

MCRPA DIGEST

October 2024



A Royal Affair: Exploring the Maryland Renaissance Festival in Crownsville

Part-time Faculty Conference

MC Pride & Allies

Ultimate Alaskan Adventure

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
Nghi 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!



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FALL/SPRING EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

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

- Coffee & Connections (First Faculty Fridays), October 4, 10:30-11:30 a.m., Zoom
- What Type of Leader Are You (Super Staff Tuesdays), October 8, 10:00-11:00 a.m., Zoom
- Halloween Fright Day, Tuesday, October 22, 3:00-4:00 p.m., via Zoom
- Summer Farms Family Event (\$), Saturday, October 26, 5:00-10:30 p.m.
- Chats with the Chiefs with Susan Madden, November 12, 1:00-2:00 p.m.
- Lunch Bunch (MCRPA Headshot Day), Thursday, November 14, 12:00-1:45 p.m., Rockville Campus
- Seasonal Sendoff Potluck, Thursday, December 5, 12:00-2:00 p.m., Rockville Campus
- 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



What a fantastic start to the fall season! Our first social hour at Kabuto was such a success, with many new faces joining us. It was great to see folks from across campuses, including those dedicated enough to make the trek from Takoma Park to Rockville (although, I'm sure the half-price sushi didn't hurt either!). It was wonderful to connect and see the friendships growing.

We also had a blast at the Renaissance Festival! The warm weather, touched with a fall breeze, made for a perfect day, and the joust we saw together—possibly the best I've ever witnessed—was truly memorable. If you missed out, don't worry—there is more fun on the way including our classic "pop-up events" or "drop-in activities." Remember, if you've got a great idea for a social or professional development event, don't hesitate to "drop it" in our Teams space. We want your ideas!

Speaking of Professional Development, we've got exciting things coming up! John Amoroso, MMC Chair, will be hosting a Coffee and Connections hour on First Faculty Friday (FFF) with a fun prize drawing to top it off—no, not a car, but something to make your morning! And on Super Staff Tuesday (SST), Karylvetta Acevedo and I will be hosting a virtual session on identifying your leadership type. It's a chance to dive into our leadership strengths and walk away with a new perspective on leadership.

If you're passionate about a topic and want to co-host a session for either FFF or SST, we'd love to collaborate! Reach out to me or anyone on the leadership team—we're excited to share our gifts and support you in expanding yours. Hopefully, by the time this goes to print, you've already received my email following up on your response to the Passion Project. If not, I'm working through the list, so don't worry, it's coming! Thank you to those who participated and answered, there is still time if you want to either update your membership profile, headshot, contact information, bio, and share your passions with us.

Here's to more great moments ahead, and let's keep the momentum going from September into October. Cheers to another amazing month together!

Dr. Christine Crefton
MCRPA President



Social Hours at Kabuto

Kickoff to the Fall Semester

We kicked off the fall semester with our Social Hours event on Thursday, September 19, at Kabuto in Rockville. The evening was a perfect opportunity for members to reconnect after the summer and enjoy a casual and relaxed atmosphere.

Attendees indulged in delicious food while engaging in lively conversations throughout the night. In addition to our members, we were pleased to welcome a few Montgomery College employees who stopped by as our guests, adding to the vibrant mix of people.

For some of our MCRPA members, this Social Hours gathering marked their first event since joining the association. It was wonderful to see new faces and introduce them to our community. We were delighted with the turnout and look forward to seeing everyone at future events.



Join us for our Halloween Fright Day, Tuesday, October 22, 3:00-4:00 p.m., via Zoom.

Time Travel for a Day: Unleashing Our Inner Medieval Spirit at the Renaissance Festival



We set off early on Saturday, September 21st, for our annual trip to the Renaissance Festival in Crownsville, Maryland. This event has become a tradition for us, offering a chance to step back in time and immerse ourselves in a world of medieval fun, food, and festivities. Each year, attendees come dressed in elaborate costumes, embracing the festival's spirit as they wander through a vibrant, historically-inspired village full of excitement.

