

**To: Montgomery College Community**

**From: Dr. Jermaine F. Williams, President**

**Subject: Montgomery College East County Education Center**

**Date: November 2, 2022**

I am excited to share that County Executive Marc Elrich and County Council President Gabe Alborno along with members of the General Assembly will join our Board of Trustees First Vice Chair Dr. Frieda Lacey and me this morning in a press conference to announce the College's plans to open the Montgomery College East County Education Center (MC-ECEC), the College's first phase of expansion into the eastern region of Montgomery County. The MC-ECEC will be located at 2221 Broadbirch Drive in Silver Spring, where the College has signed a lease to operate. The center will house a variety of credit offerings, Workforce Development and Continuing Education classes, student services, and a Community Engagement Center. Following renovations to the currently vacant building, it is expected that operations and offerings will begin in summer or fall of 2023.

The College began to examine possible expansion into the east county more than two years ago when asked by County Executive Elrich to explore the possibility. The county funded a [feasibility study](#) conducted by the College in 2020–2021. This study included an in-depth analysis of the needs of east county and demonstrated that residents would benefit from the College's services. The Board of Trustees is fully supportive of these efforts and voted last year to authorize the president to open an education center in the east county.

The College identified the Broadbirch site with the help of a real estate broker and has entered into a 15-year lease with the building owner, DSC Partners, LLC. The site is convenient to major access roads—Maryland Route 29 and the Intercounty Connector (ICC)—as well as public transportation, including nearby Bus Rapid Transit and Ride On stops. It is near ample community-serving restaurants and retail, close to Adventist HealthCare White Oak Medical Center, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the planned Viva White Oak with related amenities, and existing and planned multi-family communities.

Preliminary plans include 11 classrooms and 7 labs at the location as well as a Community Engagement Center; a Truth, Racial Healing, and Transformation Center; and student services, such as Raptor Central (a one-stop shop for admissions, enrollment, and visitor services), and more. The size of the space is over 55,000 square feet, making it the largest of the College's centers, the other two being in Gaithersburg and Wheaton.

The county executive and county council approved funding for the MC-ECEC project in the FY23 operating budget. The funding will become a part of the College's base budget moving forward and will not take away from existing commitments. In addition, the county secured a state grant to support the center in next year's budget.

The MC-ECEC will bring College classes and services to an underserved part of Montgomery County, where residents can benefit from the College's offerings. Our Germantown, Rockville, and Takoma Park/Silver Spring campuses are situated near population clusters where many current students live. This new center brings that opportunity to residents in east county and is a first step in removing barriers to post-secondary education in an area where many households are dependent upon public transportation for daily activities.

The center is the first phase of MC's expansion to the east county. The feasibility study recommended a full campus, and College leadership is actively working to develop these plans. Establishing a campus is a much more involved process than opening a center and may easily take 7 to 10 years.

Many people across the College have been involved with this project including the 30-member College Expansion Advisory Committee that participated in the feasibility study, which was completed through a partnership with the development firm Ayers Saint Gross, and their collaborators, Kennedy & Company, and McEneaney Commercial. The College's real estate broker was Jones Lange Lasalle (JLL), which assisted in identifying the Broadbirch location and negotiating the lease. During this phase, Cabinet members provided guidance for the extensive work done by members of the Administrative and Fiscal Services division—especially the Office of Facilities and the Office of Business Services—and the Office of General Counsel, as well as planning by Academic Affairs, Advancement and Community Engagement, and Student Affairs. Throughout the entire project, the Office of Government Relations has played a pivotal role in securing public support among county and state elected leaders. The president's office, through the chief of staff/chief strategy officer, has shepherded this project since 2020. I appreciate the work of everyone who has worked on this effort and helped it come to fruition.

I look forward to the exciting steps ahead as we prepare to expand our services to the east county.