

**2023 Departmental and Campus Honors,
Takoma Park/Silver Spring**

Presidential Scholar Award



Summer Mai Li Suliman

Summer Mai Li Suliman has distinguished herself academically with a 4.0 GPA in honors coursework and rigorous scholarship, through her extraordinary commitment to helping students and her community, and her compassionate service to those less fortunate. Summer has been active in numerous student activities and organizations including the MC student newspaper, MC Stargazers Astronomy Club, the Muslim and Honors Student Association, while also tutoring peers with disabilities through the Disability Support Services Center at Montgomery College. Summer volunteers for the Free Minds Book Club and Writing Workshop, serving incarcerated and formerly incarcerated adults and youth in the DC Juvenile Detention and Federal Prison systems. She is a Renaissance Scholar who has been invited to present at multiple academic conferences. Summer plans to become an educational policy analyst after transferring and completing her education, so that she may continue advocating for marginalized communities, within educational spaces, to create more equitable and inclusive environments.

Department of Art

Academic Excellence in Graphic Design

Ana Onofre (Nominated by Mr. Kevin Bowman)

Ana is the soft-spoken, modest student who stands out when she unveils her work and her exceptional drawing skills are revealed. She is a pleasure to have in class.

Academic Excellence in Studio Art

Elielle Kayomb (Nominated by Mr. Kevin Bowman)

Elielle is the kind of student who helps set the standard in a classroom (both remote and in-person) not only because of the quality of her artwork, but also through her thoughtful contributions to discussions, her diligent work ethic, her openness to suggestions, and her positive attitude.

Gloria Monteiro Award

Thaddeus Gros (Nominated by Ms. Katherine Knight)

Thaddeus operates with a serious dedication to concept, craft, and improvement, and also weaves in influences from a breadth of personal interests. The resulting work inspires classmates and raises the bar in his studio and academic classes alike.

Department of Chemical and Biological Sciences

Bernice F. Pierson Biology Award

Phoenix Bryant (Nominated by Dr. Kimberly George & Dr. Kathryn Monzo)

Phoenix is an outstanding STEM student interested in pursuing a career as a physician and researcher. To achieve this goal, she is pursuing a Biological Sciences degree at MC and plans to transfer to either UMD or UMBC to continue her studies. While pursuing her degree at MC, Phoenix has taken two honors courses, BIOL 150 HM (Principles of Biology I) and SCIR 297 HM (Scientific Research) where she worked on projects exploring the use of CRISPR-Cas9 technology With Dr. Linda Jurata. Her BIOL 150 Honors project was "Intergenerational Epigenetic Effects of Parental Trauma on Offspring" and her follow up SCIR297HC CRISPR project was "Creating a sgRNA to Implement CRISPR-off in FKBP5 Intron 7 in Rats".

Gail Jenkins Anatomy & Physiology Award

Keegan Freedman (Nominated by Dr. Carole Wolin)

Keegan has a GPA 4.0 with 28 credits completed including BIOL150, 151, 212HM, and is currently in BIOL213 with me (also getting an A so far). Her honors paper in BIOL212HM was entitled An Investigation into Treatments of Osteoarthritis of the Hip and Knee.

Excellence in First Year Chemistry Award

Grace Kigo (Nominated by Dr. Aksana Chabatar)

Grace is a Biological Sciences major and has 4.0 GPA. During our academic association together, Grace consistently demonstrated an outstanding degree of commitment and dedication, which is required for mastering a deep understanding of the material. She has also demonstrated efficient and excellent practical and analytical skills in performing laboratory experiments and analysis of experimental data. Grace has proven herself a very friendly and team-oriented person, which is required to succeed in the professional field. She actively participated in the group activities during the discussion section of the course, and she helped the other members of the group with the assignments and tasks. She earned an A grade in all of her exams in CHEM 131 and currently in CHEM 132 courses. Her scores are nearly 100 % perfect in all of her assignments. She is truly one of the best students that I have encountered at MC.

Excellence in Organic Chemistry Award

Certitude Lembion Gakounet (Nominated by Dr. Adel Halli)

Certitude is a Chemistry/Biochemistry major with a 3.89 GPA, and A's in all of her chemistry courses. She won the First Year Chemistry Award last year. Certitude is an excellent student with very desirable qualities. She is prompt, always on time, very reliable, diligent, and most of all, very caring about her classmates, and very friendly and respectful. In Organic Chemistry, she's proven to completely understand the topics covered in class as her grades show: almost all her assignments are higher than 90%.

Department of English and Reading

Dynamic Process Award

Nicholas Deeds (Nominated by Ms. Comfort Mingot Davis)

Nicholas is an excellent student. He rapidly assimilates content and creatively expresses his ideas to persuade audiences with a variety of essays. He also masters the act of correctly annotating and citing sources in MLA style. He is always the first student to submit his paper. He is also great at assisting his peers with understanding their writing assignments.

Excellence in Fiction Award

Allan Bernal (Nominated by Dr. Michael LeBlanc)

Allan took my fiction writing class in the fall of 2022, and I was lucky to have him in the class. The class was conducted on Zoom, and Allan was a superior student and writer. He gave extensive written feedback to his fellow students in a kind and generous way that helped them grow. In the classroom, when we conducted class workshops, he provided deep insights into the student fiction that showed a keen eye for the workings of fiction and always moved the discussion forward in a productive direction. For this reason, I asked Allan to help proofread The Sligo Journal of Arts and Letters for this last issue, and he did a fantastic job. He truly deserves an Award for Fiction Excellence.

Great Determination Award

Danita Coleman (Nominated by Mr. Matthew Decker)

As an adult learner returning to school after many years of being a working professional, Danita brought mixed emotions to her first semester's learning experience. Despite her concerns, she approached class with unmatched enthusiasm, modeling for her peers what attentive learning looks like, turning on her camera, volunteering answers in the chat or aloud, and asking questions that not only clarified her understanding but others as well. Optimistic and confident but anxious about her potential for success, each new major writing assignment presented a challenge for her, but she persevered. While Professor Decker was thrilled to share in Danita's success at the end of the fall 2022 semester, he was also incredibly sad to lose such a tremendous student and ally.

Darleen Jackson (Nominated by Ms. Cinder Barnes)

Darleen added to the collegial spirit of the class with his participation and insightful contributions.

Ludwin Martinez (Nominated by Ms. Cinder Barnes)

Ludwig added to the collegial spirit of the class with his participation and insightful contributions.

Great Logic Award

Josie Prentice (Nominated by Mr. Matthew Decker)

Josie carries a unique skillset as a writer capable of not only investigating a hot button issue objectively, but also enlivening her ultimate researched argument with style, creative flourish, and audience appeals that keep the reader invested. Consumer data protection laws aren't the most exciting, certainly, but thanks to Josie's exceptional clarity, thoughtful context-building, careful source integration, and more, she keeps her readers' eyes glued to the page. Professor Decker said, "At the end of reading this paper, I know I learned something new from Josie's intellectual labor, and this is only one of the reasons why I awarded her the unheard of 100% on the Researched Argument."

Great Student Model Award

Vimbainashe Mabvaru (Nominated by Ms. Cinder Barnes)

Vimby is a great addition to our English class. She has been an awesome writer and class participant. She contributes insightful comments to discussions that add to the level of discourse.

Great Writing Voice Award

Sephira Amen (Nominated by Ms. Cinder Barnes)

Sephira added to the collegial spirit of the class with their participation and insightful contributions.

Intellectual Curiosity Award

Hanna Thatcher (Nominated by Ms. Esther Schwartz-McKinzie)

In our class, Hanna has modeled perseverance, intellectual curiosity, and thoughtfulness. They arrive each class meeting with annotated text and notes; they take notes diligently, and their contributions and insights are genuinely smart, sometimes subtle, and always helpful to other students—and to Professor Schwartz-McKinzie! Because of their determination, Hanna has never missed a class meeting, earned a nearly perfect score on a challenging midterm exam, and shone as a discussion leader. Their paper comparing the representation of gender in the Ugandan and Babylonian creation myths demonstrates unique perspective—they were thinking about something in a way that had not occurred to me.

