

# Equity Week 2025

## Schedule of Events

Day 1

Monday, April 7, 2025

### Equity Week Opening Keynote: Cultivating Community with Eric K. Ward

**12–1:30 p.m. | via Zoom**

Join us for the Equity Week Opening Keynote featuring Eric K. Ward, a nationally recognized civil rights leader and racial justice advocate. Through his leadership at Race Forward and co-founding #CultureGuard, he has reshaped national conversations on racial equity, democracy, and social justice. In alignment with this year's theme, "Cultivating Community: Building Connections Across Differences," Ward will share insights on bridging divides, confronting systemic inequities, and fostering inclusive communities. His powerful storytelling and deep expertise will inspire action toward a more just and connected society.

### Leadership and Advocacy for Inclusive Practices: How to Be an Agent of Change Within Your Community facilitated by Jason Green

**2–3 p.m. | via Zoom**

This session is designed to empower participants with the knowledge, tools, and strategies needed to lead and advocate for inclusive practices within their communities. Whether you are a seasoned leader or just starting your journey as a change agent, this session provides actionable insights to help you make a meaningful impact.

### MC Pride and Allies: Supporting the LGBTQIA+ Community at Montgomery College

**3–4:30 p.m. | Hybrid – In-person, Rockville Campus, SV 416 & Virtual via Zoom.**

Join the MC Pride and Allies for a panel of MC employees and students for a meaningful discussion on how faculty, staff, and students can foster an inclusive and supportive environment for the LGBTQIA+ community at MC. Learn about available resources within the College and throughout the county, and explore ways to strengthen connections among LGBTQIA+ students, faculty, staff, and allies. This discussion will also highlight strategies to increase allyship and engagement from the broader MC community.

## The Power of Intersectionality: Exploring the Layered Identities Within Our Community facilitated by Dr. Christine Crefton

**10–11 a.m. | via Zoom**

The Power of Intersectionality is designed to encourage participants to explore the complexities of layered identities within ourselves and examine how these intersecting identities shape our unique experiences and perspectives within our communities. Aligned with the week's theme of "Understanding and Celebrating Differences," this session fosters awareness and dialogue to promote a more inclusive and empathetic environment.

## Equity Walk/Run

**12:30–1:30 p.m. | Rockville Campus Track (In-Person)**

Equity Walk/Run is for Students and all Employees, Spouses, and Retirees.

Come and stay for as little or as long as your schedule permits. Options are to run a 3K or walk. Prizes for fastest running times will be given and raffled off for all attendees. Walk-ins will be accepted; pre-registration is recommended.

If you need accommodations based on a disability, please get in touch with [megan.cooperman@montgomerycollege.edu](mailto:megan.cooperman@montgomerycollege.edu)

## The Power of Empathy: Bridging Divides and Celebrating Differences facilitated by Dr. Sarah Federman

**1:30–2:30 p.m. | via Zoom**

Join Dr. Sarah Federman, author, educator, and conflict resolution practitioner, for an inspiring conversation on the role of empathy in bridging divides while fostering deeper understanding and celebration of differences. Drawing from her experience as a former international executive and her journey into conflict transformation, Dr. Federman will explore how narratives shape our perceptions and interactions. Her work highlights the importance of empathy in transforming conflict and fostering connection, with a particular focus on corporate responsibility and preventing mass violence. Dr. Federman's unique approach blends storytelling, conflict resolution, and personal reflection to encourage participants to challenge their narratives and create space for healing and transformation.

## Effective Communication Across Cultures and Generations & Generational Jeopardy facilitated by Dr. Alexander Jun and Dr. Paul Miller

**10 a.m.–12 p.m. | via Zoom**

Join us for an engaging and interactive session as part of Equity Week, featuring Dr. Alexander Jun and Dr. Paul Miller. This event will explore the complexities of effective communication across cultures and generations, focusing on intersectional identities, ageism, and cultural influences on generational differences. Dr. Jun will lead a thought-provoking discussion, encouraging participants to reflect on how identity and culture shape communication. Following this, Dr. Miller's Generational Jeopardy activity will provide a dynamic and entertaining way to test and expand our understanding of generational differences, misconceptions, and the role of cultural diversity in shaping perspectives.

## Spring Equity Dialogue featuring keynote speaker, Dr. Isis Artze-Vega

**3-4 p.m. | TP/SS Campus, Cultural Arts Center (CU), Theatre 1, 1st Floor (In-Person) & via Webinar**

Join us for the Spring Equity Dialogue during Equity Week 2025 on April 9, 2025, featuring Dr. Isis Artze-Vega, an accomplished leader in higher education and equity-minded teaching. This year's dialogue focuses on "Building Bridges: Strategies for Connection", aligned with the week's theme of "Cultivating Community: Building Connections across Differences."

Dr. Artze-Vega, Provost and Vice-President for Academic Affairs at Valencia College, will share insights on creating relationship-rich educational environments and fostering community through equity-minded practices. As a co-author of *Connections Are Everything: A College Student's Guide to Relationship-Rich Education* and lead author of *The Norton Guide to Equity-Minded Teaching*, Dr. Artze-Vega brings a wealth of experience in building connections that transform learning and promote student success.

