

Melanie A. Gaskins is a woman who is unmasking her phenomenal self through art, writing and all things creative. She is a naturally gifted local artist who has honed her skills through Art classes obtained from Harrisburg Area Community College. Her Instructor, Ellen C. Branscomb, was influential in broadening her view of art, helped to fine tune her techniques and essential in helping her develop her unique artistic style.

What she finds most challenging in the creation of a piece is first understanding its purpose and meaning to its viewer. Then drafting a theme and allowing her imagination to explore an interpretation, build a concept, then visualize it and express it on paper or canvas using a combination of water color, acrylics, oils and collaging for texture.

April 2014 she was asked by MK Americana to present art work for their exhibit Passport Destination: Moscow in Washington D.C. She submitted '**Young Alexander Pushkin**' 22x28 and "**To Kern over Moskva River**" 24x36 both acrylic with a hint of oil on canvas.

July 2012 she participated in Collage/Assemblage Centennial 1912-2012 Her work was exhibited at the International Museum of Collage CO. "**Awaken**" 9 canvases mixed medium: Acrylic, Charcoal, Oil and Watercolor Collage.

Melanie has interpreted several famous artists' works to study their talent. Two of her interpretations of Leonardo Da Vinci's pieces "**The Mona Lisa**" and "**Lady with an Ermine**" have been exhibited at The Mechanicsburg Art Center.

Her most precious piece is a charcoal sketch she drew of President Obama in 2008 "**A Man of Change.**" Melanie and President Obama share their signatures on the front of the original drawing. Articles were written about this piece and published by the Patriot News January 11 & 15, 2009. She spoke to the students at Northside Elementary during an assembly about the sketch. She gave the school a poster of the piece that included an Artist Interpretation. It was hung in the school's front lobby.

She gives back to the community by volunteering her time and talent. Her works have been displayed throughout our community. Lower Paxton Township's Trash to Treasure Project – "**The Mona Lisa**" portrait painted on public trash can -

Acrylic. MLK Day at the United Way of York 1/13 – *“Martin Luther King Live United”* portrait on canvas-Acrylic and collage. St. Paul Episcopal Church Annual Food Explosion 8/12 painted 12 water colors paints depicting various flowers on bottle vases.

“Dare to Blossom Differently” She is honored, grateful and feels blessed for being given the opportunity to share this particular piece and all of her work with you, the **YWCA** and our community.

What she would like to accomplish with her art is to have people experience it. She hopes when you view her work you see differently, feel passion, think openly and be motivated to act, change or do.

Melanie’s positive energy, passion and motivation are fueled by the unconditional love for her amazing three children Ashley, Brad and Evan. She feels by showing them her creativity they too can imagine freely and become their best true selves.



Work History:

She worked for FedEx for 15 years and of those 7 as an Operations Manager. Her responsibilities varied and she was able to use her creativity throughout her career. Her duties consisted of hiring, training, scheduling, maintaining workgroups and station morale. She organized Employee Appreciation Day, Employee Picnics, Safe Kids Day, Day of Caring and Bring Your Child to Work Day. Prior to joining FedEx in 1989 she was an Office Manager at Oxford Investments/Chilmark Commodities Inc.

In 1983 she joined the Air National Guard 193 Cam Squadron. Then three years later join the Air National Guard 216th EIS in Hayward CA where she completed her six years of service.

Education:

HACC, PA & De Anza College, CA

She has attended community colleges throughout her adult life taking courses to improve on her skills, techniques and over all self.

In 1983 She Obtain an Associate's Degree from Thompson Business Institute in Executive Data Management and is a graduate of Central Dauphin East High School

Personal:

Melanie was married 30 years and has three children. Lived 8 years in California all around the Bay Area and spent the last four in San Jose. She returned home to raise her children and to be closer to family and friends.

Hobbies: She enjoys writing (currently working on an Action /Adventure Sci-Fi Series "Awaken 120") and party planning.

Interest: She enjoys watching and critiquing movies including Foreign Romantic & Action movies. What she admires about the Foreign movies and dramas is they opens your eyes to others perspective on how they see and interpret scripts, plot, composition, cinematography, scenes and locations. She is a fan of Twilight, Drama Fever, Scandal, How to Get Away with Murder, and The Walking Dead.