

# MCRPA DIGEST

February 2025

## From Snowy Roads to Warm Hearts: Spring Semester Social Hours

Vision Boarding with MS Whiteboard  
Social Hours at Kabuto  
90-Day Check-In Crew







# 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  
Nghii 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

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

- Chats with the Chief, February 11, 12:00-1:00 p.m., Zoom
- Valentine's Day Origami and Sweets, February 13, 2:00-3:00 p.m., Rockville Campus
- Staff Enrichment Day, March 19, 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., Germantown Campus
- National Poetry Month, April 2, 2:00-3:00 p.m., Zoom
- Five Weeks of Fun, April-May
- 10th Annual MCRPA Retreat (Music, Food, Travel), May

**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.

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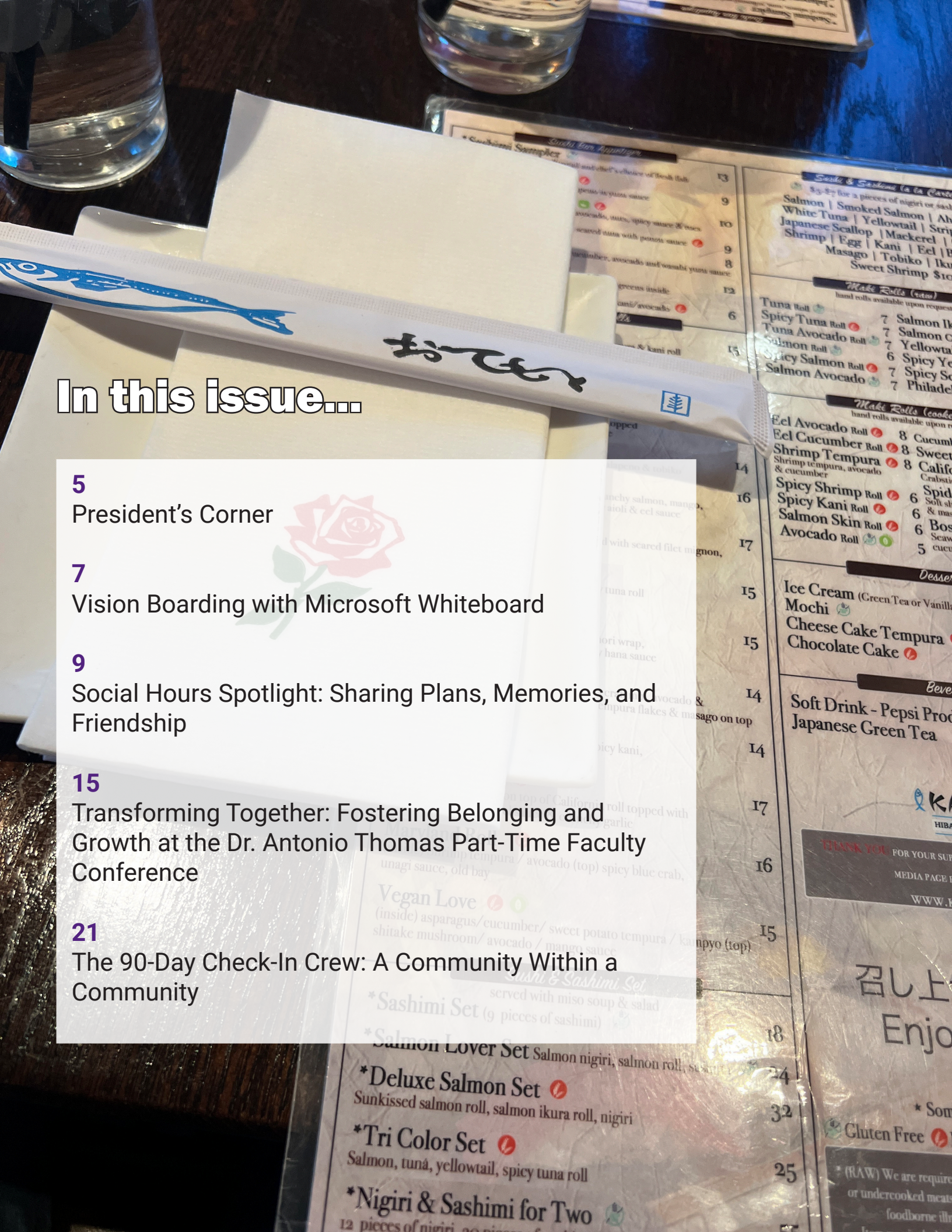
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## President's Corner

As we step into February, I want to reflect on what an incredible start to the year we've had! January was a month full of inspiration, connection, and growth for MCRPA.

