



The Equity Newsletter | March 29, 2022

HOW DO YOU IDENTIFY? WOMEN ARE MORE THAN A MONOLITH

The Office of Racial Equity and Belonging invites you to join us in commemorating Women’s History Month with *How Do You Identify? Women Are More Than A Monolith*. This interactive discussion will center women of various intersectional identities and their experiences navigating society, political arenas and the workplace. We will gather **in-person today, March 29, at 1 South Van Ness Ave., 2nd Floor Atrium Conference Room from 12:30 PM – 2 PM. Masks will be required.**

All staff are welcome to attend as they are able, whether that is for a partial duration of the event or the full length.

The SFMTA Office of Racial Equity and Belonging presents:

How Do You Identify? Women Are More Than A Monolith

An Interactive Discussion featuring Guest Speakers from across the Agency



**March 29, 2022
12:30 PM – 2:00 PM**

**1 South Van Ness Ave.,
2nd Floor Atrium
Conference Room**

All Staff Welcome

This is an in-person event. Masks are required. Contact equity@sfmta.com for more information.

Interested in Speaking at Future *How Do You Identify* Events? Contact the Office of Racial Equity and Belonging

The Office of Racial Equity and Belonging is looking for speakers to participate in our upcoming *How Do You Identify* events. If you are interested in being a speaker or want to nominate someone, please email equity@sfmta.com and CC Jeremy.Brooks@sfmta.com by the respective deadlines listed below:

- Speakers for **Middle Eastern Heritage Month: April 4**
- Speakers for **Asian and Pacific Islander Heritage Month: May 2**
- Speakers for **Pride: June 6**

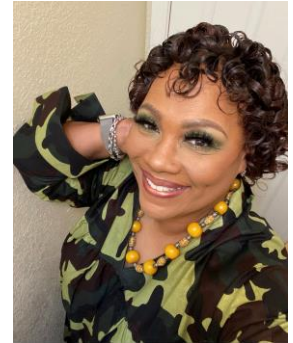
CELEBRATING WOMEN STAFF AT THE SFMTA

What does it mean to be a woman in transportation?

Being a woman in transportation/the mobility sector to me is the ability to be responsive to the needs of patrons, clients and the consumer in transportation services, and recognizing the importance of being a strong team player.

What do you love about being a woman?

I am proud to be a woman because I am fearless, able to stand up on what I believe, I am strong and I have a force of empowerment and determination to reach my goals.



Michelle Alexander
Jr. Management
Assistant
Acting Potrero
Trolley Division

What does racial equity mean to you?

Racial Equity means fairness and meeting people where they are at, and making adjustments to their specific needs; to confront and combat institutionalized racial bias and racist practices with all parts of our lives.

What does racial equity mean to you?

We will see racial equity when the racial make up of our organizations mirrors the city/region as a whole, and people of color are represented throughout the entire workforce with commiserate representation in management.



Annette Williams
Director, Accessible
Services
Taxi, Access and
Mobility Services

Many of my colleagues on the front lines at SFMTA are people of color, drivers, fare inspectors, maintenance technicians, station agents, etc., and it's important to ensure that colleagues who work directly with the public are heard and that decisions in the organization are made with their input in mind or, better yet, by them. The organization will benefit greatly when front line employees receive the respect and honor they deserve for the crucial job they do to keep San Francisco moving.

What do you love about being a woman?

I appreciate that connecting meaningfully with colleagues and those we serve is something that is often practiced and honored by women in general. Building strong relationships is something most women rely on to be heard.

What does it mean to be a woman in transportation?

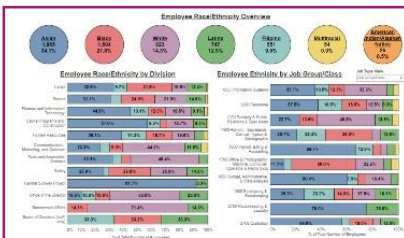
We women employees bring our lived experience to work and approximately half the people we serve are women. Our contributions are crucial for SFMTA to be able to serve all customers well. Women have been underrepresented in the Transportation sector making it even more important for our voices to be heard.

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT: RACIAL EQUITY ACTION PLAN UPDATES

Throughout March 2022, Racial Equity Officer Josephine Ayankoya gave a series of presentations providing progress updates on the implementation of the SFMTA Racial Equity Action Plan (REAP).

