Rachel has traveled widely and visited many countries in Europe, Asia, Africa, Middle East, and the Americas.

Class of 2009

Bryce Hoover, MBA with Distinction (Oxford U, Said Business School), BS (UM), AA, worked as a consultant for Accenture from 2011–2015. Since 2017, he has worked for Tesla as a manager in business analytics. Bryce is also a board member of Oxford Entrepreneurs Network and is involved in building a network of entrepreneurs and investors around the United States who are Oxford alumni. Bryce is married to Rachel Hoover, a Scholars alumna, and they have two children: Addie is 3.5 years and Monty is 5 months old. Bryce has traveled widely and visited many countries in Europe, Asia, Africa, Middle East, and the Americas.

Javier Peña, MA (Georgetown U), BS (Georgetown U), AA, is living in the West Palm Beach area, where he works as a communications and outreach professional for an international human rights and development organization based in Miami. Javier is involved with his local church and serves on the board of Christian Solidarity Worldwide, a UK-based human rights organization that advocates for freedom of religion and belief for all. Javier lives with his wife, Laura, and their daughters, Isabella and Sophia.

Class of 2010

Kenia Avendano-Garro, MA (U of Wisconsin), BA (UM), AA, is currently ABD ("all but dissertation") at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in Japanese literature. She is working on a dissertation that, to put it briefly, considers



Malcolm Royer with his children



Bryce Hoover with his daughter Addie

WHERE ARE YOU NOW?

tensions of race relations in contemporary Japan as located in inaudibility, therefore analyzing examples in contemporary literature that re-center listening as a critical tool for deconstructing race and difference-intimating borders in a Japanese context. Kenia built this dissertation partially on her MC capstone paper. Kenia is working toward finishing her dissertation in the fall 2020–spring 2021 school year with the support of the L&S Community of Graduate Research Scholars Fellowship. She plans to defend her dissertation in spring or summer 2021.

Anna Pomerantseva, MBA (Northwestern U, Kellogg School of Management), BS (Georgetown U), AA, was with Navigant Consulting in its international arbitration practice from 2012 to 2016 and worked for the Clorox Company in brand management from 2018 to 2019. Anna is currently in product marketing with Optoro.

Class of 2011

Lucy (Bauer) Aldridge, MD, MPH, BS (UM), AA, has started a three-year residency in pediatrics.

Cecilia Nicolich, BS (American U), AA, works for ACIDI/VOCA and is currently based in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, as the director of operations for the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Transforming Market Systems (TMS) activity. Cecilia will be attending the University of Navarra IESE Business School in Barcelona, Spain, beginning in fall 2020 as a Forte Fellow (Forte scholarship) to pursue her MBA.

Class of 2012

Samantha (Sam) Cameron, MAT–master of arts in teaching (St. Mary's College of Maryland), BA (St. Mary's College of Maryland), AA, will be starting her sixth year of teaching at Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School in the fall of 2020, where she will be teaching AP World History, Middle East History, and Modern World History. Sam is an active member of the Society for Children's Books Writers and Illustrators (SCBWI). She is working on getting her first novel published.

Class of 2014

Matthew Schwarzenberg, MS (McDaniel College), BA (UM), AA, graduated last December with a master's degree in counseling. A week later, he landed a job at a high school in the Carroll County Public School (Maryland) system as a school counselor.

Noelle (Roy) Schwarzenberg, BA (UM), AA, works as a technical writer for General Dynamics as a casual employee.

Class of 2016

Nicole Obongo, BS (UM), AA, received her bachelor's degree in biological sciences and plans to attend medical school at the Robert Larner, M.D., College of Medicine at the University of Vermont.

Yasaman (Yasi) Hosseini, BA (UM), AA, received her bachelor's degree in public health in 2019 and has since been working as a consultant at Atlas Research on a Booz Allen project

supporting the Office of Quality and Safety at the National Capital Region Medical Directorate, which is responsible for ensuring that health care facilities deliver safe and high-quality care. Yasi enjoys her short commute to work from her home, but currently she is working from home, trying to make the best out of current circumstances and spending quality time with her family. She loves yoga and trying new recipes.

Class of 2017

Chadwick Dunefsky, BA (UNC, Chapel Hill), AA, received his bachelor's degree in history in 2018 and has been accepted into the University of North Carolina at Greensboro (UNCG) for library science in its online program. He will be starting classes this fall. Chadwick interned with GSK, a pharmaceutical company, in its heritage archives program during the summer.