We kicked things off with Super Staff Tuesday, where Nghi and I presented on the power of visualization through vision boarding using Microsoft Whiteboard. It was a powerful session that left participants feeling energized and focused.

MCRPA and MC Pride and Allies partnered to host a table at the Part-Time Faculty Institute on January 18th. Thanks to John Amoroso's fantastic elevator speech, we welcomed new members to our community—a reminder of the importance of sharing our mission with others. We also hosted a session on the *10 Faces of Innovation*, creating a space to explore creativity and teamwork. It was a great opportunity to engage with part-time faculty, who often split their time between institutions and need more ways to connect and "find their people."

And who could forget the social hour at Kabuto last week? These informal meet-ups are such a great way to unwind, connect with one another, and share laughs in a relaxed environment.

As we look to February, I'm excited for what's ahead! From our signature in-person origami event to a special edition Super Staff Tuesday featuring *Chats with Dr. Shinta Hernandez* and a hands-on training



session on CPR/AED offered as part of a partnership with MC Wellness, there's something for everyone.

I am so thankful for your talents, leadership, and dedication to MCRPA. This year's theme, *Community Starts Here!* rings true as we continue to grow together this spring semester. Don't forget to mark your calendars for our 10th Annual Retreat on May 29th—it's an event you won't want to miss! Be sure to email me directly if you want to be on the planning committee.

Thank you for being part of this amazing community. Here's to another month of connection, productivity, and growth.

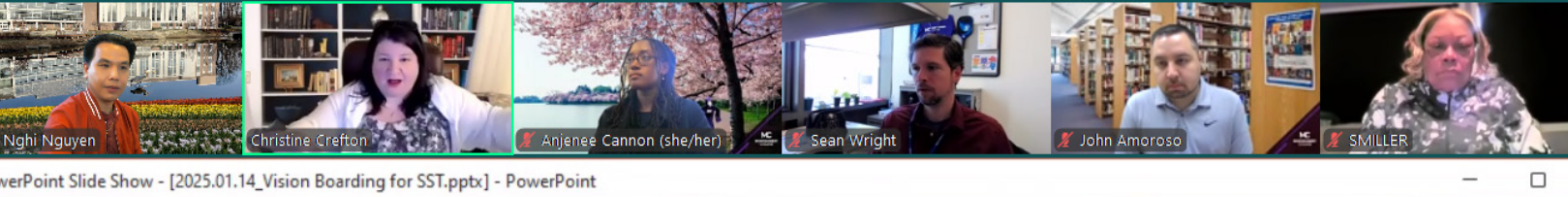
Dr. Christine Crefton, President

## Chats with the Chief featuring Dr. Shinta Hernandez

February 11  
12:00-1:00 p.m.  
Zoom







## Vision Boarding with Microsoft Whiteboard

MCRPA and ELITE teamed up to host another engaging Super Staff Tuesday event, Vision Boarding with Microsoft Whiteboard. Facilitated by Dr. Christine Crefton and Nghi Nguyen, this workshop invited participants to tap into their creativity and place their aspirations front and center.

During this one-hour interactive session, Dr. Crefton led a reflective and inspiring journey, helping participants explore their personal goals, dreams, and ambitions. Once the creative ideas were flowing, Nghi Nguyen introduced the group to Microsoft Whiteboard, a versatile digital tool perfect for bringing vision boards to life. With its vibrant and dynamic features, Microsoft Whiteboard empowers users to design

motivational boards that keep them focused and on track.

After the presentations, participants had the opportunity to create their own vision boards using Microsoft Whiteboard. A few shared their boards with the group, receiving thoughtful feedback and encouragement. For instance, one participant aimed to embrace a healthier lifestyle, while another expressed a desire to travel more.

If you missed this session, don't worry—there might be another opportunity to join this inspiring and interactive workshop in the future!

**Valentine's Day**  
**Origami and Sweets**  
February 13  
2:00-3:00 p.m.  
Rockville Campus



# Social Hours Spotlight: Sharing Plans, Memories, and Friendship





It might have been cold outside, but it was warm and welcoming inside Rockville Kabuto restaurant, where several MCRPA members gathered after a busy workday for our Spring Social Hours event.

The table was filled with delicious food, and the conversations were as lively as ever. Over the course of two wonderful hours, we shared stories, learned new things about each other, and enjoyed the camaraderie.

One highlight of the evening was Christine sharing how much she cherishes her Friendship Bracelet.

During our time together, we discussed both personal and professional plans for the year. A few members already have exciting trips lined up, including vacations

in Costa Rica and attending professional conferences this spring.