- On March 1, Officer Ayankoya provided detailed REAP updates to the SFMTA Board of Directors.
 - You can [view her full presentation via the meeting recording \(item 12\)](#).
- On March 17, Officer Ayankoya presented to the Board of Supervisors Government Audit and Oversight Committee.
 - You can [view the hearing via the meeting recording \(item 3\)](#).
- On March 17, Officer Ayankoya led an All Staff Call to provide the agency with progress updates on the implementation of the SFMTA Racial Equity Action Plan and gather staff input on the key initiatives which should be funded to meet the stated values of the [SFMTA Strategic Plan](#) in the next two fiscal years. Officer Ayankoya also held a similar meeting convening the agency's Affinity Groups, Equitable Workplace Committee and Streets Equity Action Team on March 14 to ensure these equity-centered employee groups had an opportunity to provide input.
 - You can [watch the full recording of the All Staff Call here](#).

Key REAP updates include the following:



The Equity Data Project has identified diversity gaps in hiring that are informing initiatives in hiring and outreach, workforce development and pipeline development. Specific data dashboards are in the process of being made available to the public.

The Office of Racial Equity and Belonging (OREB) is directing a series of collaborative discipline interventions with Human Resources (HR), Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO), Transit and Safety centered on analyzing and standardizing disciplinary practices, particularly among Transit Operators. The OREB will continue leading ongoing workshops with HR, EEO, Transit and Safety to monitor, evaluate and intervene in gaps in disciplinary outcomes.



In 2022, the OREB will be launching Leadership Lab, a mandatory racial equity training for SFMTA supervisors, managers, senior officers and directors, and continuing Equity Lab, a training series on racial equity, mobility justice and transportation equity open to SFMTA staff, SFMTA Boards of Directors and City and County of San Francisco staff, to build foundational equity knowledge across the agency.

The Racial Equity Policy is currently in development and will serve as a bridge action between the Phase One and Phase Two Racial Equity Action Plans. The Racial Equity Policy Advisory Team, a group of multi-disciplinary staff across the agency, has been supporting the development of this policy.





The OREB will be continuing Staff Belonging and Wellbeing initiatives, including cultural heritage commemoration events, culturally-specific trainings and the office's yearlong partnership with the Transit, Cable Car Division to design a series of racial equity-themed cable cars.

The OREB is partnering with the Streets, Security and Investigations Division for a Gender Equity Project aiming to advance racial and gender equity in SFMTA transit and mobility systems by prioritizing gender safety throughout SFMTA security systems. This cross-divisional effort will use culturally affirming prevention and intervention strategies that center the needs of Indigenous, Black, Latina, Asian and Pacific Islander women and girls in defining necessary gender violence prevention strategies.



Special thanks to the staff who joined Officer Ayankoya on the All Staff Call or the Affinity and Employee Resource Group meeting to present on opportunities to advance racial equity in their work over the next two years:

- **Kimberly Burrus**, Chief Security Officer
- **Anne Fritzler**, Strategic Planning Lead, Performance Team, Office of the Chief of Staff
- **Lanair Haynes**, Senior Operations Manager, Transit Services
- **Rashid Herd**, Workforce Development Director
- **Demario McClary**, Division Manager (Operations), Presidio
- **William "Bill" Miles**, Talent Acquisition Manager
- **Margot Reed**, Manager of Apprenticeship, Internship, Fellowship and Job Training Programs
- **Daryl Robinson**, Streets Operations Manager
- **Maddy Ruvolo**, Streets Accessibility Planner
- **Jean Santullo**, Well-being Manager
- **Teresa Scism**, Division Manager (Operations), Flynn
- **Kate Toran**, Director, Taxis, Access and Mobility Services
- **Aleta Washington**, Division Manager (Operations), Kirkland
- **Ziliang Yang**, Division Manager (Operations), Muni Metro East

CELEBRATING WOMEN STAFF AT THE SFMTA



Candace Wilcher
Transportation Operations
Specialist, Field Manager
Transit Services, Muni
Metro Rail and Street
Operation and Construction

What does it mean to be a woman in transportation?

"My 23 year career at the SFMTA means my skill sets are important, and are proof that I as a Black woman help make important contributions to keep the Bay Area moving."

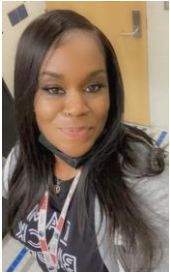


Denisha Haynes
Training Manager IV
Transportation & Training
Instruction, Cable
Car/Green/Muni Metro East
Division

What does racial equity mean to you?

"I believe that racial equity should be the mindset of everyone, a way of being, habits of thinking, ways of acting, to be intentional in preventing racial inequities."

CELEBRATING WOMEN STAFF AT THE SFMTA



Zulaika Mayfield
Senior Clerk
Transit Services

What do you love about being a woman?

"She is a Queen; her soul is royalty."



Sheila Wallace
Training Manager II
Transportation & Training
Instruction

What does it mean to be a woman in transportation?

"Being a woman in the transportation sector will let other women know that if she can do it, so can I."

