



Nik Sushka

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1. **What is your role at Montgomery College?**

I am the Rockville campus service-learning coordinator. I lead programs like our collegewide Impact MC Leadership program, MC Votes, Alternative Summer Break, and service-learning projects in and out of the classroom for the Rockville campus.

2. **How long have you been in your current profession?**

I've been in Higher Education for almost 15 years, worked at MC from 2009-2010, and then came back in 2012. And I just learned there's a nickname for MC employees who do that—Boomerangs!

3. **How do you define success?**

Success for me is growth. Personal or professional growth for me is all about self-reflection, taking on new challenges, and pushing myself to do something that wasn't possible before.

4. **What do you enjoy most about Montgomery College students?**

What I enjoy most about MC students is that, whatever their academic and professional goals, I am working with them at crucial stages in their lives. That's an exciting moment to be sharing with people, and I really appreciate being able to connect students to the resources and people that will help make that happen. For example, this past summer I helped an Alternative Summer Break participant apply for the Maryland State Delegate Scholarship Program, for which she received \$4,000. She texted me later that she felt a huge weight had been lifted off her shoulders as a result of that scholarship, and she was so excited to transfer to UMD now that she could truly afford it. Helping students take those steps towards their dreams—that's what I enjoy most.

5. **What are you currently passionate about?**

I'm passionate about removing barriers that prevent students from making the most of MC. Too many don't have the time, resources, or even belief in their own abilities, so they don't sign up for a leadership program, or a service-learning project, or a student club. Too many don't know about possibilities like paid internships, off campus federal work study, on campus service-learning courses, or academic clubs that will help them pass their math courses or apply for scholarships or attend professional conferences. Beyond that, I'm passionate about making sure that our students are able to fully participate in their communities: economically, socially, and civically. That's the only way I believe we will ever have communities that are equitable, healthy, safe, and happy. So I am passionate about helping create a College and a community where that is a possibility for everyone.

6. **What is one goal you hope to achieve this year?**

One goal I have this year is to support MC's Complete Count efforts for the 2020 Census. Every ten years, the U.S. constitution mandates that we make a good-faith effort to count every person who is currently living in the country. These population counts help us distribute resources, plan for successful communities, create Congressional and legislative districts for political representation, and much more. For every person who isn't counted, Montgomery County loses an estimated \$18,250 every 10 years. There have been efforts to stop people from being fully counted in almost every Census, dating all the way back to our country's first one. For some, being fully counted and fully represented is an act of resistance. So I have the goal to engage as many students, faculty, and staff as I can, to help our entire MC community—and our family, friends, and neighbors, too—be fully counted and help shape the future of our community as a result.

7. **What is your favorite quote?**

I have a lot of them, but here are my top three at the moment

"Never forget that justice is what love looks like in public." Cornel West

"Education must not simply teach work—it must teach life." W.E.B. DuBois

"Everyone you will ever meet knows something you do not." Bill Nye

8. **What hobby would you get into if time and money weren't an issue?**

Space flight, but I'd also need to get rid of my terrible motion sickness.

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

I'd write a book called, "I Changed My Mind" . It'd feature the stories of people who have made life-altering decisions, something I've done myself on some pretty big issues. I'd want to tell the stories of nuns who left the convent, former white supremacists getting their racist tattoos removed, butchers who became vegans, so on. I'm fascinated by those people and their stories.

10. **What do you want to be remembered for?**

I want to be remembered for my sense of humor, passion, and impact on the lives of others. I hope that when I'm old—and I hope to be old someday!—I will be able to look back and remember decades of educating and mentoring students, and see the many paths their lives took, and the impact that they have made, in small part because of me, as civil rights lawyers, early childhood educators, entrepreneurs, artists, health care workers, and so on. I feel extraordinarily privileged to have such an influence in the lives of others, and I want to be remembered for the positive influence that I have hopefully had.