Montgomery College Student Named One of Nation’s Top 20 From Two-Year Colleges
Marianne Mullan Named to All-USA Community College Academic First Team

Montgomery College student Marianne Mullan has been named as one of the nation’s top 20 students from community colleges with her selection to the All-USA Community College Academic First Team. In partnership with the American Association of Community Colleges, Phi Theta Kappa honor society and USA Today, this annual honor is given to students who have demonstrated outstanding academic achievement and community and college involvement. Mullan received a $2,500 award and a medallion at a ceremony today in Seattle, Washington.

“It is very humbling to be named to the All-USA team,” remarked Mullan. “I almost cannot believe it. To be counted among such amazing students is an honor.”

“Montgomery College is proud of Marianne for being honored nationally and for serving as role model at the College and for younger students in the community,” said Dr. Hercules Pinkney, interim president of Montgomery College. “Marianne continues a tradition of talented Montgomery College students being named to the All-USA First Team.”

Mullan is the fourth Montgomery College student to have been named to the All-USA First Team since the program’s inception. The College last placed a student on the first team in 2007 with Vanessa Coleman. Other honorees were Gabriela Molinolo in 2005 and Maureen Harrigan in 1996.

Besides the All-USA Academic Team honor, Mullan was named Maryland’s New Century Scholar for receiving the state’s highest All-USA Academic Team application score. For this honor, she will receive an additional $2,000 stipend from the Coca Cola Scholars Foundation and the Coca Cola Foundation.

Mullan first took classes at Montgomery College while still a high school student. As a ballet dancer, she benefited from the ability to enrich her homeschool education with community college courses while still having the flexibility to rehearse and perform. Mullan planned to attend only one semester at Montgomery College before enrolling at a four-year university, but her experience changed her mind.

“To be honest, I really fell in love with Montgomery College that semester,” remembered Mullan, a Rockville, Maryland resident. “I enjoyed making friends from across the globe, learning in small classes, and engaging students and professors in meaningful relationships.”

Professor Sara Ducey first taught Mullan more than one year ago in an early morning nutrition class. From the beginning, she found Mullan “bright and charming” and “a delight” in and out of the classroom. Not only
did Mullan ask thoughtful and challenging questions, she also maintained a fun approach to learning that influenced her classmates in a positive manner.

“Marianne has strength of heart, spirit and intellect,” said Professor Ducey. “She is the type of student that a professor hopes to have in class, and she is such a sharing and caring individual. It is truly a gift to be around her.”

Professor Ducey’s advice and support have helped guide Mullan toward her future goal of earning a master’s degree in counseling with a focus on eating disorders. For Mullan, it is a very personal mission in life. At the age of eight years old, Mullan became anorexic, losing a third of her weight in three months. With help from family, friends, and counselors, she started the long road to recovery. Finally, at age 12, she attained a healthy weight, but the disease continued to affect her and resulted in low self-esteem and depression. As Mullan explains it, she feared college would lead to a relapse. Instead, she found Montgomery College.

“Through my support system and experiences at Montgomery College, I have found full recovery [from an eating disorder],” said Mullan. “For years, the enemy I like to call ‘ED’ has driven my life and now it is my life’s endeavor to drive it.”

Since attending Montgomery College, Marianne has launched her own campaign for a healthy lifestyle through eating disorder awareness, advocacy, and prevention. She proactively finds opportunities to speak or write about eating disorders in her classes or in the greater community, including helping other students who are battling the disease. She delivers presentations in a local high school, conducts workshops for youth through the Maryland Cooperative Extension Service, and mentors high school girls as a team leader for Pure Fashion, a program that strives to teach girls self-confidence.

“I view each day as a new opportunity to touch lives,” she explained. “Through my past, current, and future efforts, I endeavor to help my school, community, and society overcome the eating disorder epidemic. In short, I am in the business of saving lives.”

With her 4.0 grade point average, Mullan still finds time to participate in many activities. She dances with the Montgomery College dance company, and she previously served as a core member of the Rockville Civic Ballet Company. At the College’s Rockville Campus, she is the president of the chapter of Phi Theta Kappa honor society. She participates actively in the county fair program, serving as the president of the Junior Board of Directors of the Montgomery County Agricultural Center and Fair. In addition, she is a leader and adviser in the 4-H Youth Development Program.

Marianne will graduate from Montgomery College in May. She will transfer to Franciscan University of Steubenville (Ohio) and major in mental health and human services.
For more information on the All-USA Academic Team, visit www.ptk.org. For more information about Montgomery College in Montgomery County, Maryland, visit www.montgomerycollege.edu.

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**Montgomery College** is a public, open admissions community college with campuses in Germantown, Rockville, and Takoma Park/Silver Spring, plus workforce development/continuing education centers and off-site programs throughout Montgomery County, Md. The College serves nearly 60,000 students a year, through both credit and noncredit programs, in more than 130 areas of study.