

*BOND  
ACADEMY-MC  
EDUCATORS  
RISING SOCIAL*

PRESENTED BY



THE BOND PROJECT  
Uplifting Our Kids. Our Culture. Our Craft





## *INGER SWIMPSON*

### **BIO:**

Dr. Inger Swimpson is a former central office and school-based administrator with Montgomery County Public Schools. Prior to her retirement and during her 30-year career, she served as a middle school classroom teacher, instructional specialist, assistant principal, and director in the Offices of Human Resources and Development and School Support and Improvement. She earned her bachelor's degree from North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University and both her master's and doctorate from Bowie State University.

### **What does education mean to me?**

Education is making meaning of one's culture and sharing it with the world. It is an exploration of the who, what and why of one's culture, elevated and integrated in spaces where one is often told it doesn't belong.

# 2021 STUDENT MEMBERS



**DANIEL BRADFORD**

- **Bio:**
- Hello! My name is Daniel Bradford and I am a Sophomore at Montgomery College where I am studying Communication Studies. Outside of school, I work at an elementary in before/aftercare and with my church's youth ministry. I aim to transfer to a four-year to obtain my bachelor's degree in communication studies and public relations.
- **What does education mean to me?**
- In a world that is increasingly interdependent, I believe education is a resource for connection. Education expands our minds with the necessary knowledge and skills to not only be able to place ourselves in a changing world but to better understand each other. A lack of education breeds ignorance and division, while education provides a space for understanding, connection, and community.





# JULIUS DAVIS

## **BIO:**

Julius Davis, Ed.D., is the University System of Maryland (USM) Wilson H. Elkins Associate Professor of Mathematics Education and Founding Director of the Center for Research and Mentoring of Black Male Students and Teachers at Bowie State University. He has two main strands of research focused on Black male students and teachers in education. In my view, true education is a source of liberation for Black people throughout the Diaspora.

# 2021 STUDENT MEMBERS



**TAVON CHASE**

- **Bio:**
- Tavon "Taye" Chase is a director of a before and aftercare program. Taye also teaches dance and coaches an all-star competitive cheer team. Taye is a native Washingtonian, but currently resides in Montgomery county, Maryland. Taye has always said that, he wants to be the role model he wishes he had while growing up.
- **What does education mean to me?**
- Education is super important to me because not only does it provide stability it also provides financial security. Being educated provides me with a level of confidence with holding conversations in any setting. Having an education opens many doors and opportunities that wouldn't normally be there. I have learned how to set personal and professional goals through education. The most important thing in my opinion, education builds character.



# *TROY BODDY*

## **BIO:**

Dr. Troy Boddy is the former Director of the Equity Initiatives Unit for Montgomery County Public Schools and currently is the president of East Coast Racial Equity Group, and co-director of the Sandy Spring Slave Museum and African Art Gallery. Dr. Boddy also served as an elementary principal, assistant principal, staff development specialist, Reading Recovery Teacher, multiage (k-3) teacher, and curriculum writer.

## **What does education mean to me?**

My parents always told us that education is something they can't ever take away from us. Education is the key to understanding who you are and the world around you and using that knowledge to improve the things that you can.

# 2021 STUDENT MEMBERS



**KHARENGTON COLEMAN**

- **Bio:**
- My name is Kharengton Coleman. I was born and raised in Silver Spring, Maryland. I am currently in my 2nd year at Montgomery College. I enjoy trying new foods and travelling. I love working with children and aspire to follow in my father's footsteps and become an Elementary Education teacher.
- **What does education mean to me?**
- I was diagnosed with profound hearing loss when I was only 6 months old. In kindergarten, I was moved to the mainstream class because my kindergarten teacher believed in me. She encouraged me to work hard and to not focus on my disability. She inspired me to want to become a teacher so I can be the voice for deaf children and to inspire children to work hard and believe in themselves regardless of their differences.



# KENNETH SMITH

## **BIO:**

Kenneth M. Smith is a National Board Certified Teacher, Montgomery County's Washington Post Teacher of the Year for 2018. He is a strong advocate for teacher leadership inside as well as outside of the classroom. He serves on the leadership team for the BOND Project and also serves on the executive committee for the Minority Scholars Program (MSP), a youth-driven, social justice initiative designed to address the opportunity gaps that exist within school districts.