## Excellence and Equity Awards Reception and Ceremony

**4–6 p.m. | TP/SS Campus, Cultural Arts Center (CU), Theatre 1, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor**

*4:15–5 p.m. – Reception and Book Signing (Gallery, 1st floor) - First 35 students and employees will receive signed books by Dr. Isis Artze-Vega.*

*5–6 p.m. – Excellence in Equity Awards Ceremony*

The Excellence in Equity Award recognizes and celebrates students, faculty, staff, and administrators who have demonstrated exemplary accomplishments in advancing equity, inclusion, and diversity. These individuals serve as leaders through their active participation and contributions to making Montgomery College and/or their local community more inclusive by creating an environment where all individuals are valued, respected, and feel welcomed.

## Interfaith Breakfast facilitated by Nik Sushka

**8:30–10 a.m. | Location: Rockville Campus, SC 363**

Using a method designed by the University of Cambridge's Interfaith Programme, we'll discuss the theme "Community" using sample texts from different faith and belief backgrounds. Then, we'll share our individual interpretations, reactions, and ideas, with the goal to create a safe space for listening, learning, understanding, and even disagreeing better. All are welcome to attend regardless of religious background, faith, or non-faith practice.

## Racial Healing Circle hosted by TRHT facilitators

**12–2 p.m. | Rockville Campus, Mannakee Building, rooms MK 122 and 123 (In-Person)**

This information session, led by a panel of trained Racial Healing Circle (RHC) facilitators from MC, will help participants understand how the college's RHCs contribute to the national TRHT movement. In this safe space, participants will be invited to drop by to hear about TRHT goals, share their own RHC experiences, and ask questions. If you've thought of attending an RHC and you're not sure what to expect, this session is for you!

## Student Cultural Awareness Day hosted by the Offices of Student Life

**12–2 p.m. | Rockville (SV Atrium), TP/SS (ST 2<sup>nd</sup>, Floor), Germantown (HS 011) Campuses**

Cultural Awareness Day aims to celebrate diverse traditions, foods, and art, that offer students the opportunity to share their cultural heritage through interactive exhibits and culinary experiences. Aligned with the theme "*Understanding and Celebrating Differences*," the event fosters cross-cultural appreciation and inclusivity. To ensure equitable participation, we are exploring collaboration with each campus's Student Life office to host smaller, localized versions, allowing students across all three campuses to meaningfully engage in cultural exchange.

**Rockville (SV Atrium):** We are planning on a cultural performance and Q&A by Grammy nominated artist, Harold "Fyütch" Simmons who is a dynamic Grammy-nominated music and social justice artist, educator and speaker! Using an eclectic mix of live events ranging from concerts, K-12 classroom instruction, assemblies and professional development workshops, Fyütch engages with audiences in a positive, meaningful way that leaves a lasting impression. He uses hip-hop, spoken word, and visual storytelling to create unique all-ages experiences that promote racial equity and liberation.

**Takoma Park/Silver Spring (ST 2<sup>nd</sup> floor):** Expanding their Music and Community weekly event to incorporate a Cultural Awareness Day component. This could include tabling, short cultural presentations between songs (such as the history of karaoke), and potentially a performance by the Afro-Fusion Dance Club.

**Germantown (HS 011):** "Random Reads" – Students will pick a mystery-wrapped book with clues on the cover and participate in cultural trivia. The goal is to engage students with diverse authors while fostering student interaction.

## Student Voices Panel: The Next Generation of Leaders

**3–4 p.m. | via Zoom**

The Next Generation of Leaders is a dynamic student panel that highlights the diverse experiences of students from various backgrounds, including veterans, students with disabilities, student parents, international students, and non-traditional students. Through authentic storytelling and insightful dialogue, panelists will explore how their layered identities shape their experiences and perspectives, offering valuable insights into fostering a more inclusive and supportive campus community. This session aligns with the week's theme, "Understanding and Celebrating Differences," by amplifying student voices and promoting a culture of belonging for all.

**Day 5** Friday, April 11, 2025

## Inclusion by Design Summit: "When Accessibility Leads, Belonging Follows" sponsored by ELITE

**9 a.m.–3 p.m. | via Zoom**

The Universal Design Center (UDC) at Montgomery College is excited to host the Spring 2025 Inclusion by Design Summit—a premier gathering of educators, industry professionals, and advocates dedicated to universal design, accessibility, and equity. This year's summit, themed "When Accessibility Leads, Belonging Follows," will highlight best practices, emerging research, and innovative strategies for fostering inclusion.

Free and Open to Everyone!

**Day 6** Sunday, April 13, 2025

## American Patchwork Quartet sponsored by the Cultural Arts Center

**4 p.m. | TP/SS Cultural Arts Center, Theatre 1**

American Patchwork Quartet (APQ), led by multi-Grammy award-winning guitarist/vocalist Clay Ross, binds timeless American folk songs with jazz sophistication, country twang, West African hypnotics, and East Asian ornamentation. APQ's sound is a masterful confluence of tradition and innovation, transcending culture, politics, and ideology.

A southern-born roots music aficionado, Ross is also the founder of the world-renowned Gullah group Ranky Tanky. In APQ, Ross intertwines with other Grammy-winning artists: Falguni Shah, an eleventh-generation Hindustani classical vocalist; Yasushi Nakamura, an internationally acclaimed Issei jazz bassist; and Clarence Penn, a drumming protégée of Ellis Marsalis whose fibers were honed by African American church traditions.

APQ resonates as a potent symbol of unity in diversity. It stands testament to the notion that, from a collage of varied backgrounds, a coherent and beautiful whole can be fashioned.