Memorable Contributions Award

Zora Guise (Nominated by Ms. Esther Schwartz-McKinzie)

Zora stands out as a highly capable young woman with a great deal of character and resilience. From the start of the semester, which begins with a narrative essay, Zora impressed her instructor with her ability to engage her reader by recreating powerful moments in prose, and by her candor and wise self-knowledge. Furthermore, Zora so genuinely cares about the process and the journey of learning, not merely the grade. That includes her interactions as she thrives through her connections with others. Poised to grow, thrive in, and contribute to any learning environment, Zora will be a student to watch, and Professor Schwartz-McKinzie looks forward to witnessing this student's accomplishments.

Most Improved Award

Jonathan Kim (Nominated by Ms. Comfort Mingot Davis)

Jonathan has made tremendous improvement this year, and Professor Davis wanted to highlight his accomplishments and inspire other students with Jonathan's examples and perseverance. Completing and submitting all assignments in a timely manner, he attends every class, participates actively, and does not shy away from controversial topic discussions. His critical thinking and writing skills have evolved. He understands and utilizes rhetorical situations and appeals to his advantage. He voluntarily offers his time to work with struggling students—answering questions about coursework and due dates as well as peer feedback—which has won the respect of his peers.

Outstanding Student Service Award

Gigie Nguyen (Nominated by Dr. Michael LeBlanc)

Gigie was in both my English 101 and English 102 classes, and she is also an officer in Phi Theta Kappa. She has been a wonderful support person for me, both in and out of the classroom. In the classroom, I can always rely on Gigie whenever I have a question about whether an assignment makes sense or the Blackboard site is working properly. She gives me accurate and prompt feedback that I can use and helps me run my class. Outside of the class, she supports every event she can attend. I can always rely on her to come out and lend a hand when I need one, and I was grateful she was at the The Sligo Journal Reception on April 27, where she continued to be a sounding board for me so that I can ensure that the event runs smoothly.

Rhetorical Bravery Award

Obianuju Vivian Ugwueke (Nominated by Ms. Comfort Mingot Davis)

Vivian exhibited unique perspectives and bravery regarding controversial issues. Professor Davis wanted to highlight her accomplishments so that other students would be able to develop their critical thinking, avoid jumping on the bandwagon, and have the courage to share their positions. Vivian does not shy away from controversial topics' discussions; instead, she understands and uses rhetorical situations and appeals to her advantage. She asks questions and expresses her thoughts respectfully and is always willing to support or explain her position. In every class, she encourages her classmates to actively participate in class discussions while asking questions her classmates were too shy to ask.

Unique Perspective Award

Joey Pennington (Nominated by Ms. Cinder Barnes)

Joey is an amazing student, whom I've had in two classes. Their participation has added to the level of discourse in the courses they have taken with me. Their essays and analysis have always taught me something and shown me different ways of understanding various topics.

Department of Health Sciences, Health, & Physical Education

Excellence in Health Information Coding Award

Stephanie Gayle (Nominated by Dr. Corinne Smith)

The Health Information Management and Medical Coding Certificate Programs Awards of Excellence recognize students who have distinguished themselves by demonstrating exemplary academic achievement, professionalism, leadership, and academic engagement. The awards recognize the top academic performers from the HIM and Coding programs. In addition to outstanding academic performance, each of these students consistently surpassed the high ethical and professionalism standards of the Health Information Management and Medical Coding Programs.

Excellence in Health Information Management Award

Sherri Janzen (Nominated by Dr. Corinne Smith)

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Guzel Mardeeva (Nominated by Dr. Corinne Smith)

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Excellence in Medical Coder Certificate Program Award

Allison Perikles (Nominated by Dr. Corinne Smith)

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Fire and Emergency Services Management Program Major of the Year Award

Karla Delcid (Nominated by Ms. Kathleen Dayton)

Karla was chosen by the Fire and Emergency Services Management program faculty because she possesses the knowledge, skills and leadership abilities expected of a professional in this field. Karla currently has an overall 3.93 GPA, and a 4.0 GPA for Fire Science courses. She is an active participant in our in-class (remote) discussions, and she seeks to deepen her understanding of the field outside of the classroom. As a student in the Fire and Emergency Services Management program, she has mastered the technical aspects of the fire science curriculum. Karla is well prepared to continue her studies in this challenging and rewarding career field.

