

MCRPA DIGEST

December 2024/January 2025

Food, Fun, and Festivity: MCRPA Seasonal Sendoff Celebration

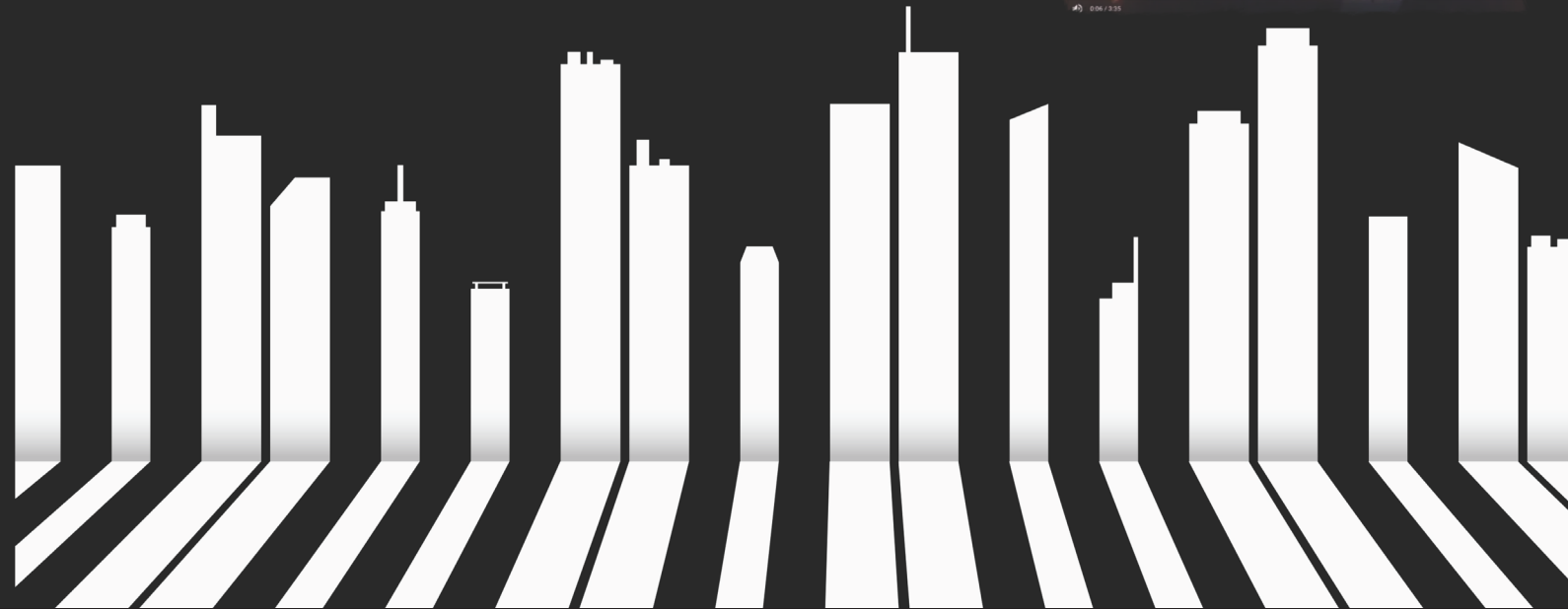
Lunch and Learn
Trivia Night
Mobile Market Volunteer

Montgomery College Presents Virtual Piano Sing-Along

FEATURING:

Jeremy Ragsdale - X Factor Romania 2017 Winner
with Co-host: Van the Man

Tuesday, December 17, 2024
1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. (EST)



Register for event - <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZ-cldumupzMuEtBTS8ZXar4Q3oxrld2yT-1f>

*After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

Leadership Teams



Meet the FY25 Leadership Team:

Executive Team

Dr. Christine Crefton, President
Dr. Paul Miller, Vice President
Ramon Valenzuela, Secretary
Carla Ammerman, Secretary

Professional Development

Michele Kight, Chair
Kimberly Bloch-Rican, Co-Chair
Anna Donohoe, Vice Chair

Community Engagement & Events

Maria Martinez, Chair
Nicole Land, Vice Chair (not pictured)

