

MCRPA Member Spotlight August 2021

Vickie Drake



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

I have worked at Montgomery College since January 2012 in various roles in the library. I am currently the Head Librarian for Health Sciences, Communications, and Special Programs.

How long have you been in your current profession?

Despite attempts through the years to escape, it seems most of my experience has been working in libraries. My first job was a library page (aka shelver) at my local municipal library, and I worked in academic libraries through college. I moved into supervisory library roles starting when I was 20 and

worked my way up from there.

What is your favorite thing about working at MC?

I love the support that MC gives to all its employees, especially in terms of professional development. It is rare, in my experience, that staff are offered the opportunity to have paid time away through the Professional Development Leave to complete a major project similar to what faculty have with their sabbaticals. As well, the College's generous EAP funds allows anyone, no matter their job title, to gain educational credentials. I hope this investment into employees is something that MC never loses.

How do you define success? What does success look like?

Success is something that is entirely personal in my opinion. For some, it might be the ability to pay all your bills each month. To others, it is the ability to be completely accepting and comfortable with themselves. Many of our students may define success as graduating or successfully transferring to another institution. These definitions may grow and change as well throughout life. Once a person has defined what success could be for themselves, then a plan can be devised to achieve that success. Currently, success for me is getting my PhD that I am pursuing with intermediate goals to achieve that (passing my comps and advancing to candidacy, writing and defending my

proposal, completing the study and finishing the dissertation, defending the dissertation, and finally graduating).

What do you enjoy most about Montgomery College students?

I love their diverse experiences and goals. Each student has a unique story that they can tell which can enrich each listener's life if we take the opportunity to discover them. Many have overcome adversity and obstacles to be at MC, and some are persevering despite current challenges. There are other students who just may not be sure of their direction yet and are figuring things out, which was more my story as a young college attendee. I love being able to help students in some small way that makes their lives a bit easier.

What is one goal you hope to achieve this year?

Just one? I have so many things on my to do/goals list: lose this COVID pandemic weight and get in better shape; advance to candidacy and get my proposal read; plan an overseas trip for next year, hopefully!; see my family in Texas, as it has been too long, and I missed some milestone moments due to the pandemic this past year.

What is your favorite quote?

"Good Judgment depends mostly on experience and experience usually comes from poor judgment."

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

Research help! I get to put my library skills to work all the time.

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

Travel internationally, especially to areas off the tourist path. Plan some destinations but wander while you are there. Explore and build in time to really be like a local if possible. Some of my most memorable experiences were completely unplanned.

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

I wanted to be a veterinarian for most of my childhood. I always loved animals and had a variety of pets growing up and wanted to pursue that as a career. I considered everything from zoo veterinarian to big animal veterinary practice.

Where do you see yourself in 10 or 20 years?

In 10 years, I would like to be in a more advanced management role, and I would like to experience some different roles within higher education. I really enjoy advising students and having an impact that is direct to a student's success and might consider teaching part time.

In 20 years, I better be retired or dang close to it!