## **What does education mean to me?**

Education is a lifelong journey that constantly challenges, comforts, transforms liberates, and excites the imagination. Along the journey, I believe we should use our education to be self-reflective, while also uplifting and empowering others to realize and achieve their own pursuits to the best of their ability and encourage them to fully engage in the human experience.



# 2021 STUDENT MEMBERS



**YESENIA FLORES DÍAZ**

- **Bio:**
- Yesenia Flores Díaz is a second career educator excited to teach Grade 7 Advanced English at a Title I middle school in Silver Spring this fall because representation matters in the classroom. She's an award-winning writer who strives to inspire learning for all students. In June 2021, she was recognized with a generous scholarship by the Montgomery County Public Schools Retirees Association. She earned a bachelor's degree in English from CUNY Lehman College, a master's in Organizational Counseling from the Johns Hopkins University, and is near completion of professional education coursework at Montgomery College. Yesenia is proud of her Puerto Rican heritage, grateful for a New York City public school education that changed her life trajectory, and credits her parents and elementary school librarian for cultivating a love for reading.
- **What does education mean to me?**
- Education matters because it opens doors of unimaginable opportunities and changes the trajectory of our lives. My paternal grandparents didn't finish elementary school and later became sharecroppers in rural Puerto Rico before migrating to New York City during Operation Bootstrap. When I was growing up, my father used to say: "Every generation should do better than the last." Now that I'm an adult and mother of two, I get it. For these reasons, I constantly seek ways to grow and learn to honor my ancestors' sacrifices and pave a smoother path for my descendants.



# YESENIA FLORES DÍAZ

## **BIO:**

Yesenia Flores Díaz is a second career educator teaching English at a Title I middle school in Silver Spring, MD. She sees her younger self in many of her students and is determined to share her love for literature and writing with them. Mrs. Díaz is the proud mother of two amazing daughters and uses empathy, humor, lots of love, and a bit of Spanglish as part of her core educational philosophy to inspire learning at home and work.

## **What does education mean to me?**

A good education offers endless opportunities for growth and changes life trajectories. Education empowers. It provides access to experiences, people, and places one would not imagine nor realize without.