UNDERSTANDING THE POLITICS OF "WOMEN", "WOMYN", "WOMXN"

The terms "women", "womyn" and "womxn" have varying histories and associations with gender identity and inclusivity.

"Women"

Much like "history" vs. "herstory", critiques for "women" come from its reinforcement of patriarchal structures, as a word coming from "men".

"Womyn"

Consequently, according to the [University of California Irvine Womxn's Success Center](#), the term "womyn" first appeared in 1975 in an announcement of the "Wolf Creek's Women's Festival". Unfortunately, the term soon became associated with exclusionary "white, liberal-feminist transphobic concepts" as "Womyn's Festival organizers indicated that attendants must be 'womyn-born-womyn'", excluding anyone whose gender did not align with their sex assigned at birth.

"Womxn"

In contrast, "womxn" originated in intersectional feminist spaces in 2010 as a term intended to be inclusive of various gender identities and expressions, while also recognizing how ["the history of feminism has included racism, transphobia and harmful gender binary views."](#) Critiques of the term, however, note that using a different word to indicate the inclusion of trans women and nonbinary people may not actually affirm peoples' identities, as ["womxn implies trans women aren't real women and non-binary people are women."](#)

Whether people choose to use "women", or "womxn", or another term, the important thing to remember is the power that language can have in creating spaces of belonging or establishing barriers of exclusion. We must continue to build our understanding of the rich histories of the words we use in order to use language with intent.

UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENT: TRANS DAY OF VISIBILITY



March 31 is International Transgender Day of Visibility, a holiday dedicated to celebrating the accomplishments and victories of transgender and gender non-conforming people. The holiday was founded by transgender activist Rachel Crandall in 2009.

This year, [Trans Day of Visibility San Francisco](#) will be celebrating Transgender Day of Visibility on **Thursday March 31** from **6:00PM – 9:30PM** at **SOMArts Cultural Center**, located at **934 Brannan Street, San Francisco**. The event is **free** and open to the public.

CELEBRATING WOMEN STAFF AT THE SFMTA



Leda Melara-Rozier
Senior Operation Manager
Transit, Transit Management

What do you love about being a woman?

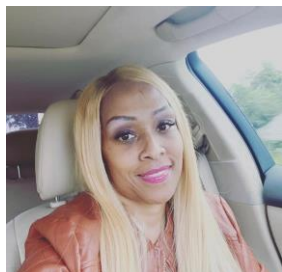
"As a strong Latina woman, I love being an example to other women that we can overcome all barriers the system presents us, more so to my daughter and nieces."



Myra Phillips
Car Cleaner Manager
Transit, Flynn Division

What does racial equity mean to you?

"To me, racial equity is when everyone has what they need to thrive, no matter where they live or how they identify."



Natisha Countee
Transit Supervisor
Cable Car Division

What do you love about being a woman?

"A strong Black woman can't let a tear stain her face."



Emma Gonzalez
Transit Operator
Transit, Transit
Management Rail

What does it mean to be a woman in transportation?

"The ability to do my work having the same training and abilities as my male counterparts."

WOMEN IN TRANSPORTATION: A FEMINIST REIMAGINING OF KENYA'S PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Transportation and mobility are experiences that span across the globe, with varying modalities and pathways that support individuals in getting from point A to point B. In Kenya, matutus or “mini buses” are a primary mode of traveling as well as expressions of artistry and community. However, they also come with challenges to accessibility, particularly for women.

Watch the video to understand how one Kenyan woman organizer, Naomi Mwaura, is working to improve Kenya’s transportation system and ensure matutus are safe and reliable options for women and children. This video is one of the educational resources to watch in preparation for *How Do You Identify? Women Are More Than A Monolith*.



RSVP FOR UPCOMING CABLE CAR RIDES, DECORATION SHIFTS & INPUT SESSIONS

As part of the Transit, Cable Car Division and Office of Racial Equity and Belonging initiative to decorate a series of racial-equity themed cable cars, staff are invited to participate in staff connection and volunteer activities for upcoming commemorative cable cars:

- **April** | Middle Eastern Heritage Month
- **May** | Asian and Pacific Islander Heritage Month
- **May** | Cinco de Mayo
- **June** | Pride
- **June** | Juneteenth



If you are interested in joining one of the inaugural cable car rides or decoration shifts, or want to nominate staff to attend, please email Fred.Butler@sfmta.com and cc equity@sfmta.com.

A calendar invite will be sent for upcoming input sessions regarding the Cable Cars for Pride month and Juneteenth. If you are a member of an affinity group related to the communities highlighted, please support in circulating the invitation to people who are interested in attending. Expect an invitation to be sent the week of April 4th.

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