

**Key Talking Points  
Student Advocacy Day  
February 11, 2009  
Miller Senate Office Building**

The 2009 Maryland General Assembly has opened amidst one of the worst economic recessions in the nation's history. As revenues continue to fall and unemployment continues to rise, the State faces another \$2 billion deficit in the 2010 budget.

**Ask legislators to remember community colleges if there is additional State revenue to distribute.**

- As introduced, the 2010 State Budget provides flat funding for community colleges for three years in a row. Currently community colleges have been reduced by nearly \$50 million in state aid.
- In difficult economic times, it is even more important to keep community college tuitions and fees down as more displaced workers and entering college freshmen choose to attend their local community college.
- Although community college tuitions are relatively low, students cannot afford tuition increases made necessary by cuts in state funding.
- Last year community colleges enrolled over 128,000 students in credit programs and another 377,000 in non-credit courses. That represents over a half million Marylanders attending our community colleges. 97% of the Maryland's Community College students are Maryland residents.
- **Tell your own personal story how you struggle to pay your tuition and fees at your community college.**

**The current capital budget of \$84 million funds only 6 of the top 12 priority projects at community colleges. Although this is a slight increase over last year (approximately \$2 million), it is far short of the funds needed to cover the costs of all community college projects that are ready for state funding. Another \$44 million is needed to fund an additional 6 top priority projects.**

- Currently Community Colleges need three more colleges the size of Frederick Community College to meet current enrollment. Community Colleges enroll over half of the undergraduates in the State and have less than one third of the facility space.
- Our colleges need both expanded classroom and lab space and upgrading of aging facilities that need renovation or maintenance. The average age of our community colleges is over 30 years old, thus our buildings desperately need updating and modifications for technological changes.
- **Individual campuses will brief students on their specific capital needs or let students know if they need to thank legislators because their college's project has been funded.**

### **Other thoughts to keep in mind**

- Security will require each student to show a photo ID.
- Encourage students to leave backpacks and pocketbooks to expedite the security lines.
- The purpose of today's visit is to thank legislators for their support for community colleges and to educate them about YOU, the students these colleges serve.
- Let them know how important their support of community colleges is to you.
- Legislators will likely ask if you are a registered voter. Please register before the event and know your representative in Annapolis. If in doubt who your representatives are, please consult the following website: <http://mdelect.net/>
- Be prepared to describe your actual situations and personal struggles you go through to get an education. Tell the legislators your dreams and goals. Let them know if you are going into teaching, nursing or any of the allied health fields, which are critical workforce shortage areas.

### **Suggested Points to Discuss with Legislators**

- What legislative district you are from and where your parents are from
- The name of the college you attend and why you chose the institution
- How the community college has made a difference in your life
- How much your community college experience means to you
- If you are a State financial aid recipient
- Any community service activity in which you participate
- Be on time, be positive, friendly and brief
- Ask to take a photograph with the legislator
- Invite the legislator to visit your campus
- Send a thank you letter