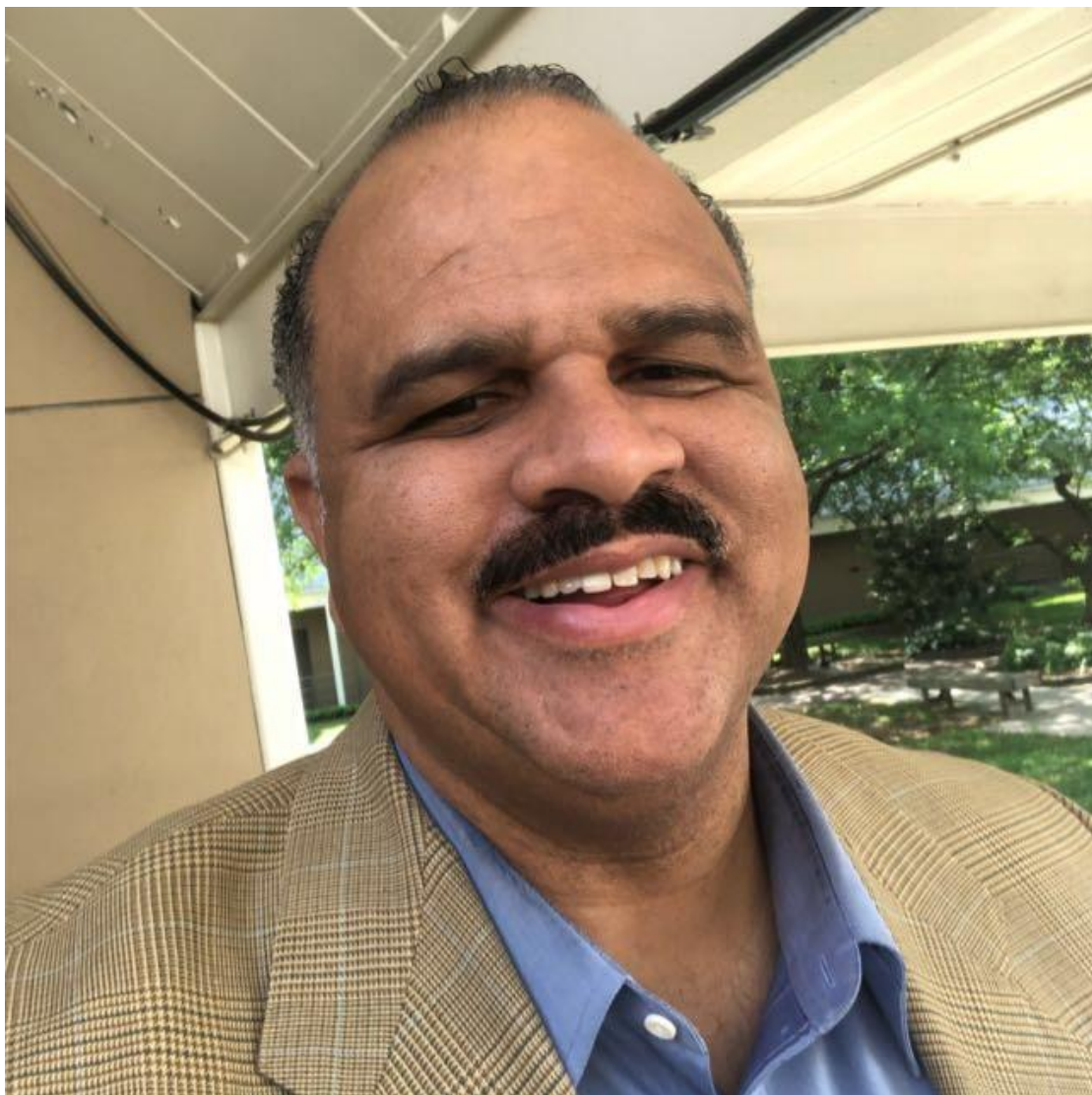
# 2021 STUDENT MEMBERS



**YOKAYRA GUTIERREZ**

- **Bio:**
- Yokayra Gutierrez is an upcoming freshman at Montgomery College, majoring in Elementary Education. She volunteered over 500 student service learning hours tutoring elementary school students and as a camp counselor during the summer, achieving the Certificate of Meritorious Service. She also achieved her 90 + 9 Clock Hours Certification for learning new skills and techniques in a classroom setting, which led her to a Teachers Aide position allowing her everyday classroom experience. A strong believer in challenging herself and her students to think outside the box to develop their creativity and imagination. She has personally found great benefits in implementing out-of-the-box thinking in her life, including art projects and real-life issues.
- **What does education mean to me?**
- I grew my love for education because it was my outlet when there were family issues. School for me became a place where I could truly express who I was, my likes, and my interests. Having supportive teachers and classmates by my side encouraging me to try even when it gets tough, to be kind to one another, and to be who I was with no shame in it. That feeling of knowing I always had someone in my corner to make me feel seen, is something I hope I can do for another child who needs a break from whatever that may be, to truly be themselves. Education was my outlet and it could be someone else.





# ROLF BARBER

## BIO:

Mr. Rolf Barber is a DCPS graduate of Woodrow Wilson high school. He comes from a single-parent, immigrant background where he grew up in a 1 BR apt, sharing a bedroom with no family car. He came out of high school with terrible grades but through hard work, He was able to obtain a BA degree from Alabama State University on a full tennis scholarship. While working a full-time job at Georgetown University, He completed his master's degree there part-time. Thus becoming the 1st college grad from either side of my family.