Others are looking forward to warmer weather after what has been an especially snowy and cold season. While we all agreed we love the snow, we're less enthusiastic about the mess that follows with road salt and ice.

It was a joy to see everyone and spend time together!





EMPLOYEE

# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CATALOG



**#ForwardTogether**

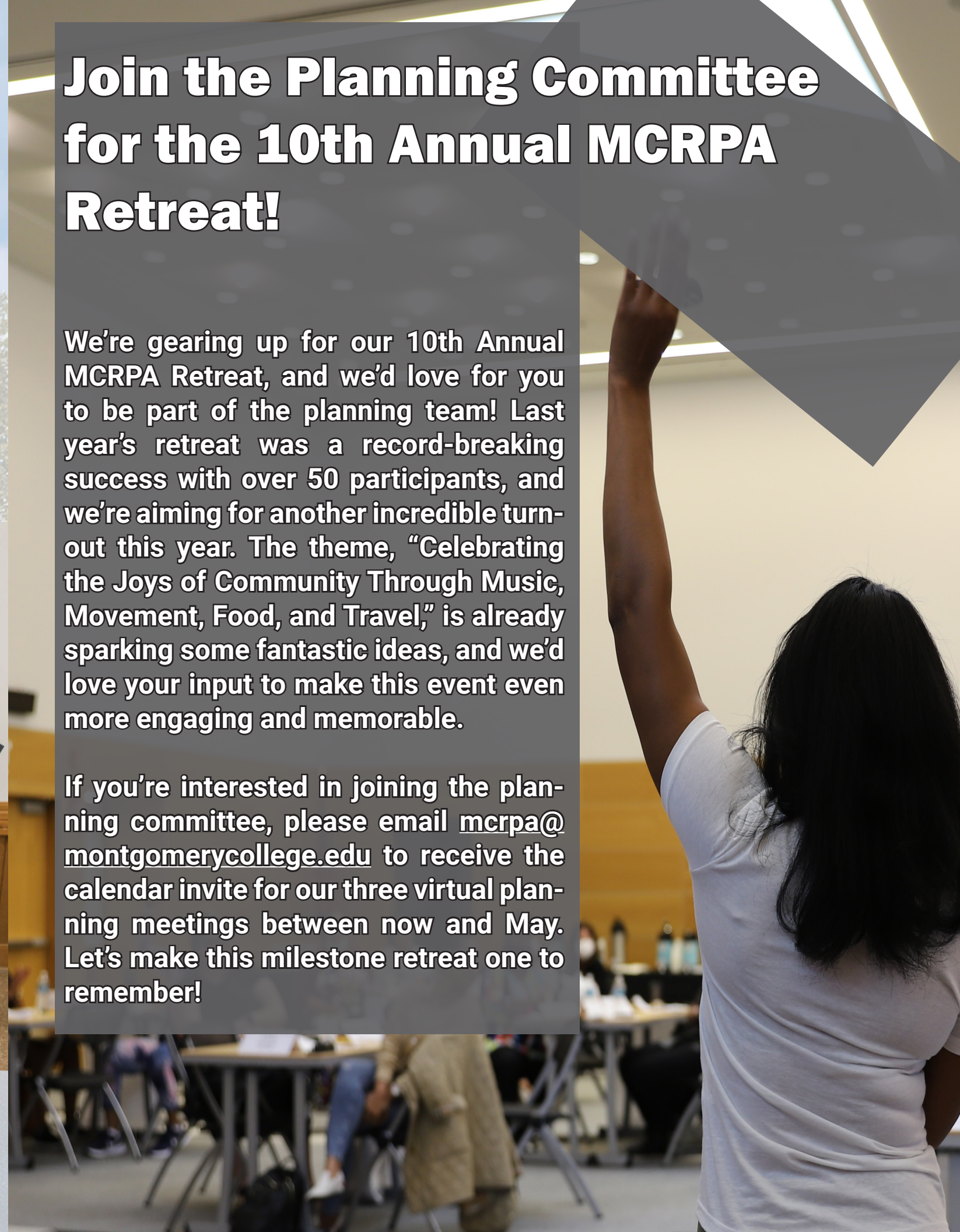
Learning, Working, and Growing Together!

**Spring  
2025**

## Join the Planning Committee for the 10th Annual MCRPA Retreat!

We're gearing up for our 10th Annual MCRPA Retreat, and we'd love for you to be part of the planning team! Last year's retreat was a record-breaking success with over 50 participants, and we're aiming for another incredible turnout this year. The theme, "Celebrating the Joys of Community Through Music, Movement, Food, and Travel," is already sparking some fantastic ideas, and we'd love your input to make this event even more engaging and memorable.

