



The Equity Newsletter | February 15, 2022

EQUITY LAB: MOBILITY JUSTICE FOR BLACK COMMUNITIES

Tuesday, Feb. 22, 2022 | 11:00 AM – 12:30 PM

[Link to Microsoft Teams Event](#)

The Office of Racial Equity and Belonging invites you to attend our first **Equity Lab** training!

Equity Lab is a racial equity, mobility justice and transportation equity training series designed to build foundational knowledge across the agency and citywide. This month's **Equity Lab** is on **Mobility Justice for Black Communities**.

See the flyer for additional details.



Equity Lab
A Racial Equity, Mobility Justice & Transit Equity Training Series from the SFMTA Office of Racial Equity & Belonging (OREB)

Transportation Equity & Mobility Justice for Black Communities

Tuesday, February 22, 2022 | 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM
Speakers including Kimberly Burrus, Ariel Ward, Adrienne Heim, Kim Walton, and Kenya Wheeler

This Equity Lab will highlight the MTA workforce in a discussion on transportation equity for Black communities. The interactive discussion will explore promising approaches to advancing racial equity in a series of methods, including enforcement, engagement, planning and diversifying the engineering sector.

This training is intended for all MTA staff, MTA Board of Directors, the MTA Youth Transportation Advisory Board, as well as MTA Advisory Committees, Task Forces, Councils & Advisory Groups.

City and County of San Francisco staff & the community at large are welcomed and encouraged to attend.

Contact Equity@sfmta.com for Questions



CELEBRATING BLACK STAFF AT THE SFMTA



Michele Brewster
Proof of Payment (POP) Supervisor,
Investigator, Security, Investigations
and Enforcement
Streets Division

What does it mean to be a Black professional in transportation?

To be a Black professional in transportation holds a unique sentiment for me. I began my delve into transit in December 1999 with the establishment of Proof of Payment (POP) at the SFMTA. I was a part of a 19-member class that included 3 African American females, of which I was one.


In 2007, I proudly reached another trailblazing moment as the first African American female supervisor for POP. I hold these accomplishments as a privilege to the ongoing strides made in transportation, always remembering that I stand on the shoulders of great women like Maya Angelou and Rosa Parks who began the journey so that I could hold a place.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH CELEBRATION HOSTED BY THE BLACK & AFRICAN AMERICAN AFFINITY GROUP (BAAAG)


3rd Annual BLACK History Month Celebration

This Year's Theme - Celebrating Black Excellence and Black Health and Wellness

This Year's Virtual Event - Recognizing and Honoring the late Bernard J. Tyson, former Kaiser Permanente CEO



Hosted by the SFMTA BLACK & African American Affinity Group "BAAAG"



Wednesday, February 16
12 p.m. to 1 p.m.

For event details visit SFMTA.com/BAAAG. Questions? Contact Adrienne Heim, Adrienne.Heim@sfmta.com or 415.646.2564.

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CELEBRATING BLACK STAFF AT THE SFMTA

What does it mean to be a Black professional in transportation?

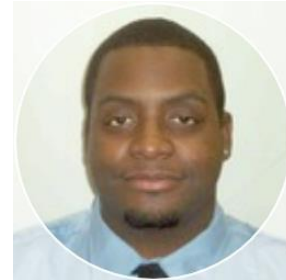
Being a Black professional in a large metropolitan transportation agency, comes with its own challenging, yet humbling and gratifying experiences.

Being native to San Francisco, I grew up riding Muni, so I understand the importance of public transportation in underserved areas. I began my career as a transit operator where I have operated many types of transit equipment and served in several supervisory roles. I believe the [Transit] Operators are the true pillars that represents San Francisco's melting pot.

Today, I am personally vested to help provide improved transportation choices for existing transit dependent communities, and to make walking and cycling conditions better for all.

I was a G.A.R.E. (Government Alliance for Racial Equality) participant and Cohort from 2017 – 2018, which afforded me the opportunity to identify issues with a racial equality lens and implement real solutions, and methodologies to resolve the transportation problems in underserved communities.