## What does education mean to me?

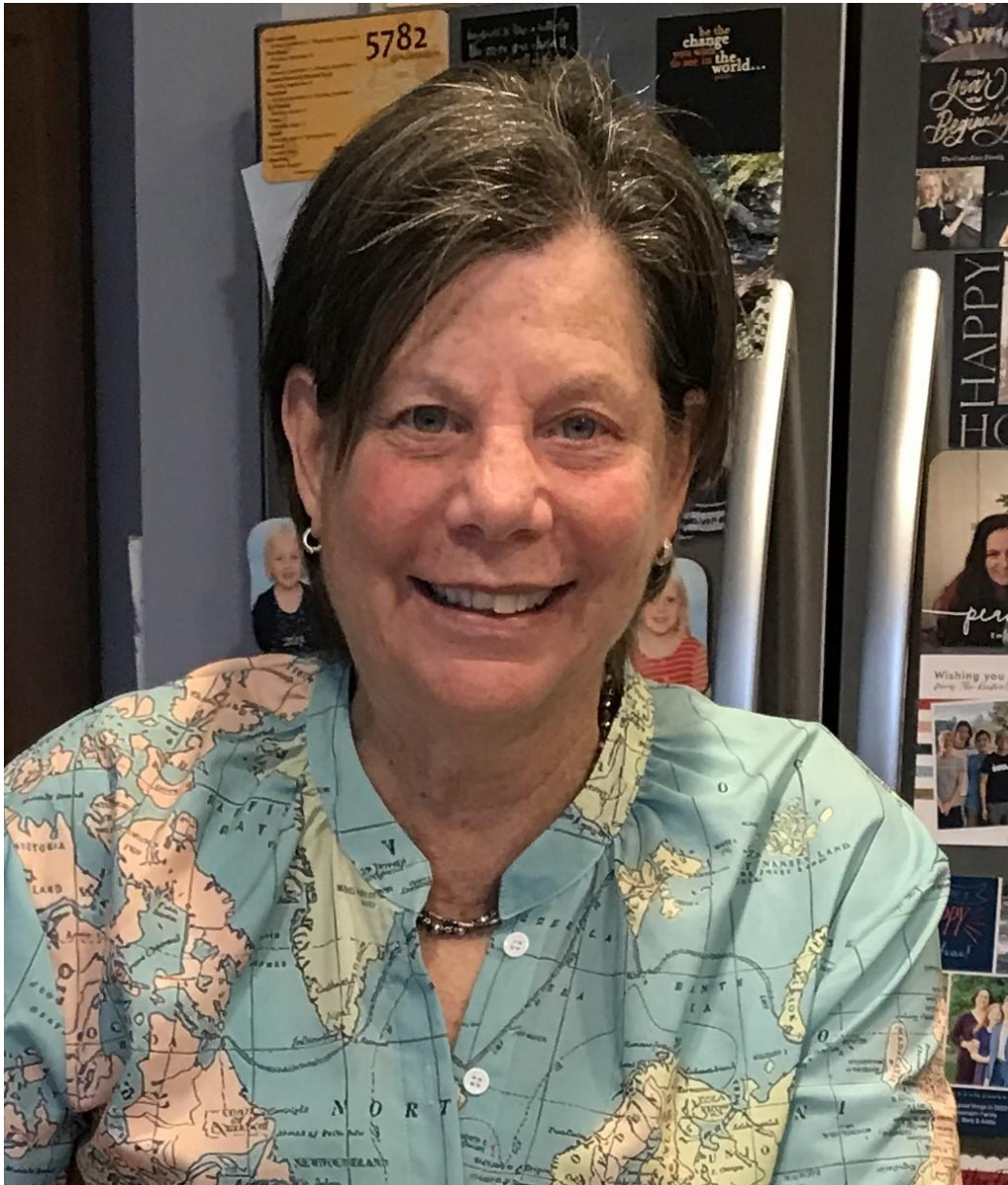
Education is a chance to IMPACT a young person's life for the better! It can enlighten, inform & awaken their mind to ALL kinds of possibilities professionally & their future contributions to society! It is a ticket into the middle class!



# 2021 STUDENT MEMBERS

## KAREN GUZMAN

- **Bio:**
- My name is Karen Guzman and I am a new student at Montgomery College. I graduated from Northwood high school this year. During my high school years, I was in a child development program for three years. In the program, I would teach preschool students math, reading, and science. It was a fun experience for me to teach preschoolers. I really enjoyed this program because I learned new things such as the stages of child development. At Montgomery College, I plan to study elementary school education and earn my associate's degree. After I plan to transfer to another college or university to earn my bachelor's degree. I am excited to start college in the fall of 2021.



# *PHYLLIS LERNER*

## **BIO:**

Phyllis Lerner is a teacher at the JHU Grad School of Education and a life-long equity activist. She cherishes being called “Auntie Phyllis” at Rwanda's Agahozo-Shalom Youth Village, a post-genocide high school where she has volunteered for years. Since Covid has kept her close to home, she's been challenging MCPS policies with local advocacy groups.