The Renaissance Festival is always filled with entertainment for all ages, from engaging performances to artisan crafts, and of course, a wide variety of delicious food and drinks. There's something for everyone to enjoy.

Our first stop was the Glass Blowing demonstration, where we watched an expert craftsman create a glass beer cup right before our eyes. It was fascinating to see the intricate process unfold, as the presenter walked us through each step and technique required to shape the glass using the traditional blowing method. Everyone was amazed by the skill and precision involved in this age-old craft.

Next, we attended a captivating falconry show, where the presenter gave an in-depth talk about the world of falcons. Not only did we learn about these majestic birds' incredible intelligence and remarkable vision, but we also had the chance to see the falcons up close. Their keen ability to spot and catch prey was truly impressive, and it was a highlight of the day for many.

Throughout the festival grounds, there were plenty of comedic magicians working their magic—lit-





erally. From making objects vanish and reappear to performing mind-boggling tricks, these talented performers kept everyone guessing and laughing. As always, the challenge of trying to figure out their secrets was part of the fun, though the magicians, of course, never revealed their methods.

No visit to the Renaissance Festival would be complete without indulging in some classic festival fare. We savored our favorite giant turkey legs and enjoyed a few refreshing drinks, soaking in the lively atmosphere around us.

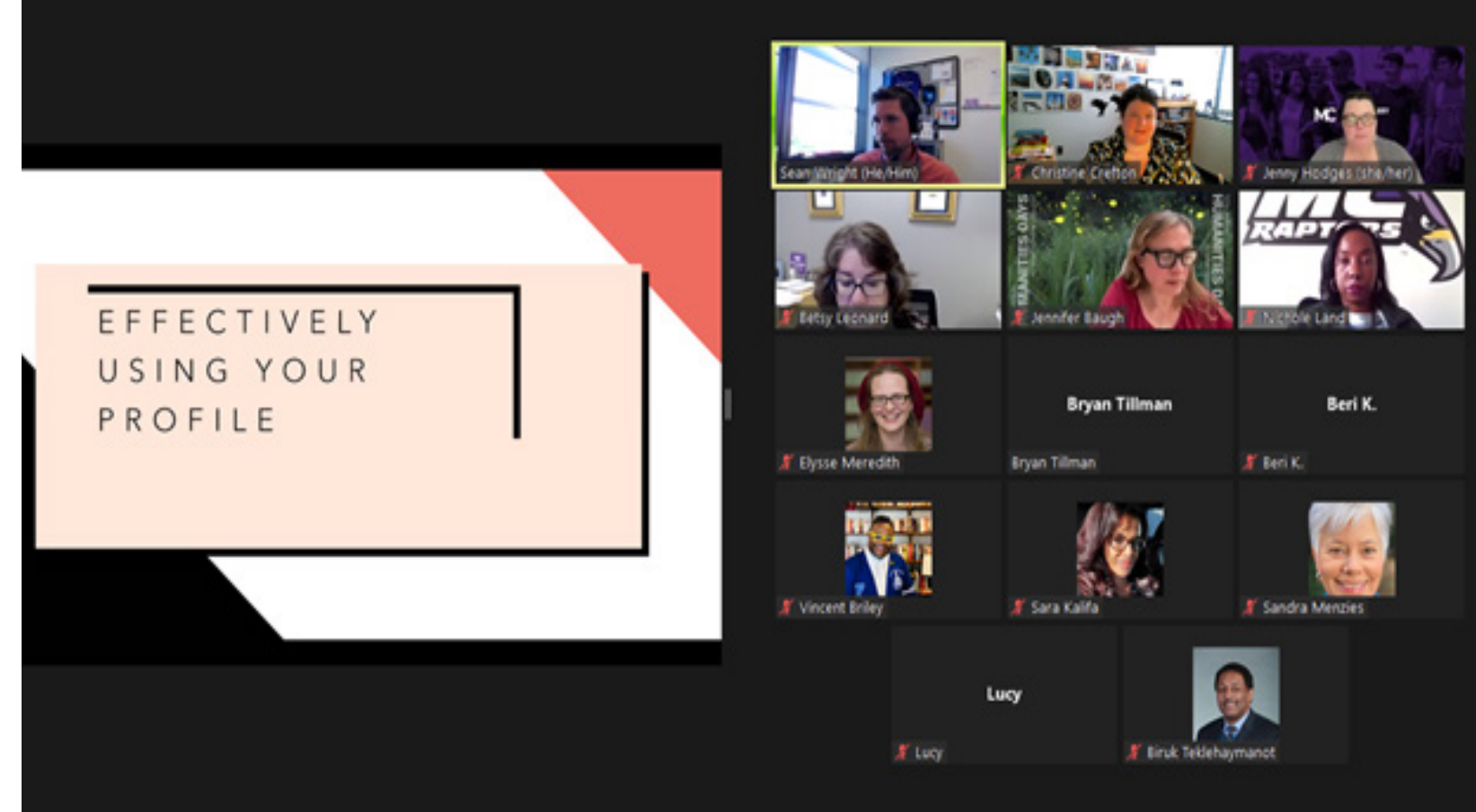
Unfortunately, for those hoping to attend later this year, the event is completely sold out for the remaining dates. But rest assured, this year's festival delivered an unforgettable experience, and we're already looking forward to the next one!