To sum it up, as a Black professional in public transportation, I feel that I stand on a great foundation. From my vantage point as a [Transit] Operator, I know firsthand what being underserved looks like and most importantly, feels like. I never thought it was possible to be sitting here today but now that I'm here, I feel It's my duty and responsibility to help close those gaps, reach back to assist others by improving the customer experience of our daily ridership, and providing equitable access to opportunities.



Lanair Haynes
Senior Operations Manager
Transit Division, Transit
Services

CELEBRATING LUNAR NEW YEAR OF THE TIGER: UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENTS

Dumpling Adventure with Kristina Cho

Thursday, Feb. 24 | 6:30PM | SF Asian Art Museum

Kristina Cho is a first-generation Chinese American who grew up in Cleveland, Ohio, and spent a lot of her childhood at her family's Chinese restaurant. As an adult, she moved to San Francisco and found a new home in the Inner Richmond neighborhood. Her food blog, [Eat Cho Food](#), began as a creative outlet that eventually grew to a point where she quit her job in architecture to pursue cooking and recipe development full-time. Kristina's first cookbook, "Mooncakes & Milk Bread," is a joyful celebration of Chinese culture and the bakeries that bring a little sweetness to Chinatowns across the country.



Celebrating Lunar New Year: Chinese New Year Parade

Saturday, Feb. 19 | 5PM – 8PM | Chinatown, San Francisco

Named one of the top ten Parades in the world by International Festivals & Events Association, the Alaska Airlines Chinese New Year Parade in San Francisco is one of the few remaining night illuminated parades in North America and the biggest parade celebrating the Lunar New Year outside of Asia.





EVENT RECAP: HOW DO YOU IDENTIFY?

On Friday, February 11, the Office of Racial Equity and Belonging (OREB) concluded part two of *How Do You Identify? Black People Are More Than A Monolith*. The commemorative, Black History Month discussion was hosted at Potrero Division, and engaged more than 45 staff from multiple teams. Click the photo to the right to view a recording of the first event in the series.



The Black History Month event hosted at Potrero Division featured four guest speakers—Chair Gwyneth Borden (MTA Board of Directors), Harun David (Streets Division, Proof of Payment), Edward Lampkin (Streets Division, Livable Streets) and Josephine Ayankoya (Office of Racial Equity and Belonging). The panelists and audience discussed Black identity and connections in the African Diaspora. Unity and self-identification were prominent themes in both discussions.

Special thanks to Potrero Division for hosting the event, our guest speakers for sharing their unique perspectives and the many teams who supported the planning, promotion and implementation of the event.

The *How Do You Identify* discussion series will continue throughout the 2022 calendar year. We hope to see you at future cultural commemoration and staff belonging events! **If you are interested in speaking for any of the upcoming *How Do You Identify* discussions, please email equity@sfmta.com.**

- March | Women’s History Month
- April | Middle Eastern & Northern African Heritage Month
- May | Asian American & Pacific Islander Heritage Month
- June | Pride

OFFICE OF RACIAL EQUITY & BELONGING FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM: APPLICATION DUE MARCH 4TH

The Office of Racial Equity and Belonging (OREB) is excited to announce the launch of our Fellowship Program! The OREB Fellowship is a networking and development program for staff across all SFMTA divisions. This 12-month, professional development program will provide SFMTA staff with the opportunity to gain verifiable work experience. The 2022 cohort will be the first of many to support racial equity projects through participation on multidisciplinary teams that represent the diversity of the SFMTA workforce.

[The application for the 2022 OREB Fellowship Program is available online](#) and due **Friday, March 4, 2022**. Please see the all-staff communication for additional details.



[CLICK HERE for PDF Version of the Application](#)

CELEBRATING BLACK STAFF AT THE SFMTA



Maisha Johnson
Receiver
Transit, Potrero Division

What do you love about being Black?

"I'm extremely proud to be a African American woman because we are one race that stands united in times of praise and struggles. We make a huge standout when it's important and we stand together, cry together and protest."



Theresa King Sanders
Transit Operator
Transit, Kirkland Division

What does it mean to be a Black professional in transportation?

"I love being a strong, proud African American woman, 33 years of being with Muni. Now, SFMTA has helped me to become a leader and gain the respect of others. I wouldn't have it any other way."



Pamela Johnson
Public Relations and Events
Manager
Communications and Marketing
Division

What do you love about being Black?

