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**Contact:**

Alexis Reed, Director of Marketing and  
Communications  
301-738-0015 x 229  
[areed@mcccmd.com](mailto:areed@mcccmd.com)

Kristin O'Keefe, VP of Communications & Marketing  
240-641-6703  
[kristin@thinkmoco.com](mailto:kristin@thinkmoco.com)

## **Montgomery County Business Organizations Commit to Addressing Racism and Economic Inequity in Montgomery County, Maryland**

**ROCKVILLE, Md.**—Over the past few months, Montgomery County businesses have been weathering a pandemic; we're just now beginning the process of economic reopening and recovery. There is, however, another equally important kind of business recovery work that must be done here—collectively standing against racism and injustice and working to create positive change. This type of recovery is just as critical for Montgomery County's future.

We join with our community in condemning the killing of George Floyd and the systemic racism that led to his death, as well as the deaths of other Black men and women. Further, the COVID-19 pandemic has disproportionately impacted Black Americans due to higher infection and death rates and widening economic disparities as a result of business closures, particularly black-owned businesses.

While Montgomery County's diversity is one of our greatest strengths, we can and must do better. As representatives of the business community, we're committed to working with local leaders in the public and private sectors to ensure an inclusive, equitable environment in Montgomery County, fostering greater economic participation, equity, growth, stability, and sustainability.

Together, we're committed to prioritizing inclusive economic growth that is guided by these key principles, including metrics that hold us accountable to growth and prosperity across races, a commitment to progress that expands opportunities for small businesses and entrepreneurs of color, and investments in areas where there is a concentration of minority-owned businesses. In short, we must ensure that all segments of Montgomery County's population can play a significant role in our future prosperity.

Honest conversations, positive actions, and change are needed if we truly want a full recovery—not only from the pandemic but also from bias and racism.

Janice Freeman, President & CEO  
African American Chamber of  
Commerce of Montgomery County

Carmen Larsen, Chair of the Board  
Hispanic Chamber of Commerce  
Montgomery County

Gigi Godwin, President & CEO  
Montgomery County Chamber  
of Commerce

Ben Wu, President & CEO  
Montgomery County Economic  
Development Corporation



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### **About African American Chamber of Commerce of Montgomery County**

The African American Chamber of Commerce (AACC) of Montgomery County is a non-profit organization founded in 1996 to support and unify African American businesses in Montgomery County. The founders of AACC recognized the need for an organization specifically focused on increasing the number and strength of African American businesses. While economic development has continued to proliferate throughout most segments of the County, the African American business community has not progressed at the same rate. AACC's goals include enhancing the positive presence and visibility of African American businesses, conducting regular educational seminars, and serving as an information clearinghouse. AACC promotes networking, mentoring and lobbying for the benefits of African American businesses.

### **About Hispanic Chamber of Commerce**

The mission of the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Montgomery County is to support its members and advance the State of Maryland as a national and global competitive leader in economic growth and private sector job creation through its effective advocacy, high level networking and timely communications.

### **About Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce**

The Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce (MCCC) is a membership organization that accelerates members' success through effective advocacy, programs, and events. Its membership includes small, medium, and large organizations representing a wide range of industries. For more information, visit [www.mccc.md.com](http://www.mccc.md.com).

### **About Montgomery County Economic Development Corporation**

The Montgomery County Economic Development Corporation (MCEDC) is the official public-private economic development organization representing Montgomery County, Maryland. Created in 2016, MCEDC is led by a Board of Directors of business executives. Its mission is to help businesses start, grow and relocate in Montgomery County by helping them gain access to top talent, business and market intelligence and prime locations. For more information, visit our website. Follow us on Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn.