

Featured MCRPA Spotlight Member – January 2020



Elyse Meredith

How long have you worked at Montgomery College, and what is your current role?

I started at MC in 2015 as a part-time tutor in the Germantown Writing, Reading, and Language Center. I became a full-time Instructional Associate in the WRL Center in 2016, and I am currently serving as the center's interim manager.

What is your favorite thing about working at MC?

The students! Our students are passionate, driven, and dedicated, and they come to us with a wealth of knowledge, experiences, and perspectives. I love hearing their struggles, triumphs, and unique stories, and they inspire me to do better on daily basis.

What is your favorite quote?

“When I was a boy and I would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me, ‘Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping.’” – Fred Rogers.

What are you currently passionate about?

Languages—though that's more of an ongoing passion! I learned nine historical and modern languages in college and graduate school, and I keep trying to pick up new ones. I've attempted to learn at least fifteen languages, but I'm starting to lose track! Right now I'm trying to learn Arabic, Turkish, and Hawaiian through Duolingo. After those, I would like to learn more ASL. Don't expect me to speak any of them, though—I'm only truly fluent in English! I am also passionate about English dialects and languages with their roots in historical English since I spent my childhood around Hawaiian Pidgin and my graduate school years around Scots. Because of this, I'm particularly passionate about helping our linguistically diverse students develop their own unique voice.

What hobby would you get into if time and money were not an issue?

I would raise sheep and goats! I love goat cheese, and I'm also a knitter, spinner, and weaver, so I would love to run a small hobby farm. I also daydream about buying and reforesting wilderness, but I would need a lot of help, as I have a black thumb!

They say that everyone has a book in them. What would be the title of your book?

An Adventuresome Life without Exaggeration.

What do you want to be remembered for?

Kindness, honesty, and going the extra mile.

What are you interested in that most people haven't heard of?

So many things! I'm fascinated by experimental archaeology, which crosses over with my interest in historical languages and weaving. For example, I'm currently spinning a fleece that I washed myself; I plan to dye it with historic plant dyes and test their colorfastness over a year. Once that's done, I'll dye the rest of the fleece and use it to weave either fabric or tapestry, depending on the colorfastness results.

What is something you think everyone should do at least once in their lives?

Do something that truly scares you; you might find you like it! For instance, in July 2018, I had the opportunity to go rappelling in wet caves. I dislike being wet, I'm not great with small spaces, I have a fear of falling, and I

was really out of shape—so of course I said yes! I will never forget dropping down hundreds of feet into the earth beneath a waterfall, and I would do it again in a heartbeat.

What profession did you want to work in when you were younger?

When I was very little, I wanted to be a zoologist. When I was a teenager, I waffled between architect and graphic designer. Even though I've ended up doing something quite different, I've found myself regularly using the knowledge and skills from exploring those professions in my daily life.