"What I love about being Black is the strength of our ancestors, the courage of our African American leaders, and having a direct lineage to the first people on the planet."



Andre Clark
Transit Operator
Potrero Division

What does it mean to be a Black professional in transportation?

"I remember reading a story about the first Black bus driver in Bristol, U.K in the 1960's. This story inspired me to be the best Transit Operator I can be and to help others along the path and to be a team player. I never forget those who paved the way for me and others, to be the positive role model for future Transit Operators."

VISIT [SFMTA.COM/EQUITY](https://www.sfmta.com/equity) TO EXPLORE THE OREB WEBSITE

The Office of Racial Equity and Belonging website is [now live!](https://www.sfmta.com/equity) The website is designed to provide updates on equity work at the SFMTA, such as the Racial Equity Action Plan. The website is also a resource for current staff, MTA stakeholders and community members.

In addition to outlining the structure and function of our office, the website will provide information about training, professional development and career opportunities; support programs for underserved communities; and the agency's equity commitments and progress toward meeting those commitments.

Check out the website at [SFMTA.com/Equity!](https://www.sfmta.com/equity)





SAN FRANCISCO FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM: APPLICATION NOW OPEN!



The application for the next cohort of San Francisco Fellows is [now open!](#)

The mission of the San Francisco Fellows program is to foster community stewardship by preparing recent college graduates and young professionals for roles in public service and administration. All people who have had an **undergraduate degree conferred within the past 5 years** (May 1, 2017 and June 30, 2022) are invited to apply.

To learn more about the program, visit [the San Francisco Fellowship Program website](#). **Applications will be accepted until March 6, 2022.** Please share with your family members, friends and networks as you see fit!

RACIAL EQUITY UPDATES

The SFMTA Board of Directors Phase One Racial Equity Action Plan Update

Tuesday, Mar. 1 | 1PM

[Access the meeting via the BOD webpage](#)

On March 1, Racial Equity Officer Josephine Ayankoya will provide the SFMTA Board of Directors with progress updates on the Phase One Racial Equity Action Plan.

All staff are invited and encouraged to attend virtually.

UPCOMING LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

National Models and Methods for Achieving Equitable Development

Friday, Feb. 18 | 10 AM – 11:30 AM | Webinar

[Register here.](#)

Join the Smart Growth Network, as community development professionals from Florida, South Carolina, and Alabama share their experience within a growing community of practice, explore why they selected their methods and how they sustain themselves as non-profits and illustrate what success looks like in their communities.

Participants of the live webinar are eligible for 1.5 AICP CM Equity credits.



SFPW- 2022 BHM Healing Circle: Mental Health and Wellness

Feb. 18 | 12 PM – 1 PM | [Virtual Zoom Meeting](#)

Join San Francisco Public Works as [Althea O'Brien](#) facilitates with therapist [Jessica Whitaker](#) contributing in this Healing Circle on Mental Health and Wellness. Jessica Whitaker is a licensed Clinical Social Worker.

[Click here to join the meeting.](#)

(meeting ID: 369 944 1214, passcode: 840354)

UPCOMING LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Working While Black (DPH-HSS): Healing Circle

Feb. 22 | 12 PM – 1 PM | [Virtual Zoom Meeting](#)

In partnership with the Department of Public Health, the San Francisco Health Service System is sponsoring *Working While Black Healing Circle*. This Healing Circle is a safe, private non-judgmental place to share chronic and acute experiences of racial trauma. Mindfulness techniques will be practiced, and resources provided. No registration is required.

[Click here to join the meeting](#), or dial +1-415-655-0003,, 173.243.2.68
(meeting ID: 2458 183 4943, passcode: WWB365)

Equity In The Center Trainings/Workshops

More than Fragility: A Deep Dive into Understanding & Dismantling Whiteness

Wed. Feb. 23 | 9AM - 12PM PT | [Register here.](#)



The Equity Newsletter provides key updates regarding the SFMTA Racial Equity Action Plan as well as information about equity work at the agency (including upcoming events, trainings and suggested educational resources) to the SFMTA workforce, Board of Directors and stakeholders.

The Equity Newsletter is published by the
Office of Racial Equity & Belonging: equity@sfmta.com