Governance Training

On Thursday, August 29, elected members of Montgomery College Governance gathered for the annual training in preparation for the upcoming governance year, which officially kicked off in September. This important event allowed council members to meet some of the College's Cabinet members, who provided updates on their respective divisions, offering valuable insights into the institution's strategic direction and current initiatives.

A significant number of our MCRPA members have been elected to serve on the councils this year, continuing their commitment to enhancing the College's governance process. While some are just beginning their terms, many are entering their final year on their respective councils. Council members are elected for a term of two years and may be re-elected for another term, giving them the opportunity to contribute even more to the College's decision-making process.

Montgomery College's participatory governance system plays a crucial role in ensuring that all members of the College community—faculty, staff, and students—have a voice in shaping the institution's future. This inclusive approach allows for broad-based input and ensures that important recommendations for institutional improvements are thoroughly considered. It fosters a culture of collaboration, where feedback is valued and incorporated into decisions that impact the entire College. This process not only strengthens the institution but also empowers individuals to actively contribute to the ongoing success and growth of Montgomery College.



Professional Week

MCRPA member Sean Wright delivered an insightful presentation titled “Crafting Connections: LinkedIn Networking” during Professional Week on August 29.

The workshop was designed to help attendees maximize LinkedIn's powerful tools for career advancement. Sean provided a comprehensive overview of how LinkedIn, when used strategically, can be an invaluable platform for professional growth.

During the session, attendees learned actionable strategies to enhance their LinkedIn profiles, making them more attractive to potential employers and industry connections. He emphasized the importance of creating an engaging and authentic online presence, from crafting a compelling headline and summary to showcasing skills and accomplishments effectively.

Sean also covered techniques to increase visibility, such as leveraging keywords, consistently sharing relevant content, and engaging with posts in meaningful ways.



KAISER HEALTH VAN ON CAMPUS

The Kaiser health van will be on campus, 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., on the following dates:

- October 7 - Central Services
- October 21 - Rockville
- October 31 - Germantown
- November 11 - Takoma Park

Flu shots will be free for employees, retirees, and students.

Employees and retirees can schedule a time in advance, but walk-ins will be taken anytime. Students will be drop-in anytime.

Anyone 60 and over will be offered the higher dose flu shot for free.

Kaiser will offer the COVID shot to any Kaiser insurance member.