If you're interested in joining the planning committee, please email [mcrpa@montgomerycollege.edu](mailto:mcrpa@montgomerycollege.edu) to receive the calendar invite for our three virtual planning meetings between now and May. Let's make this milestone retreat one to remember!





# Transforming Together: Fostering Belonging and Growth at the Dr. Antonio Thomas Part-Time Faculty Conference





On Saturday January 18, MCRPA had the honor of participating in the Dr. Antonio Thomas Part-Time Faculty Conference: Transforming Together, a day dedicated to fostering belonging and growth for part-time faculty at Montgomery College. As part-time faculty often juggle responsibilities across multiple institutions, creating a sense of community and belonging for them is essential—and MCRPA is committed to that mission.

In the atrium, MCRPA partnered with MC Pride and Allies to host a table where we shared mints, friendship bracelets, and conversations about the value of connection and the benefits of membership. Part-time faculty are vital members of the

College community, and we hope our outreach helped inspire a stronger sense of belonging.

The conference also highlighted the amazing work of two MCRPA members who are Shoenberg Fellows:

- **Professor Wyckham Avery**, a Film instructor and member of MC Pride and Allies, presented on their fellowship project, *Nonbinary Representation in Media*. This innovative research uses surveys, interviews, and case studies to explore the authenticity and audience reception of gender-fluid characters in media. With an online resource hub and actionable guidelines for content creators, Wyckham's







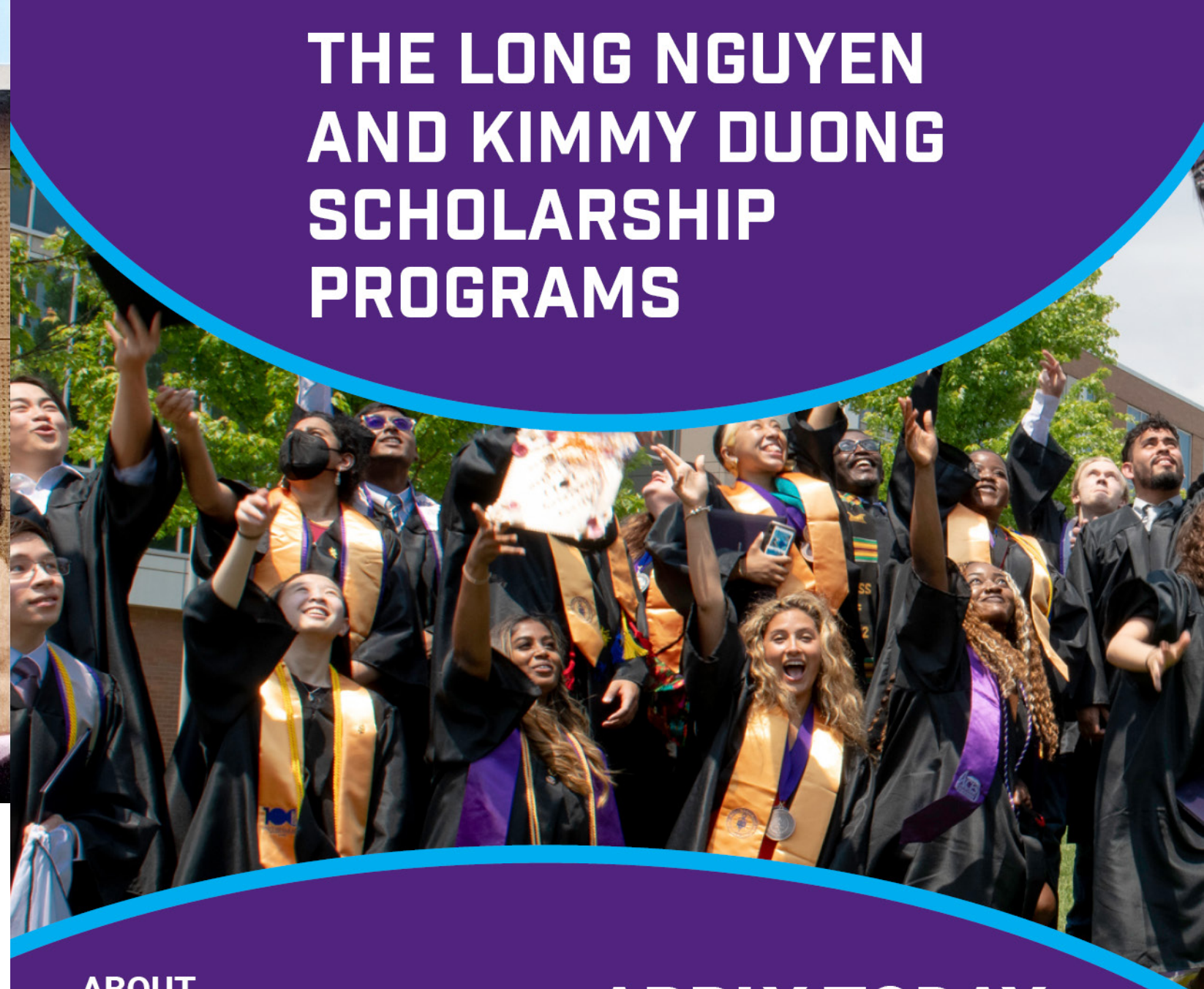
work is advancing inclusive storytelling and deepening cultural understanding.

