

Mickayla Pence is agile. She welcomes learning new things and smoothly adapts when circumstances change. With a BFA from Marshall University, she began her artistic career in NYC as a graphic designer. In 2013 she left this creative pathway to enroll in the prestigious Make Up For Ever Academy NY where she learned professional makeup artistry, body painting, and special FX makeup - graduating top of her class in 2014. Over the years, she has steadily worked as a professional makeup artist for movies, commercials, and editorial photo shoots, but her momentum was temporarily halted when the COVID-19 pandemic put a pause on the entertainment industry. In response to those economic challenges, she established Mick's Media Jewelry LLC and now manages both her small business and makeup career simultaneously. "I'm not designed for the traditional 9 to 5, but rather for the 24/7 as my own boss," she says while smiling. For the past 12 years, working as a professional makeup artist, she has traveled throughout WV, the nation, and worldwide; partnering with celebrities and other professionals on intense, focused projects. She describes the camaraderie of working behind the scenes on video sets as a professional film and TV makeup artist.

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“Everyone comes together to accomplish the goal. Over the years I have worked with diverse groups of people from all over the world. On set, there's a sense of excitement while working together in conjunction with extreme sleep deprivation from working 12+ hour days in logistically challenging locations. When in the midst of it all, it often feels like a never ending feat, but then we accomplish our complex goals, and suddenly it's over in the blink of an eye...ultimately crew members tend to be a bit nomadic, like glorified carnys with unique skill sets coming together to make a really big group art project,” she laughs. In addition to working on team projects, she also embraces the

solitary artistic endeavor of making jewelry in her welcoming, art-filled, Lewisburg home. “I’m an ambivert in real life, needing both a sense of community while simultaneously needing my own personal space to unwind from the buzz of the world.”



Mickayla is a full-time artist who says half her income is from jewelry making and the other half is from her continuing work as a makeup artist. “I find a different sense of fulfillment in making jewelry compared with my other creative outlets,” she says, “as a member of the artistic sphere, we have an unparalleled type of patience and understanding when it comes to problem-solving. We think outside the box. We solve complex design problems. We make things that are both visually and functionally complete.” Mickayla would like to see art and the artistic process more integrated into our culture, work environments, and educational institutions. “People should be encouraged to use art as a tool to excel in a variety of careers, not just as a hobby...ultimately, we are inventors!”

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Her late grandmother and master painter, Maxine Mann, was an inspiration in her early artistic journey. She notes that she was encouraged to be creative and make messes when making art with her grandma as a child, but did not consider a career in the arts until taking her first art class with Mrs. Morgan as a senior at Greenbrier East High School. She says, "As an artist, I know that not every idea will go as envisioned and that the beauty in creativity aligns more in the journey to discover, rather than a race to the finish line."

Mickayla works with natural and found objects such as pressed flowers, magazine clippings, butterfly wings, precious metals, and gemstones. She fabricates both fine and funky one-of-a-kind mixed media jewelry using a variety of techniques and processes. She started out making jewelry by preserving found materials, such as: used plastic bottles, recycled magazines, and flowers from her garden, and then carefully curing them in an eco-friendly resin. Throughout her success, she later taught herself to metalsmith, first with copper and now with sterling silver and gemstones as part of her finer collections of work. As her portfolio expands, so does her exposure to broader audiences. Her work appears in magazines and print, such as this cover and article in Belle Armoire Jewelry: Rainy Day Jewelry (Cover and inspiration-based article Spring 2025 issue), and her feature in YNST magazine: 55 gifts from 55 counties (holiday gift guide - Winter 2024).

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Mickayla speaks about the pleasure of seeing her jewelry out and about in the world. "When I run into a stranger wearing my jewelry, I strike up a conversation with something like, 'Hey, I made your earrings', which prompts a conversation about the work and also provides an opportunity to share my newest projects with information about where to find me at upcoming vendor events. It's

important to make a connection with every person,” she shared about her one-on-one experiences. “I’m not a pushy salesperson. I’m honest. It’s important to build a relationship of trust and longevity. An ethical relationship.”

She easily pivots from the role of maker to a broader view. "My jewelry has to be aesthetically pleasing, and it also has to be practical, comfortable, not too heavy.” Mickayla credits her BFA in Graphic Design from Marshall University with giving her many skills she uses daily to promote and support her art. She shows competence in a broad array of technologies, including hard business skills as well as the creative ones she employs to succeed in the market.

A substantial portion of the time she counts as running Mick's Media Jewelry is devoted to flexing her business skills. She designs packaging, creates marketing materials, writes about herself and her work, creates logos and graphics, and takes photographs of her jewelry. As a business owner, she manages the money, updates her online shop, researches opportunities, plans her show schedule to accommodate her travel, protects and stores her work between shows, and manages her social media accounts. “I’m a real DIYer, I hate to pay someone else to do work I know I am capable of.”

Website and social media handles:
- Online Shop: micksmediajewelry.com
- Instagram: [@micks_media_jewelry](https://www.instagram.com/micks_media_jewelry)
- Facebook: [Mick's Media Jewelry](https://www.facebook.com/MicksMediaJewelry)