Membership, Marketing, & Communications

John Amoroso, Chair
Nghien Nguyen, Vice Chair

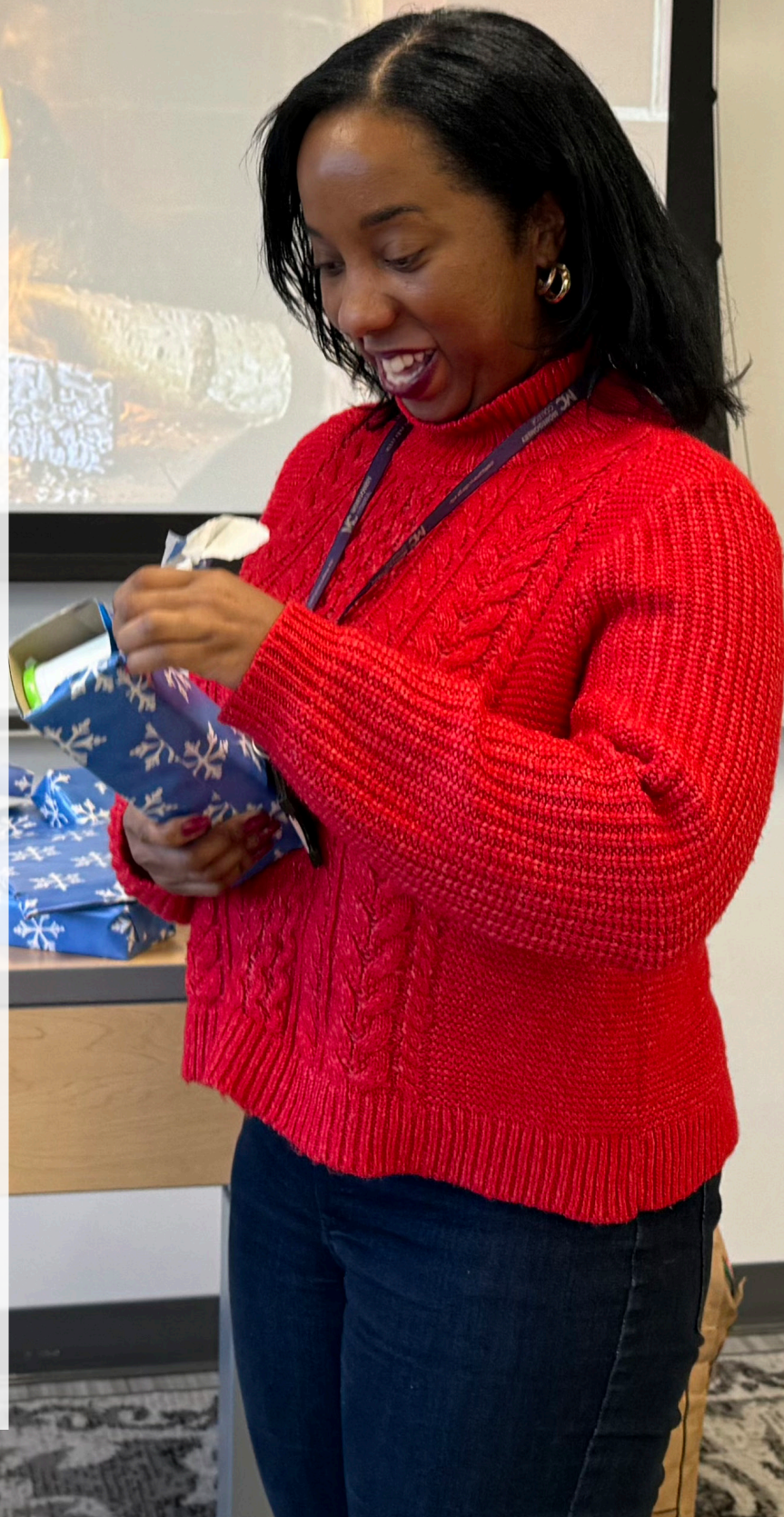
Please contact any of us if you want to join a committee or get more involved. Committees meet monthly via Zoom, and you can come to see what is going on, lend a hand, listen, and be a part of something pretty awesome!

SPRING EVENT HIGHLIGHTS



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These events are planned for the fall and spring semesters. We will send out additional information as it becomes available.