## **What does education mean to me?**

At age 22, I probably would have framed a wordy and academic response. Today, teaching and learning is the air I breathe...and the reason I will continue to do so.

# 2021 STUDENT MEMBERS



**ERIK HERNANDEZ**

- **Bio:**
- My name is Erik Hernandez, at the time of writing this I am 19 years of age living in Wheaton Maryland working at my family restaurant. My life is filled with wonder. I often find myself finding new hobbies and dropping them around a few months later but one thing I've been certain of is my love for teaching. I had always enjoyed the thought of teaching but I never really explored it until my 12th grade of high school when I became a platoon commander for NJROTC and a student aid, I enjoyed the role of helping students and being in charge of a class. After that I was set for my role to become a teacher over the summer, I took a job as a classroom monitor for both Flora Singer Elementary and Rosemary Hills Elementary School and I was able to pursue my love for teaching even more there.
- **What does education mean to me?**
- Education to me isn't just a right, education is a need that humans must have in order to survive the world. To understand the basic fundamentals of life humans must learn, in order to know what is right and wrong in a sense humans must learn, in order to correct the mistakes we make humans must learn, and we as humans have found a way to give everyone that chance and that is with education. I don't think people understand just how important education is for our everyday lives- we use the knowledge from the education given to us almost every second we are awake from driving, talking, eating, etc we are always using what we've learned.





# YOLANDA ABEL

## **BIO:**

Yolanda Abel is an Associate Professor and chair of the Department of Advanced Studies in Education at Johns Hopkins University School of Education. She is also a faculty affiliate with the Center for Social Organization of Schools, the Center for Safe and Healthy Schools, and the Center for Africana Studies. Her publications appear in *American Educational Research Journal*, *Journal of Negro Education*, *Education and Urban Society*, and *School Science and Mathematics Journal*.

## **What does education mean to me?**

The opportunity to sharpen our divine gifts and contribute to the world in ways that are uniquely ours.



# 2021 STUDENT MEMBERS



JORDAN JEFFERSON

- **Bio:**
- My name is Jordan Jefferson, I am a sixteen-year-old African American girl from Silver Spring Maryland. I am currently in my first year of my two-year dual enrollment program at Montgomery College.
- **What does education mean to me?**
- The word “Education” means a lot to me. When I first hear the word education I think of “learning”, learning is the process of acquiring a new understanding and knowledge. Also, when hear education I think of it as a very useful tool in life that can help your overall health and wellbeing.



# *EMMANUEL SMITH*

## **BIO:**

My name is Emmanuel D Smith I'm 31yrs old. African American male, this is my third semester at MC, I'm the current president MCER. I work a full-time job but I'm on my path to becoming an educator.

## **What does education mean to me?**

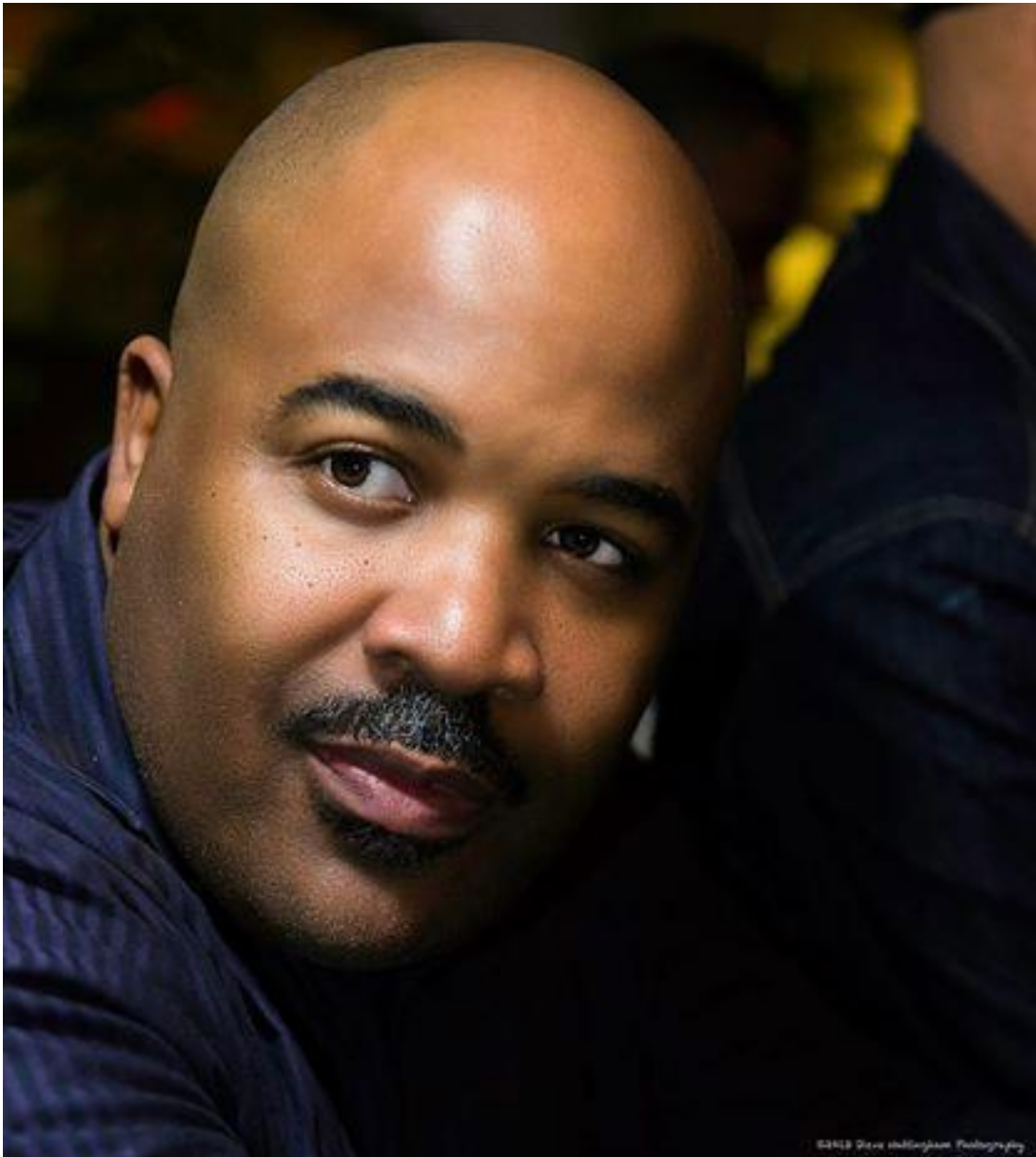
The old me would reply to this question by saying nothing. But from the experiences and connections I received at MC, I can say education means the world to me. Your whole world and everything around you can change from getting an education. I'm an example of this!

# 2021 STUDENT MEMBERS



CONNIE KRAMER

- **Bio:**
- My name is Connie Kramer and I'm a freshman at Montgomery College. I graduated from Winston Churchill High School and plan on studying Elementary Education. While I was at Churchill, I volunteered in a classroom for autistic kids. I love listening to music, organizing, and writing creative stories.
- **What does education mean to me?**
- Education has helped shape my understanding of the past and present world. It's taught me common knowledge I can use in everyday life and to be a good citizen. Education is like stepping stones that lead to being successful in the future. I believe that every child in the U.S. should have an equal opportunity to get a good education and therefore an opportunity to have a successful job as an adult. I want to contribute to giving every child the opportunity for a good education.



# MICHAEL WOOD

## BIO:

Michael Wood, Ph.D. is the Assistant Director of the Center for Research and Mentoring of Black Male Students and Teachers. His research focuses on Black men's persistence in college, non-cognitive theories while utilizing an anti-deficit thinking framework to underpin student access and academic leadership.

## What does education mean to me?

Education provides an opportunity for an engagement of thoughts and ideas. Students and instructors grow through educational interaction, this growth allows me to give back to the personal and professional development of each student.



# 2021 STUDENT MEMBERS



JALEN MCBEE GREEN

- **Biography**
- My name is Jalen! I'm currently living in Germantown, MD and seeking an AAT in Elementary Education/Special Education at Montgomery College Germantown Campus. When I'm not at school I'm working as an assistant teacher at a childcare center, spending time with family and friends, and playing lots of Sims!
- **What does education mean to me?**
- I can think of several different reasons why education matters to me; however, I will just name the biggest one. The reason why education matters to me is because the world matters to me. I believe that the only way our world can become a better place is if the people living in it are educated. There are endless things to learn about in this world and becoming someone who helps others learn more means the world to me.