My First Cruise Adventure

Gigi Papillero

After much persuasion, I finally convinced my husband to embark on a cruise, with a little help from our friends. We chose a 7-day adventure at sea, visiting the stunning destinations of Ocean Cay, Cozumel, and Costa Maya in the last week of August. To say it was an absolute blast would be an understatement—it was pure magic! For once, we felt like royalty, leaving all thoughts of work behind. We danced, partied every night, and watched some shows, immersing ourselves in the cruise life.

As someone from the Philippines, I was thrilled to discover that about 50% of the crew were fellow Filipinos. Their presence added a familiar touch to the experience and instantly connected us. Although we did not purchase drink packages or dine at the specialty restaurants, we were generously treated like VIPs. The crew went above and beyond, offering us drinks from the bar, including fine Italian and French wines. We even had our sommelier! To top it off, they surprised us by preparing a special Filipino dish on our third and fifth nights, which brought us the comforting flavors of home. And the best part? Unlimited meals!

The Filipino hospitality truly shone throughout the entire trip. The crew ensured we were never without food, coffee, or drinks, and warmth and care reminded us of the profound cultural value of treating guests with utmost generosity. Our “kababayans” (compatriots) made this trip unforgettable, and we cannot wait to relive this experience again!



Strengthening Community for Part-Time Faculty with MCRPA

Dr. Antonio Thomas Part-time Faculty Fall 2024 Conference

On August 24, MCRPA members Anna Donohoe and Maria Martinez participated in the Dr. Antonio Thomas Part-time Faculty Fall 2024 Conference. Outside of holding an info table for the association, they also hosted a breakout session called Strengthening Community for Part-Time Faculty with MCRPA.

The breakout session provided the part-time faculty with an engaging hour dedicated to enhancing the sense of community and belonging at Montgomery College. This session is designed to highlight the vital role that networking and relationship-building play in creating a supportive and inclusive workplace.

Perfect for part-time faculty looking to integrate more deeply into MC, they learned how MCRPA can be a valuable resource in their professional journey, help them build meaningful connections, foster a sense of belonging, and confidently navigate the social landscape of their work environment.

By the end of the session, faculty were equipped with insights needed to build a strong, supportive network at Montgomery College, enriching both their professional and personal life.





Dr. Antonio Thomas Part-time
Faculty Conference
Fall 2024
Saturday, August 24th
Ridgely Campus
Theater Arts Arena



Photos taken by
Maria Martinez and
Shinta Hernandez.

