

# MCRPA Member Spotlight

## MC Pride & Allies Honoring Diversity and Inclusion During Pride Month & Beyond

**Share your experiences as an LGBTQ+ Student at MC!**

You're eligible if you:

- Are a current or former MC student
- Identify as LGBTQ+
- Are at least 18 years old

The information collected will be used to make recommendations for improving support at LGBTQ+ students for Montgomery College. The survey is anonymous, completely voluntary, and takes about 2 minutes to fill out. For more information, please visit [www.montgomerycollege.edu](https://www.montgomerycollege.edu)

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MONTGOMERY COLLEGE  
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Proud and Proud to be Proud

PROTECT  
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Share your experiences  
as an LGBTQ+  
Student at MC!

Share your experiences  
as an LGBTQ+  
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SCAM ALERT



Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ+) Pride Month is celebrated each year in June to honor the Stonewall Riots, which occurred on June 28, 1969, in New York City. These riots began when police raided the Stonewall Inn, a gay club in Greenwich Village. The Stonewall Riots served as a catalyst for the gay rights movement in the United States and around the world.

Today, Pride celebrations are an important marker of the progress made by the LGBTQ+ community and a recognition of the ongoing fight for equality.

At Montgomery College, MC Pride & Allies is a dedicated group of employees committed to creating a welcoming environment for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, intersex, asexual (LGBTQIA+) employees, students, and allies. Many MCRPA members are actively involved in the group, including Anna Donohoe, who serves as chair, Kaylin Nguyen as vice chair, and Megan Cooperman as secretary.

MC Pride & Allies' vision and goals include (a) offering safe and welcoming spaces for LGBTQIA+ employees and allies to connect and support each other; (b) serving as a resource for LGBTQIA+ students and allies seeking information and guidance; (c) affirming the urgent need for defending/supporting LGBTQIA+ people in our College community and beyond; and (d) affirming the continuing need for Safe Zone, Bystander, and Consent training.

Some Pride & Allies members point out that being part of the group has enhanced their sense of belonging and community at Montgomery College.

“Being part of MC Pride & Allies has made me feel comfortable expressing my true identity,” says Kaylin. “My favorite thing about the group is the dedication of every member to supporting LGBTQIA+ students and employees.”

“I joined MC Pride and Allies to Connect, to Learn, and to Grow,” says Roberta Buckberg, who is a long-time ally of the LGBTQIA+ com-



*Each semester, MC Pride & Allies hosts Open House events across all three main campuses, providing employees and students with the opportunity to meet our members and access resources that support the LGBTQ+ community at the College.*

*Visitors to the table can learn about the group's latest projects and enjoy some treats.*



munity. “And I’ve been embraced, mentored, and blossomed. That’s just what this group does.”

In 2021, MC Pride & Allies collaborated with the Office of E-Learning, Innovation, and Teaching Excellence (ELITE), the Office of Equity and Inclusion (OEI), and Safe Zones trainer Dr. Ellen Olmstead to revamp and reintroduce Safe Zone Trainings as we returned to in-person operations. Since then, over 300 Montgomery College employees have completed the Safe Zone training.

Pride & Allies member Ramon Valenzuela, who is also in MCRPA, describes the group using the lyrics from the song “Chosen Family” by Rina Sawayama and Elton John.

*“We don’t need to be related to relate. We don’t need to share genes or a surname. You are, you are, my chosen, chosen family. So, what if we don’t look the same? We’ve been going through the same thing. Yeah, you are, you are my chosen, chosen family.”*

“MC Pride & Allies has given me a connection to people from all over the college in different departments/offices/campuses – both new people and long-time employees that have strengthened my feelings for MC and my work family,” adds Roberta.

In 2023, MC Pride & Allies planned several on-campus events to celebrate Pride Month, including an Open House and a Guest Speaker Series. They also hosted a virtual celebration in the fall semester for National Coming Out Day, along with various social events for group members.

During the spring semester, the group hosted early Pride Kickoff Open Houses on all three campuses and virtually in April and May to maximize participation from students and faculty who are not on campus over the summer. Our Board Games and Pizza Night was a big success, attended by several members of both MCRPA and MC Pride & Allies.

For Pride Month 2024, several events are sched-

uled both at the College and in the community. MC Pride & Allies invites you to join us in celebrating Pride Month with our employees, students, and community members.

- MC Pride & Allies will be hosting an information booth at the Rockville Town Square Pride Festival on Sunday, June 2, 2:00-5:00 p.m. thanks to the generous sponsorship of the Office of Equity and Inclusion.

- On Wednesday, June 5, 12:30-2:00 p.m., join the group as they hold a virtual panel discussion on Coming Out 101.

- Finally, Dr. Lucinda Grinnell will present the results of her survey on LGBTQIA+ Student Experiences at MC on Wednesday, June 26, 2:00-3:00 p.m.

There are many ways for you to get involved

with MC Pride & Allies throughout the month of June and beyond.

For more information on how to join or to sign up for the group’s email distribution list, please visit their website at <https://www.montgomery-college.edu/life-at-mc/mc-pride> or email [prideandallies@montgomerycollege.edu](mailto:prideandallies@montgomerycollege.edu).

Happy Pride!



*MC Pride & Allies hosts Game Night for members to gather, play games, and enjoy snacks and refreshments.*

*Their first game night of the spring semester featured a presentation on Bau Cua Ca Cop (Gourd, Crab, Fish, Tiger), a popular Vietnamese Lunar New Year (Tet) gambling game enjoyed by people of all ages.*



*Photos of MC Pride & Allies Open House in 2023.*

*MC Pride and Allies knows that inclusivity, acceptance, and understanding are essential in supporting LGBTQIA+ individuals. It is not just about tolerance but actively creating spaces and opportunities that affirm and celebrate the unique identities and experiences within the LGBTQIA+ community. This can be achieved through targeted programs, policies, and initiatives that address their specific challenges and needs. Let's explore some of the best ways to support the LGBTQIA+ community.*

# Montgomery College Rising Professionals Association (MCRPA)

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)