# GABRIEL ASHERU

## BIO:

Gabriel Asheru (ASH-er-ROO) Benn is a Peabody award-winning writer, Hip Hop artist, and educator from Washington, DC. He is a pioneer in Hip Hop education, and the founder of Guerilla Arts Ink, a local organization of 16 years that recruits, trains and hires local artists to serve as teaching artists in schools. Asheru penned the theme song to the TV show *The Boondocks*, and has an extensive catalog of Hip Hop albums that goes back to 1997. He is a graduate of the University of Virginia (B.A., Anthropology), National Louis University (M.Ed.) and U.Penn (Executive Certificate, Arts & Culture Strategy).

## What does education mean to me?

Education is an act of love. It is an investment of time, attention, and intention to build up the next generation that comes behind us. Education is a form of legacy building, to ensure that our rich cultural legacies stay intact. Education, when done properly, is a form of liberation, in that it allows us to pass down transferable skills and strategies that are necessary for students to light their own paths forward.

# 2021 STUDENT MEMBERS



TATIANA QUINTANILLA

- **Bio:**
- My name is Tatiana Quintanilla. I am currently a Junior enrolled at Towson University. I am majoring in elementary education with special education. I have worked alongside my community to bring awareness to the socio-economic barriers my community faces. I plan to educate others in ways to help their own communities.
- **What does education mean to me?**
- I am committed to becoming an elementary school teacher who will advocate for equality in the classroom and inspire and support my students to embrace their educational journey. With diverse learning styles, I will create an environment of inclusion for ALL my students, and celebrate their abilities and challenges to ensure their future. Together, we will work together to reach their dreams!





# *SAGE SALVO*

## **BIO:**

Salvo is the social-entrepreneur founder of Words Liive, and is also a 2021 Aspen Institute Tech Policy Fellow. As a 'edtech entrepreneur', Sage was selected as a 2021 Elite 200 GSV Cup Startup, a 2021 4.0 Schools Alumni Coach, 2020 AfroTech World Finalist, 2020 Harvard Alumni Launch Lab Accelerator Fellow, 2020 Education Pioneers Fellow, 2018 AT&T Aspire Entrepreneur, 2018 Lean-Lab Fellow, 2017 Clinton Global Initiative – Social Entrepreneur, and 2017 Camelback Ventures Fellow.

## **What does education mean to me?**

The Honorable Malcolm X said it most accurately for me, 'Education is your passport for the future. The future belongs to those who prepare for it today.' The Bible also teaches us that a people will perish because of a lack of knowledge.

# 2021 STUDENT MEMBERS



ANTHONY RICHARDS II

- **Bio:**
- Hello! I am a 20-year-old student, who studies Physical Education at Montgomery College. I am originally from Clarksville, Maryland. I have a true passion for sports, and working with youth in order for them to become the best student-athlete they can become. I am on a journey to become the best educator possible, and mastering the field of education is definitely a step in that direction. I am truly blessed to be a part of the Educators Rising and look forward to working with everyone!
- **What does education mean to me?**
- Education is important to me because it is the stepping stones to success. The more you know, the better you are prepared for life, and all the adversity it may bring. Every day is a beautiful day to learn no matter what age. I personally challenge myself every day to learn AT LEAST one new thing in order to keep my mind curious and ready for more knowledge. "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world." - Nelson Mandela.



# MARCUS MASON

## BIO:

Dr. Mason is a two-time alumna of Bowie State University. Earning his Bachelor of Science in Child and Adolescence Studies and Master of Arts in Counseling Psychology. Dr. Mason earned his Doctorate in Educational Leadership and Management from Drexel University. As a psychotherapist and educator, he consults with public and private sectors including school districts, social service organizations, and/or non-profits to support Social and Emotional Learning components for staff and students they serve.

## What does education mean to me?

Education should be the safe space for a student to grow and learn holistically. Education bridges the gap between important subject matters and social and emotional growth of our students.