The Ultimate Alaskan Adventure: Our Family's Cruise Through Nature's Splendor

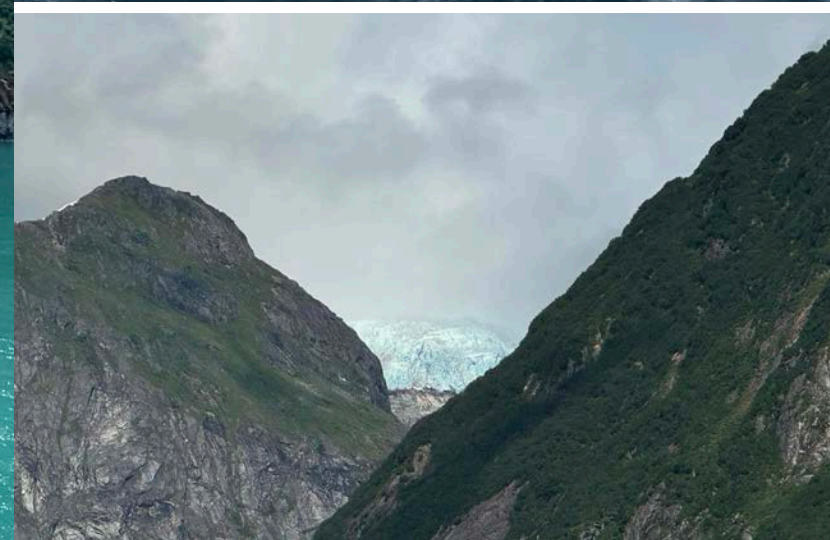
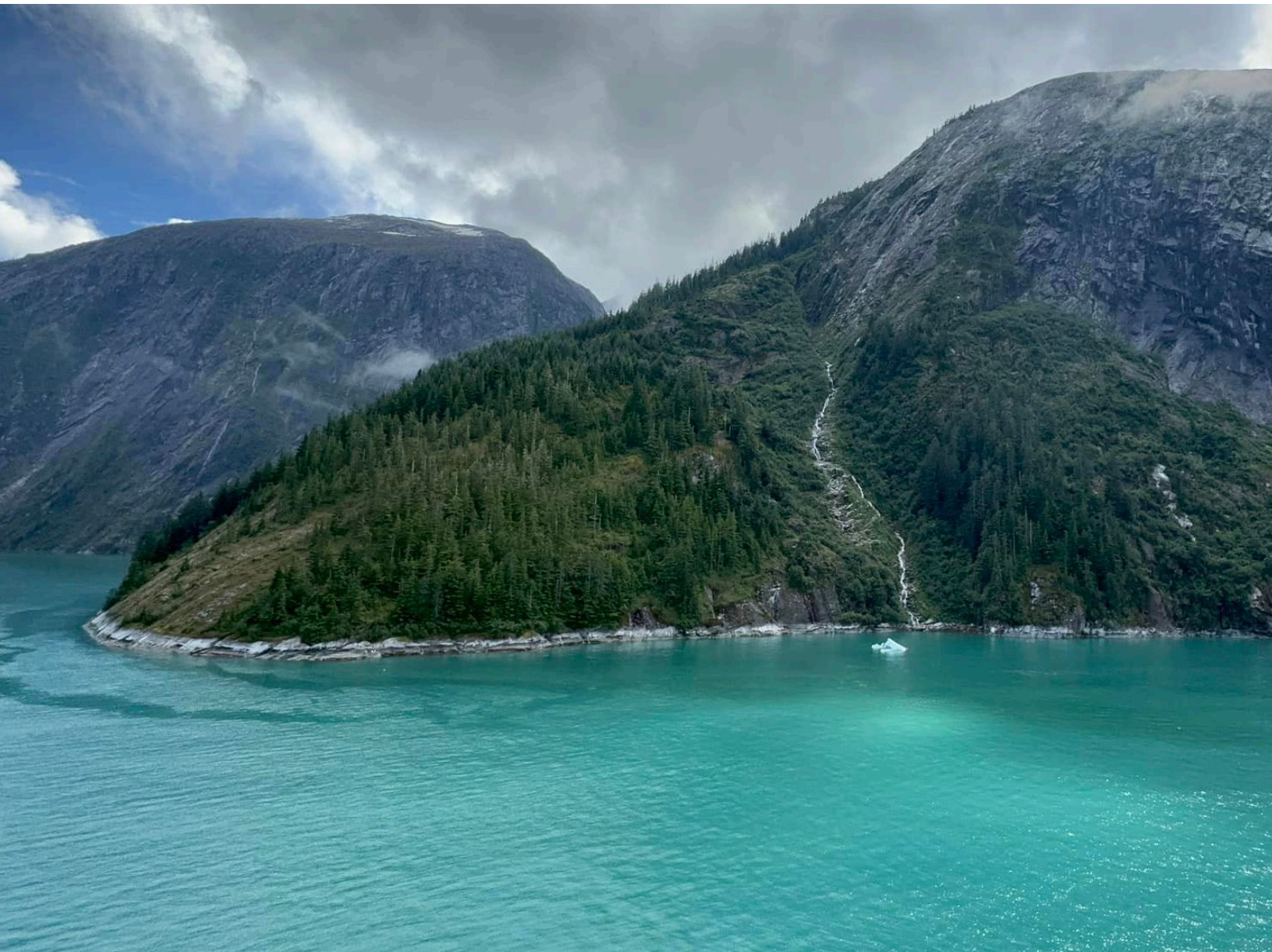
Kaylin Nguyen



In the first week of August, our family embarked on the adventure of a lifetime, setting sail on an unforgettable Alaskan Cruise from Seattle. It had been years since my last visit to Seattle, and for my parents, it was their very first time in the city. The six of us decided to make the most of our stay by exploring as much as we could over three days. We booked a charming Airbnb that felt like a home away from home, and I had the joy of giving my parents a thorough tour of the city. From its iconic landmarks to hidden gems, we soaked in the lively atmosphere, ensuring my parents experienced the best of what Seattle had to offer.