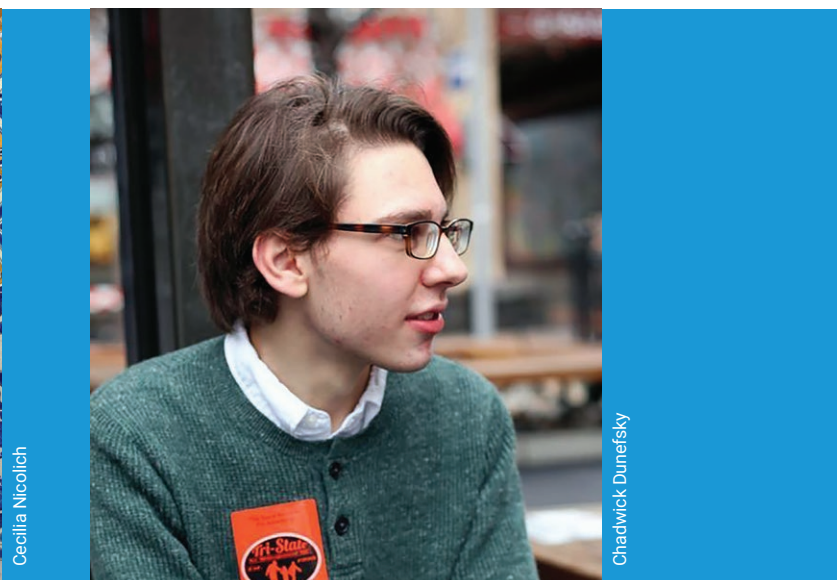
Mafe Farieta, BS (UM), AAS, received her bachelor's degree in architecture in 2020 from the UM School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation. (See page 15 for a note from Mafe.)

Class of 2018

Lauryn Fanguen, BA (UMBC), AA, received her bachelor's degree in political science and currently works at GMMB, a progressive political and issue communications firm in Washington, DC, where she also lives



Cecilia Nicolich



Chadwick Dunefsky

Strong Foundations: “Once a Scholar, Always a Scholar”



by Mafe Farieta (Class of 2017)

Strong foundations guarantee resilient buildings. As a scholar of the Class of 2017, a graduate of Montgomery College, and a recent graduate of the School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation at the University of Maryland, I would like to share a glimpse of my journey with you all, and especially with the past and present scholars. Undoubtedly, I was very fortunate to have participated in the interdisciplinary Montgomery Scholars program, which prepared me with strong foundations to reach my goals. After transferring to UM, I earned the Frederick Douglass Academic Scholarship, which allowed me to complete my undergraduate studies and even participate in a wonderful study abroad experience in Italy for one semester.

I was the undergraduate student commencement speaker for the UM School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation, Class of 2020. This was a great honor for me, and the ceremony was one-of-a-kind. It took place online, amid the global pandemic, and we all participated with our family members in our homes. Additionally, it was a great opportunity to remember special moments shared with my fellow classmates, congratulate them for their achievements, and thank every faculty, staff, and family member who contributed to our journey. In my architectural career, all the different programs and experiences in which I have participated have influenced my designs, which emphasize community building and holistic problem solving. I will continue to develop these design concepts as a graduate student this fall.

As a member of the Scholars community, I feel very fortunate and grateful for the unconditional support that I have received from my professors and mentors from day one and that extends beyond the completion of the program. I love to see this community grow as a strong and supportive family. “As I said in my commencement speech (and I reiterate the message to my fellow scholars today), we all have the strong foundation needed to persevere through any obstacles, turn the impossible into the possible—regardless of any social, economic, or cultural challenges—and achieve our dreams. Once a scholar, always a scholar!

MILESTONES

Births

While many big life events have been postponed during the pandemic, births do not wait! The Montgomery Scholars community heartily congratulates **Kristen (Hand) Smoker '04** and her husband, Jason, on the birth of their third child, Paul Patrick Smoker, on May 1, 2020; and **Javier Peña '09** and his wife, Laura, on the birth of their second child, Sophia Carolina Peña, during the summer of 2020.



Paul Patrick Smoker



Sophia Carolina Peña

Montgomery Scholars Program Newsletter

SCHOLARLY PURSUITS

For further information about Montgomery College, please go to montgomerycollege.edu

For further information about the Montgomery Scholars program, please go to montgomerycollege.edu/montgomerscholars

Comments, feedback, or input, please email: shweta.sen@montgomerycollege.edu

