



Alumni Spotlight

Susan Gottlieb '81

August 2019



Susan Joy Gottlieb '81 became a student at Millersville when she decided to switch gears from the Air Force Academy to study Visual Arts and Education. As a former swimming coach, her experience working with young people came naturally to her and motivated her interest in teaching. The new Breidenstein Art Building had recently opened, and Millersville's reputation as a school for teachers made it an easy and economical decision for Susan.

With the influence from her family in art, music, and theater, she became involved in the making of things at a young age; from sewing clothes, to drawing and painting, to embroidery—it was no wonder she was interested in pursuing a degree within the arts.

Susan began to establish herself amongst “a very special community of creatives.” She found inspiration from the MU art department, which she found to be “full of wonderful, inspiring teachers, and artists.”

Robert Lyon was her most influential teacher, as he believed in her paintings and encouraged her to pursue art as a career. He always said, “Just paint, the shows will come, just paint!” This motivated her to paint with a regular discipline, which she still applies to her practice today.

Other individuals that Susan credits as having a significant impact on her during her time at the 'Ville were Robert Husted, Sheba Sharrow, and Leonard Ragouzeos, all of whom had influenced her painting.

After graduating in 1981 with a BS in Art Education, she continued her studies at Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA) where she earned a Master of Fine Arts. Since then, Susan has taught at Lebanon Valley College, Lancaster Day School, and is one of the founders, instructors, and now the Dean of Joy at The Stone Independent School in Lancaster.

Susan lives each day by the core values she learned at Millersville.

“It is how I live my life. It is in everything I do, from teaching, engaging in my city of Lancaster, supporting other artists, young and old, in my discipline of painting and studying the world, it is who I am and it is how I charge my students to live theirs.”

In addition to her professional teaching career, Susan is an Italian tour guide for her own company and has recently returned from a trip where she guided 10 students through Rome and Orvieto, Italy. She has planned another trip in October when she will be guiding adult travelers on a Sicilian Experience.

Susan has been paving her way as a professional artist, having been featured in the *Lancaster County Magazine* and *Fine Living Lancaster* magazine.

To see some of Susan's work, visit her solo show at [Red Raven Art Company](#) in Lancaster in September 2019, which will include a new book and feature a wide variety of her artworks.



Photo courtesy of fig Lancaster