- Valentine's Day Origami and Sweets, February, TBA
- Staff Enrichment Day, March, TBA
- National Poetry Week, April, TBA
- Five Weeks of Fun, April-May, TBA
- 10th Annual MCRPA Retreat (Music, Food, Travel), May, TBA
- June Group Travel

Community Engagement & Events (CEE) Committee Meeting | Second Tuesday of the month, 11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m., Zoom

Membership, Marketing, & Communication (MMC) Committee Meeting | First Wednesday of the month, 10:00-11:00 a.m., Zoom

Professional Development Committee Meetings | First Thursday of the month, 2:00-2:45 p.m., Zoom

*Monthly committee meetings are open to all MCRPA members. Contact the committee chair and vice chair for Zoom link.

President's Corner

As we close out the year, I'm reflecting on what an incredible month November was for MCRPA! We connected over lunch during the Lunch Bunch, where members not only had the chance to network but also got professional headshots. Our Professional Development Lunch and Learn introduced us to valuable resources in the county for our business-minded members, proving how much we can gain from sharing knowledge. And who could forget the trivia outing? Team "Rising Raptors" put up a great fight, holding our own against some serious competition.

December has been just as exciting. Our Seasonal Sendoff was a true highlight—seeing so many faces gathered to share a meal, play games, laugh, and enjoy some winter wonderland fun was heartwarming. It reminded me once again of how MCRPA brings us together.

Looking ahead, don't miss next week's Super Staff Tuesday on 12/10! Be sure to register for Megan Cooperman and Tracey Smith-Bryant's presentation entitled [Rise and Thrive - How to Stay Hopeful and Resilient in Times of Transition](#). And on 1/14, Nghi Nguyen and I will kick off the new year with a session on [vision boarding](#)—a perfect way to set intentions and plan for the year ahead.

As we head into 2025, I am so thankful for your talents, leadership, and commitment throughout the year. MCRPA is here to help you stay connected, be productive, and grow both professionally and person-



ally. Our theme this year is Community Starts Here!—and nothing could be more true.

Mark your calendars for an exciting spring semester, including our 10th annual retreat on May 29th. I can't wait to see what we'll accomplish together in the new year. Here's to staying connected, learning, and growing as a community.

Happy Holidays and best wishes for 2025!

Dr. Christine Crefton, President



Reminder for full-time staff and administrators. The College's annual and personal time off carryover limits and deadlines for 2024 is Friday, December 20.



MCRPA Trivia Night at Creeks Lodge

A small but mighty group of us, proudly known as the “Rising Raptors,” made our way to The Creek Lodge on a Tuesday night in November for some delicious food and good company.

At the halfway point, we were tied for second place—absolutely killing it!

Although some tough competition eventually pushed us down to fifth place by the end, we held our ground against 18 teams, many of which are weekly regulars.

Given the odds, the Rising Raptors per-

formed amazingly well!

It was a fantastic evening, and we can’t wait to do it again.

Moments like this remind us how important it is to stay connected outside of work—here’s to more opportunities like this in the future!



Mark your calendars for Staff Enrichment Day 2025, happening on Wednesday, March 19, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on the Germantown Campus. This year’s theme is “Stronger Together: Transforming Tomorrow.”

MCRPA Seasonal Sendoff: A Feast of Togetherness



MCRPA members came together for an unforgettable afternoon at our Holiday Potluck, filled with delicious treats, games, laughter, and plenty of fun. Our winter wonderland theme created the perfect backdrop for a festive celebration that included a draw-a-snowman contest, a lively gift exchange, a cake walk, and other favorite activities.

The draw-a-snowman contest was a highlight, where we discovered who the professional artists were and who might soon be registering for Drawing 101 at the College. In the end, everyone was a winner, as we all embraced the artist within us.

Another standout moment was the wishing tree, where members shared their hopes for the upcoming year. Wishes ranged from “claim my future” and “good health for all my friends and family” to “peace and love,” “business success,” and a crowd favorite: “win the lottery and re-



Wishing everyone a happy holiday!