Once our cruise began, we were immediately struck by the natural beauty that unfolded before us. Sailing through the majestic Tracey Arm Fjord was like stepping into a postcard. The fjord's pristine waters, flanked by towering mountains with glaciers perched atop, created a breathtaking scene. Tiny icebergs floated around us, adding to the serene and surreal landscape. It was our first real taste of Alaska's rugged beauty, and we couldn't have asked for a better introduction.

As we approached our first port in Skagway, we were treated to yet another unforgettable moment—seeing humpback whales surfacing near the ship. The sheer size and grace of these magnificent creatures left us in awe, and it became a highlight of the cruise for all of us. Despite the cool, drizzly weather—quite the contrast to the August heat we left behind in Maryland—there was something exhilarating about being surrounded by mountains rising over 4,000 feet high, as mist swirled around their peaks.





Celebrate LGBTQ+ History Month with MC Pride & Allies!

October is LGBTQ+ History Month, and the MC Pride & Allies employee group has several exciting events lined up to celebrate!

October 11th is National Coming Out Day (NCOD), a day dedicated to raising awareness and celebrating the LGBTQ+ community and its allies. NCOD encourages everyone to embrace their true selves, reminding us that LGBTQ+ individuals are a vital part of every community. Keep an eye on your email for more details.

On October 16th, join us for the Women's and Gender Studies Info Fair on the Rockville Campus, from 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM.

Throughout the month, Pride & Allies will host Open House events at the three main campuses:

- Rockville Campus: October 23rd, 11:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.
- Takoma Park/Silver Spring Campus: October 24th, 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.
- Central Services: October 30th, 11:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.
- Germantown Campus October 31st, 11:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Come celebrate authenticity, visibility, and the diversity that make our community so special.

For more details, please visit the MC Pride & Allies website.

<https://www.montgomerycollege.edu/life-at-mc/mc-pride/>

Our adventure continued in Juneau, where we embarked on a Whale Watching excursion that I had been eagerly anticipating. This experience turned out to be even more incredible than I had imagined. Not only did we witness humpback whales up close—so close that I could see the details of their massive bodies as they glided through the water—but we also spotted orcas and seals in their natural habitat. For me, this was a dream come true. I've always longed to see whales up close, and to finally have that moment was beyond anything I could have hoped for. It was truly awe-inspiring and an emotional experience that I'll cherish forever.

If you've ever dreamed of taking an Alaskan Cruise, I can't recommend it enough. The rugged beauty, the wildlife, and the feeling of being so immersed in nature make it a once-in-a-lifetime journey. While we might not take the trip again—mostly because of the high cost—it was worth every penny. The memories we created on that trip, the experiences we shared as a family, and the breathtaking sights we witnessed will stay with us for the rest of our lives.





MCRPA Digest Submissions

Submit Your Story - <https://forms.office.com/r/LaDw2Qa9wZ>

Have an adventure, experience, or insight to share? Whether it's a memorable trip, a conference, or a standout program from your department, we'd love to feature your story in our upcoming Digest. Your experiences are what make our community vibrant, so don't hesitate to share your journey with us!

Share Your Wins/Accomplishments - <https://forms.office.com/r/2TTGq-sjE7s>

Achieved something remarkable this year? Whether you've earned a degree or certificate, launched an innovative program, or reached a personal milestone, we want to celebrate your success! Share your accomplishments with us, and let's inspire others with your story.

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



SCIENCE EDUCATION C

MC
MONTGOMERY
COLLEGE