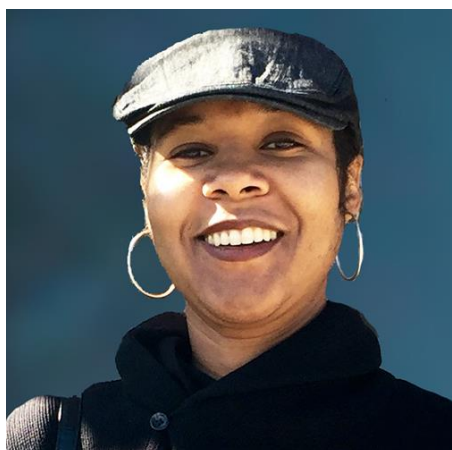


## Featured MCRPA Spotlight Member – December 2019



**Michele Knight**

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

I've worked for Montgomery College since 2006. My current role is an Instructional Designer, where I get to help faculty who want to integrate technology into their teaching.

### **Who inspires you?**

This is super corny but I have the most amazing parents. They are literally like a rural, blue collar version of the Cosby show. My mother is an amazingly beautiful woman who is the most creative woman I have ever met in my life, knows how to turn ten dollars into one-hundred dollars. She's been a small business owner, and is a seamstress who can create fashions from scratch, always immaculately dressed, a fabulous decorator and a cook. My father is sage and practical. He is one of the most

organized people I know, a quality he passed down to me, and he's also very sensible when it comes to finance. My parents gave such a structure and an order to my early days and they are warmhearted and generous now that I'm older. I wouldn't be ½ the person I am without them.

### **What is your favorite thing about working at MC?**

My favorite thing about working at MC is that there is always a sense of renewal. The work we do is very much driven by the seasons. So with the fall semester, you really get to see students excited about their possibilities and buckling down and it is the same with the faculty that I work with, a sense of the chance to start over again, apply new things and be better than ever this year. And towards the end of the academic year in the Spring and Summer there is the culmination of accomplishment. Every year there is a chance to start over and be better than ever before and this is one of the few professions where you can say that. And I feel like the work we do makes a difference in our lives and the community around us. I definitely feel that education was a game changer for me, and I see this play out repeatedly in our college community, in the lives of the faculty and the lives of the students as well.

### **How long have you been in your current profession?**

I have been in my current profession since 2006, and working for higher education since 2001. When I say it like that, it seems like a lifetime, but it feels like just yesterday that I began my career and things have changed so much, especially on the multimedia side, how much easier it is to create audio, and video, and other projects than it was in the early days. Students would never believe how difficult it used to be, whereas I'm sure a lot of our faculty do remember what it was like, with 100 MB Zip Drives, and Removable hard drives the size of a large paperback, and these were very costly if you needed to work with big files!

### **What are you currently passionate about?**

I am currently passionate about music production. I create and produce my own music for pleasure. It combines two of my great interests, music and technology. We have the most impressive gear imaginable nowadays available on a laptop, a whole bank of instruments that would have required Stevie Wonder or Jimmy Jam and Terry Lewis to rent a huge, expensive recording studio, and it is there for us and can be unlocked with keyboards, and software costing less than a few hundred dollars.

### **When people come to you for help, what do they usually want help with?**

That one is almost a no-brainer. Here on this campus, they usually want help with Blackboard or using technology. In my personal life, the questions are normally about music, investing, fashion, or technology.

**Who has impressed you most with what they've accomplished?**

Who has impressed me the most with what they've accomplished? I had a different answer for this and I changed my answer because I think it's important that no matter what we've done, we do it with a sense of dignity and grace. And so I have to say that Oprah has impressed me the most with what she's done. She has done so much with so little and come from a background where you would be amazed at what she's been able to accomplish. She's built an empire she's gone from being a simple newscaster on a local television station and building an entire empire employing hundreds of people. But what she does, she does it with a sense of dignity and a sense of do no harm and she has added so much to the world to America, to people of color, to women. That, I really admire her. I've always been team Oprah.

**Who was your idol growing up?**

Easy question for me. I've had a ton of idols over the years but when I was a kid, my number one idol was R&B singer Anita Baker. For absolute sure. I still love Anita Baker immensely. Have seen her in concert, like maybe eight times. Been up the front a good number of those times. I have a t-shirt that says raised on Anita Baker and that describes it quite well. My father used to play her first cassette tape (showing my age) Rapture, when I was in the first grade, and it must have resonated with me, because I completely stole Anita from him. I was a little kid and could sing all those songs. I'd always do her in talent shows. Even at our family reunion this year, I couldn't wait to get up to the karaoke machine to sing poorly done Anita Baker covers.

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

When I was younger I wanted to be an Author. I still fancy myself a writer and I do work on novels, poetry, and short stories in my spare time.

**What do you enjoy the most about MCRPA?**

What I love about MCRPA is the community. MCRPA provides so much community to the members. The college is a big place and it is so heartwarming and refreshing to be involved in this self-grown organization where you are shoulder to shoulder with so many colleagues that you would never mingle with otherwise. Friendships are forged within our group and it means wherever I walk on each of our campuses, I never feel alone!