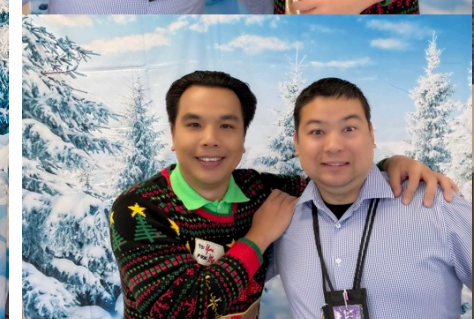
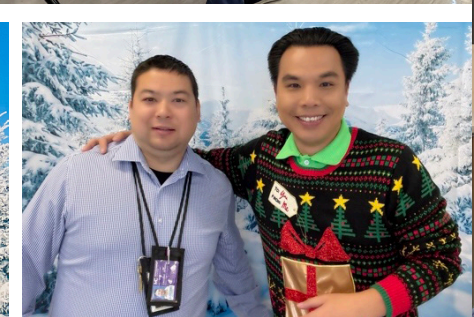
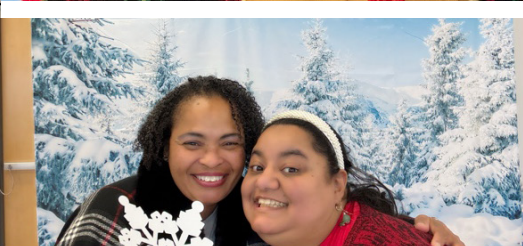
tire." Perhaps the most common wish for 2025 was for good health, a sentiment shared by many.

No holiday potluck would be complete without a fun photo op, and our wintry backdrop gave members the perfect chance to snap some pictures on their phones. While we didn't have a traditional photobooth, thanks to an app, members were able to take four different fun and silly photos and easily text or email them as a photo strip.

This annual event continues to grow bigger, brighter, and more joyful each year, and today was no exception.

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who joined us and made the day so special.

Here's to carrying this wonderful energy into the new year!



Montgomery College will be closed from December 23 to January 5 for the winter break. The College will also be closed on Monday, January 20, in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.



MC's Mobile Market: Community Care in Action





On November 13, MCRPA members participated in the Mobile Market event on the Rockville Campus.

The event featured several honored guests, including Councilmember Will Jawando, Dawn Lanzalotti Luedtke, Delegate Ryan Spiegel, Councilmember Laurie-Anne Sayles, and Councilmember Sidney Katz, who helped distribute food to our local community. Some of our members had the opportunity to meet and interact with these local leaders during the event.

One of MCRPA's goals every semester is to have our members volunteer at the Mobile Market.

The Mobile Market offers fresh fruits, vegetables, and other food items to Montgomery College students, faculty, staff,

and the community at no cost. Simply check the schedule for the campus most convenient for you, bring your bags for groceries, and pick up some food.

We hope to schedule another volunteer opportunity for members in the spring. In the meantime, we encourage all members to volunteer as you are able throughout the semester. There are multiple available dates at each of the main campuses in Rockville, Germantown, and Takoma Park/Silver Spring.

Members can volunteer for the entire event or dedicate just 30 minutes of your workday to help serve our community. The Mobile Market is a great opportunity to meet local community members, as well as connect with other MC colleagues and students. Occasionally, local leaders also volunteer at the event.

Lunch & Learn: Empowering Entrepreneurs in Montgomery County

On November 18th, MCRPA members had the opportunity to attend an insightful Lunch & Learn event featuring Kim Jones, Executive Director of the Montgomery County Black Collective.

The session provided attendees with valuable information about resources and programs available to entrepreneurs in Montgomery County, including the AMBER Business Coaching program, business coaching opportunities, and other initiatives designed to support sustainable business growth.

A standout topic of the event was the AMBER Business Coaching program, a flag-

ship initiative by the Montgomery County Black Collective. This program offers technical assistance, individualized coaching, and subject matter expertise to small and minority-owned businesses. Key features of the program include weekly management strategies to enhance business operations, monthly group mindfulness sessions aimed at promoting sustainable growth and best practices, and a collaborative entrepreneurial ecosystem fostering continuous learning and development.

In partnership with the Montgomery County Government and other business advancement organizations, the AMBER program focuses on empowering its Fel-

lows to build stronger, more sustainable organizations. Through a mix of tailored coaching, strategic accountability, and measurable performance indicators, it equips participants with the tools they need to thrive in competitive markets.

The Montgomery County Black Collective is committed to raising awareness, fostering active engagement, and advocating for equitable access to resources addressing racial equity and social justice in the realms of business and capital development.