Homeland Security Program Major of the Year

Irene Sagastume Leiva (Nominated by Ms. Kathleen Dayton)

Irene Sagastume Leiva was chosen by the Homeland Security program faculty because she possesses the knowledge, skills and leadership abilities expected of a professional in this field. Irene currently has an overall 3.93 GPA, and a 4.0 GPA for the Homeland Security courses. Irene is an active participant in our online discussions, and she has impressed the faculty with her ability to articulate difficult concepts in this complex field. But what sets her apart is her unending commitment to deepen her understanding of the field outside of the classroom. Irene is well prepared to continue her studies in this challenging and rewarding career field.

Outstanding Exercise Science Major

Matthew King (Nominated by Ms. Tonya Seed)

Matthew is a distinguished student in the Exercise Science Program. He demonstrates focused concentration in his studies, professionalism in the lab and classroom, and the ability to provide solutions in problem solving situations. Through student experiential learning, he has demonstrated leadership qualities and showcased his ability to apply instruction from course material into field work and client interactions. He has accomplished academic achievement in his studies and stands out among his peers.

Department of Humanities

Excellence in Philosophy Award

Emily Dolloff (Nominated by Mr. Daniel Jenkins)

I wholeheartedly recommend Emily for this award, as she is an exceptional student with a dedication to academic success and community engagement. In my ethics course, Emily consistently demonstrated outstanding critical thinking, clear communication, and leadership in class discussion. As a key member of our college's Ethics Bowl team, Emily played a significant role in our remarkable fourth-place finish in the Northeast Regional Ethics Bowl, outperforming renowned universities, including Harvard and Yale. Her intellectual curiosity, leadership skills, and commitment to service will make her a valuable asset to your institution and a testament to its excellence for years to come.

Excellence in Political Science

Johnny Mondestin (Nominated by Mr. Karl Smith)

Johnny is a consistently outstanding student who stands out for his curiosity on key issues in political ideology, comparative studies and American government. He has already been accepted to the political science program at UMD/College Park.

Petra Turner (Nominated by Mr. Karl Smith)

Petra has done remarkable work. She is an insightful student and a gifted writer.

Excellence in World Languages Arabic Award

Sariyya Alima (Nominated by Ms. Rania Suliman)

Sariyya is an outstanding student of Arabic. She has been accepted into two highly competitive and prestigious programs at the University of Maryland: to the University of Maryland Summer Language Institute and the Arabic Flagship Program for Spring 2023 at the University of Maryland College Park, which is one of only six Arabic Flagships in the nation. Additionally, I had the pleasure of nominating Sariyya for the 2023 Excellence in Equity Award which she won!

David Shore (Nominated by Ms. Rania Suliman)

David is a polymath who has excelled in his study of two of the hardest languages to learn in the world in a shorter time than any other student I have taught. David not only attained a high degree of proficiency in these languages but also showed great cultural appreciation and sensitivity. I believe he will be able to use his language skills to genuinely engage with other cultures and people and make a significant impact on the world. I can say from personal experience his skill in Arabic is far beyond any other student that I have had with his years of study. He was my very top Arabic language student since teaching at Montgomery College. He took his first Arabic class with me when he was in 7th grade, at age 13. David is a dual enrollment 10th grade high school student who will have completed 45 college credits with a 4.0 GPA at the end of this semester.

Excellence in World Languages French Award

Zoe Evert-Jacobs (Nominated by Ms. Josiane El Korm)

Zoe is an excellent and motivated student. She is currently studying General Studies with a concentration on Art; she is interested in painting, printmaking and drawing. She loves the French language, culture and French art. She intends to visit France soon with her family and visit all of its beautiful museums.

Excellence in World Languages Spanish Award

Mayeny Daffe (Nominated by Ms. Shelley Jones)

I have the great pleasure of teaching Mayeny again this semester in Spanish 102! She is an absolute joy to teach as she exhibits great interest in the subject matter, she enthusiastically uses Spanish as much as possible and she asks very thoughtful, well-considered questions. Mayeny's quality of work is always extraordinary, and I hope she will continue to grow in her understanding and use of Spanish. Congratulations, Mayeny!

Hewida Osman (Nominated by Ms. Shelley Jones)

I was so very impressed with **Hewida's** performance in Spanish 101. She had never before taken a Spanish class and worked incredibly hard to succeed. Hewida came to see me during office hours to work on her pronunciation and clarify grammar topics, she completed all assignments without fail, and she was never hesitant to speak Spanish in class. In addition to improving tenfold by the end of the semester, Hewida had the highest score in the class on the final exam. And she did all of this while raising 3 children! Congratulations, Hewida!

Department of Mathematics, Statistics, and Data Science

American Mathematical Association of Two-Year Colleges Math Award

Getnet Workalemahu (Nominated by Mrs. Kim Fouche)

This award is given to the student who scores the highest in the AMAYTC mathematics competition at the TP/SS campus. The exam includes challenging questions that test the students' problem-solving abilities. This year, Getnet Workalemahu achieved the highest combined score on this exam, which included some difficult questions. We are excited to see how well Getnet performs in the competition next year!

Excellence in Mathematics Award

Robermath Agbogbe (Nominated by Mrs. Kim Fouche)

Robermath has demonstrated exceptional mathematical prowess by achieving straight A's in Calculus I, II, III, and Differential Equations. Their proficiency has been recognized by two faculty members who nominated them for the award due to their outstanding performance in mathematics. Robermath's mastery of advanced mathematical concepts is a testament to their dedication and hard work in their studies. Their exceptional achievement is commendable, and we hope they continue to excel in their future endeavors.

So-Few Wei Fang Algebra to Calculus Award

Michael Steele (Nominated by Mrs. Kim Fouche)

This award acknowledges the remarkable achievement of a student who began their math education with a developmental mathematics course and has successfully progressed to complete calculus. This year's recipient of the award is Michael Steele. Michael's journey in mathematics began with intermediate algebra where he demonstrated his commitment to hard work and dedication by earning an impressive score on the final exam. He continued to challenge himself by completing trigonometry, precalculus, and eventually calculus. Michael's perseverance and determination in his studies have been recognized by his professor, who speaks highly of him. Michael's success is a testament to his unwavering efforts and his unwavering commitment to his studies.

STEM Scholars Student of the Year Award

Nikitta Joan Varghese (Nominated by Dr. Tom Chen and Dr. Jojo Dong)

Nikitta is a STEM Scholar and a Renaissance Scholar at the TPSS campus. For her honors project in Calculus I with Prof. Lugosi, Nikitta studied the landing of an airplane. She wants to become a pilot and is very much interested in ensuring safety at flying. Her honors presentation to the class demonstrated her passion for aviation. She will present this topic at the MC STEM Undergraduate Research Conference this May. Nikitta has a great personality, always respectful to her classmates and faculty. She understands how to use critical thinking for problem-solving; she feels responsible for her work and classmates. She serves as the Secretary of the MC Student Senate on the TPSS campus and PTK Vice-President of Scholarship at TPSS.

Department of Nursing

Excellence in Community Building and Support in Nursing

Elizabeth Levine (Nominated by Ms. Kathleen Snyder)

Elizabeth was a dancer in her first career, who developed the dream of caring for others. She selected Montgomery College, and the college is better because of her. Elizabeth is president of the nursing club and volunteers for events where she can motivate her peers and build community. She is a wife and a mother, thus brings a rich perspective from her life experience.

Excellence in Dedication and Determination in Nursing

Ileana Coca-Flores (Nominated by Ms. Kathleen Snyder)

Ileana has volunteered for the nursing club executive board for the past two years. Her dedication to service and developing a supportive community in the nursing program demonstrates her ability to advocate and communicate clearly.

Excellence in Education and Teaching in Nursing

Jennifer Argueta Castro (Nominated by Ms. Kathleen Snyder)

Jennifer joined the executive board of the nursing club 18 months ago. She's built a strong relationship with the Student Life Center on campus and acts as a conduit for information sharing. Jennifer planned and implemented a breast cancer prevention seminar and an autism awareness seminar on the Takoma Park Campus. Jennifer has dedicated countless hours to MC and Nursing over the past two years.

Excellence in Empowerment and Engagement in Nursing

Tamsyn Desormeaux (Nominated by Ms. Kathleen Snyder)

Tamsyn demonstrated excellent nursing knowledge and patient care this semester. Tamsyn had a family tragedy in her past, and she draws on that experience to provide thoughtful, compassionate, and holistic patient care. Tamsyn is an excellent communicator who supports her patients and colleagues through stressful moments. Tamsyn's calm and advocacy will boost her future work environments.

Excellence in Resilience and Empowerment in Nursing

Bibiana Rodriguez Cabrera (Nominated by Ms. Kathleen Snyder)

Bibiana demonstrated resilience and dedication to nursing during her time at this program. She has grown and assimilated to the nursing role and acknowledges that any academic setbacks were actually only opportunities for her to develop expertise. Bibiana's patient care is thoughtful. Her ability to develop collegial relationships will boost the culture at her future workplace. She has the tools to advocate for herself, her patients, and her colleagues.

Department of Physical Sciences, Engineering, Computer Science, Cybersecurity, & Networking

Excellence in Computer Science Award

Joel Haftel (Nominated by Dr. Sando Fouche)

Joel, an early college student at Montgomery College, has demonstrated exceptional aptitude in computer science, consistently excelling in advanced coursework and contributing innovative ideas to collaborative projects. His remarkable programming skills, willingness to assist his peers, and dedication to continuous learning have set him apart from other students, distinguishing him as an exceptional student and invaluable member of our community.

Samuel Markwell (Nominated by Dr. Ahmed Tarek)

Sam always comes to the class on time, who is in my CMSC 140 class section at our TP/SS campus. Even with the occasional challenges he faces, he attends the lecture sessions, and tries very hard to follow the class lecture discussions. He has a deep interest in learning of the Computer Science course related materials. I highly recommend him to the honors award committee.

Brandon Reed (Nominated by Dr. Ahmed Tarek)

Brandon is a very punctual and attentive student in my CMSC 140 class. He comes to the class on time and tries to participate in all classroom activities. He is one of the most responsive students with the in-class course learning activities.

Excellence in Physics and Engineering Award

Elmer Canales (Nominated by Dr. Max Nam)

Elmer, who currently holds a GPA of 3.77, is being recognized for outstanding academic achievement in physics.

Early College Program

Early College Honors Student of the Year

Phoenix Bryant

Phoenix has completed multiple honors courses over her time as an Early College student, and done extensive research in the field of epigenetics. Her first research project on this topic was so beautifully written it won Montgomery College's 2022 Writing in the Disciplines Award for scientific writing. Her second research project on this topic was presented to a college-wide audience at the Early College Honors Colloquium, where her eloquent talk showcased her exceptional maturity, as well as her admirable analytical and communication skills.

Honors Program

Honor Student of the Year Award

Summer Mai Li Suliman

Summer stands out for her grit, her passion for social justice, and her genuine excitement about, love of, and ability to conduct sophisticated intellectual exploration. Summer has presented her research at the Maryland Collegiate Honors Council conference, the Cherry Blossom Conference and will be presenting at the Beacon Conference for 2-year Scholars. She has distinguished herself within the Renaissance Scholars Honors Program and in her active community engagement and was nominated for this award by multiple Honors Program faculty.

Renaissance Scholars Program

Renaissance Scholar of the Year Award

Sephira Amen (Nominated by Dr. Carole Wolin)

Sephira has distinguished herself in her Renaissance Scholars classes with her work ethic and her curiosity. She is an astute observer of the human condition and it shows in her writing and her class participation. Not only does she shine in class, but in the college community and the larger community, in which she is very active.

Alfred Alexander (Nominated by Dr. Carole Wolin)

Alfred has demonstrated that he is an astute thinker and writer and conscientious about participating in academia. He has presented his research at the Maryland Collegiate Honors Council Conference and will be presenting at the Beacon Conference for Two Year Scholars and has volunteered in multiple capacities in the community.

Renaissance Scholar Award

Robermath Agbogbe

Alfred Alexander

Sephira Amen

Kaitlin Beckford

Lloyd Bekele

Lily Grae

Zora Guise

Nene Keita

Vimbainashe Mabvaru

Francina Moreno Palma

Annet Michelle Namugerwa

Joey Pennington

Abel Salmon

Anne Sandjol

Summer Mai Li Suliman

Eve Wilson

Famous Yamoah

Nahom Zemedkun

Mutsa Zinatsa

STEM Scholars Program

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