• Professor Erika Bucciantini, a Latin and Humanities instructor, shared her project, *Rome on the Potomac: The Legacy of Imperial Architecture*. Collaborating with MC's Applied Geography Program, Erika created advanced analytical assignments for Latin 102 and developed a StoryMap project exploring how neoclassical architecture shapes the American landscape. Additionally, MCRPA had the pleasure of presenting *Building Community with MCRPA: Exploring the 10 Faces of Innovation*. In this interactive session, participants used LEGO building to see how diverse perspectives and roles spark creativity and drive collaboration. The activity

demonstrated how our unique strengths can create extraordinary outcomes, reinforcing MCRPA's commitment to fostering innovation and connection.

The conference exemplifies MCRPA's mission to build community and support part-time faculty in meaningful ways. With events like these, we aim to create spaces where we all feel seen, valued, and heard. As our theme this year is, Community Starts Here! we are doing our part to shape MC into an even more inclusive and supportive environment. Thank you for the opportunity and to everyone who joined us, shared their talents, and engaged in this transformational day.

# THE LONG NGUYEN AND KIMMY DUONG SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMS



## ABOUT

The Long Nguyen and Kimmy Duong Scholarship Program is for undergraduate students enrolled in Washington, DC area institutions. These undergraduate scholarships are available to all US Citizens and permanent residents.

Each undergraduate scholarship will be \$1,000, \$2,000 or \$3,000 annually. The scholarship is renewable annually for up to 4 years, for students who are pursuing a bachelor degree.

## APPLY TODAY



Visit website to learn more about the scholarship programs including eligibility requirements.





## The 90-Day Check-In Crew: A Community Within a Community

At the 8th Annual MCRPA Retreat in May 2023, Dr. Paul Miller inspired participants with a keynote address challenging us to consider our futures and what to do next. That challenge sparked something special. In partnership with ELITE, MCRPA hosted a fall book club on Jeff Henderson's *What to Do Next*, open to members and the broader MC community.

About 20 participants started the journey together, meeting three times during the fall semester of 2023 to explore the book's lessons. From that initial circle, something extraordinary grew—a commu-

nity within a community. These like-minded individuals decided to meet every 90 days to reflect on their progress, celebrate victories, and plan for what's ahead.

The power of 90 days is that it feels achievable. Unlike a daunting New Year's resolution or an entire year of planning, this cycle is digestible, doable, and deeply meaningful. The reflections allow participants to celebrate their wins and recognize opportunities for growth, fostering a sense of accomplishment and purpose.

What's most remarkable is that while the

ELITE Professional Development team and MCRPA planted the seeds, this group took it upon themselves to nurture and sustain the 90-day check-ins—not out of obligation, but from joy and genuine care for one another. In January 2025, a core group met in person for the first time since starting this journey in August 2023. The gathering was filled with laughter, deep conversations, and a shared sense of support.

This is the essence of community. Across different areas of the college, with varying roles and responsibilities, we found each

other—and now, every 90 days, we come together to uplift and encourage one another. It's a testament to the culture of belonging we strive to create at MC.

If you want to join in, email [mcrpa@montgomerycollege.edu](mailto:mcrpa@montgomerycollege.edu) and we will add you to the calendar invites.



# STAFF ENRICHMENT DAY 2025

*Stronger Together: Transforming Tomorrow*

**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 19**  
**8:00 AM-4:00 PM**  
**GERMANTOWN CAMPUS**



We are currently accepting submissions for Workshop Proposals, Degree/Certificate Attainments, and Staff Distinguished Award Nominations.

**Deadline to submit is Friday, February 7.**



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](mailto:mcrpa@montgomerycollege.edu)





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8:23 AM

Thursday, May 23, 2024

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