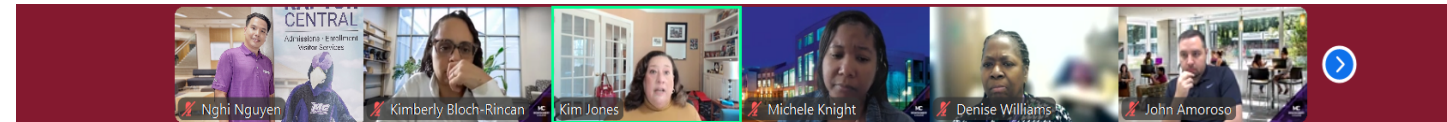
Kim Jones is a co-founder and Executive Director of the Montgomery County Black Collective. In addition to her work with the Collective, Kim serves as Adjunct Faculty at Montgomery College, where she leads

initiatives for the Nonprofit Training Institute. Her prior role as CEO of the Nonprofit Village saw her designing capacity-building and shared service programs to support charitable organizations.

Kim holds a B.A. from Spelman College and is a Licensed Consultant for the National Standards for Excellence. Her professional credentials include certification as a proposal writer and Governance Educator through BoardSource, further underscoring her dedication to excellence and leadership in the nonprofit and business sectors.



Lunch Bunch: Professional Headshots Day with MCRPA



Activities

- 16-week program
- Pre- and Post-assessments
- Weekly one-on-one coaching
- Monthly group sessions
- Subject experts in banking, marketing, finance, legal, human resources, and risk management
- Tools and resources in the county business ecosystem
- Access to procurement, grant and capital resource experts
- Assistance with business and marketing plans, capabilities statements
- Opportunities to increase visibility
- Goals and key performance indicators
- Cash awards

MCRPA's first Lunch Bunch event of the year was a perfect blend of networking and fun, bringing members together for a relaxing afternoon of food, conversation, and community. The event provided a great opportunity for everyone to reconnect, share updates, and enjoy each other's company while indulging in a delicious spread of food, sweet treats, and drinks.

In addition to the socializing and camaraderie, attendees had the special opportunity to get professional headshots taken by our talented photographers, Dr. Christine Crefton and John Amoroso. These headshots were offered free of charge,

providing a valuable chance for members to update their professional portfolios with high-quality photos.

The event saw a fantastic turnout, and word quickly spread about the free headshot opportunity, prompting a few additional guests to join us and take advantage of this professional perk.

If you missed this opportunity, don't worry. We are considering hosting another headshot session during the spring semester, so keep an eye out for announcements and be sure to mark your calendar.



Donate with Governance to The Spiffy Closet!

What is The Spiffy Closet?

The Spiffy Closet, a student-driven initiative, offers Montgomery College students access to professional and casual attire at no cost. They strive to empower students in their pursuit of meaningful employment by equipping them with suitable attire for pivotal moments like job interviews, significant events, and everyday use.

Their ultimate goal is to boost confidence among students by addressing their fundamental clothing needs and offering a diverse selection of options for all occasions, without any financial burden.



Learn More by visiting [Spiffy Closet](#) or by scanning the QR Code.



MCRPA was established in 2011 as an employee resources group. We collectively seek out opportunities to learn and grow as individuals and as burgeoning professionals. Our members are enthusiastic supporters of Montgomery College's mission and community. If you have a desire to get involved and participate in hands-on personal and professional development activities, networking, and community service, you are a perfect fit for MCRPA.

Each MCRPA member plays an important role in our structure. Because our activities directly result from our members' shared interests, we encourage our members to engage with MCRPA programming. Members determine the intensity and time commitment of their involvement. We realize that members have other commitments, both personal and professional. Explore our committees, events, membership and leadership team. MCRPA always welcomes suggestions for new roles and/or committees.

Join MCRPA - <https://www.montgomerycollege.edu/offices/mcrpa>

Contact Us - mcrpa@montgomerycollege.edu

In-Person Donations at Spiffy Closet
Wednesdays, 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Rockville Campus
Computer Science Building (CS), Room 106

Donation Collection Locations

Governance has set up spaces for you to donate items at any time throughout the week at different MC locations:

Central Services

Stephanie Krasnoff, E431R
 Ramon De La Cruz, S212A

Rockville

Nghi Nguyen, MK 342G
 Eric Scharf, MK 315E

Germantown

Rebecca Razavi and
 Eunice Melo, PK Lobby

Takoma Park/Silver Spring

Javon Inman, ST 314
 Lisa Evans, ST Student Services

Gaithersburg Business Training Center

Margarita Silva, Nelida Andres,
 John Amoroso, GBTC 400