# 2021 STUDENT MEMBERS



EMILY ROMERO

- **Bio:**
- Emily Romero graduated from Richard Montgomery High School in June 2021. She received a State of Maryland Biliteracy Certificate, which recognizes the strength of cross-cultural communication, affirms the value of diversity, and honors multiple languages in our communities. It also demonstrates a student's high level of proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing in English in one or more languages. She was also awarded a Bilingual and International Studies Certificate, which was from engaging in a variety of AP and IB courses that expanded her knowledge and understanding of literature, culture, and global politics throughout her years in high school. She will be majoring in Elementary Education throughout the two years she will attend Montgomery College and the four years once she transfers.



# *CRAIG EOZZO*

## **BIO:**

Craig Eozzo joined Montgomery College in 2020 as senior campaign director. As the acting vice president of development and alumni relations and executive director of the Montgomery College Foundation, he manages fundraising activities and all aspects of the Montgomery College Foundation as well as alumni relations. He leads the creation and implementation of fundraising strategies to sustain and increase philanthropy. He brings extensive expertise in major gifts, planned giving, and corporate relations to benefit the students of Montgomery College. Prior to joining the foundation, he was the director of planned giving and major gifts at the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts in New York City. There, he was responsible for revitalizing the planned giving society with commitments upwards of \$28 million. He also held the role of director of planned giving and major gifts at NYU's Stern School of business, where he raised more than \$50 million in scholarships and programmatic support. Craig holds a B.S. in engineering from Penn College and a M.Ed. in student affairs from Penn State.

## **What does education mean to me?**

I grew up in a very rural part of Pennsylvania surrounded by a large supportive extended and loud Italian family. My neighbors were my cousins, and we had the absolute best time growing up together. I was the first to go off to college so for me education is all about feeding my curiosity. I've always questioned EVERYTHING and need to understand how things work, and why, and impact. I like to think education has allowed me to make my families world a little bigger, more tolerant, and appreciation for something other than pasta - although it's still a favorite of mine. Staying in higher education as a career has ensured that I am always surrounded by people hungry to understand the world around them, and continually striving to improve it. Working to provide access to education to others is deeply meaningful and personal, and I can't think of a better use of my energy.

# 2021 STUDENT MEMBERS



TYLER SIMPKISS

- **Bio:**
- I am currently in my seventh year of teaching, working at Wheaton High School where I teach mathematics and coach the boys' basketball team. I received my bachelor's degree in mathematics at Elizabethtown College and my master's degree in Education at Wilmington University. I spent my first five years of teaching at a private high school in Delaware and another year at Duke Ellington School of the Arts in D.C.
- **What does education mean to me?**
- Education matters to me because I was the first of my family to have graduate college and even receive my master's degree in Education. My parents always told me the importance of education and doing the best I could in school. I want to be able to pass on the importance of education to my future children and my students so they can be the best version of themselves. I hope to inspire my students to become educators like myself.





## *DONDRAE MCGEE*

### **BIO:**

Dondrae L. McGee is a family man first to his wife Veronica and three daughters Riley, Skylar, and Gracyn as well as a Prince George's County Native. He holds two degrees from Bowie State University in Education and Organization Communication: Public Affairs. He is currently bi-vocational serving Prince George's County Public Schools as a Human Resources Partner and a Pastor at Zion Church; Landover Maryland.

### **What does education mean to me?**

To me, education is an invaluable tool that keeps the mind in a state of growth. Education is all around us and doesn't only happen within four walls of an institution or virtually. The world is one big classroom and the moment an individual no longer pursues education is the moment their growth ceases.

# 2021 STUDENT MEMBERS



ANGIE ZAVALETA

- **Bio:**
- Hi, my name is Angie Zavaleta. I am 18 years old, born and raised in Gaithersburg, Maryland (and Washington D.C. for two years). This past June, I graduated from Gaithersburg high school and will be attending Montgomery college this coming fall majoring in education.
- **What does education mean to me?**
- Every day, anywhere someone learns something new. Education is precious and should be something available to everyone across the world. There are multiple reasons why education is important, mainly it helps people build careers but it can also teach someone how to play an instrument, mental health, new language, and so on. Knowledge is a strength and helping build education in a direction where it strengthens everyone is what makes it important.