



WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH



MARCH
2025



There is no limit

to what we, as women,
can accomplish.

- MICHELLE OBAMA



*Dedicated to all women
in the transit workforce.*



2025 CATS WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

In commemoration of Women's History Month, we proudly spotlight a select group of remarkable women who play pivotal roles within CATS. These dedicated individuals have taken the opportunity to reflect on the significance of Women's History Month within the context of their work at CATS. Their insightful reflections have been thoughtfully compiled into a beautifully curated digital booklet.

By amplifying the voices of these women, we honor their often unrecognized contributions to the transit industry. We invite you to explore the stories of these women, discover how their experiences at CATS have shaped their lives and work, and learn about their ongoing efforts to foster diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging in our workplace.

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KRISTY MACKEY

Payroll and Finance Administrator | TMOC Finance

How long have you worked with CATS?

I've been with TMOC for 31 years. I started in Finance, working in the money room where we counted bus fares. Since then, I've served in Operations, Administration and HR, but my final stop on this journey is Finance – where it all began!

How would you describe your role at CATS and how it supports our CATS workforce, riders, or community?

I support our organization by making sure everyone gets paid correctly. I like to think of everyone here as my customers, and I strive to ensure they get what they've earned and walk away happy. When you take care of your employees, they'll take care of you!



What do you love about your job?

I love the people I work with! We have such a great group where everyone works together, and someone is always willing to help. I've built some lasting relationships here over the years that I treasure.

My mother instilled that work ethic in us and taught us to be kind and to follow through with what you say you are going to do. She is my hero!

Why is Women's History Month significant to you?

Women run the world, and I love it! We bring different perspectives and put fresh spins on things. Women add compassion to every conversation, and that's something we all need to get through the day!

Who are the women in your community or within CATS that you admire for their commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion, and why?

The woman I most admire is my mother. I watched her work in factories to put my sister, brother and me through school before getting her cosmetology license. She instilled that work ethic in us and taught us to be kind and to follow through with what you say you are going to do. Watching her showed me how to be a better wife, mother, caregiver and most of all, a decent human being. She is my hero!

MOLLY HAYNES

Senior Engineer | Development

How long have you worked with CATS?

I've been with CATS for two years and the City of Charlotte for six years. My background with the city is in land development and community investment project management with the Charlotte Department of Transportation and General Services.

How would you describe your role at CATS and how it supports our CATS workforce, riders or community?

My primary role at CATS is land development along the Blue Line, but I also support our Planning Department with ADA compliance of our bus stops. ADA compliance is a huge investment in our community and our transit users, ensuring everyone has access to public transit.

What do you love about your job?

I love working on ADA improvements because I see an immediate impact in the community. This includes increasing lighting at bus stops, improving shelters and adding amenities like benches and trash cans. Many of our projects have extended timelines, so it's encouraging to see those everyday impacts!



From a project manager to a stay-at-home mom, women invest in their communities daily, and I think it's important that we recognize their innovation, creativity and impact on our society.

Why is Women's History Month significant to you?

Women's History Month is significant to me personally because we have a history of oppression, but women do so many things and have since the beginning of time! From a project manager to a stay-at-home mom, women invest in their communities daily, and I think it's important that we recognize their innovation, creativity and impact on our society.

Who are the women in your community or within CATS that you admire for their commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion, and why?

The woman I admire most within CATS is Jill Brim, my immediate supervisor and manager. She always encourages me to be myself and never asks me to dim my light. It's always, "Bring it!", which is one of the things I love most about working with her.

Jill and I are both high energy and very excited about the job, so we bring that into our projects and meetings. I'm happy to be embraced as my natural self, and she does that.

PHYLLIS HEATH

Senior Transit Manager of Budgets and Financial Management | Finance

How long have you worked with CATS?

This is my second journey with CATS' Finance Department. I've been with CATS for nearly five years combined, but I have 22 years with the City of Charlotte.

How would you describe your role at CATS and how it supports our CATS workforce, riders or community?

My teams and I are responsible for budgets, planning and financial management of CATS Operating and Capital financial program, policies and procedures. We review every requisition, purchase order change order, invoice, procurement service request, contract change order, journal entry, budget amendment and transfer, grants, travel requests, reimbursements – you name it! When we do these things, we're affording everyone in the community mobility options and a chance to thrive.

What do you love about your job?

I'm a native Charlottean, born and raised here, with my second degree from UNC Charlotte. I love that I have an opportunity to help transform my city by literally moving people forward, serving the city where I was born, work, live and play; to do that alongside an amazing team is so rewarding.



Why is Women's History Month significant to you?

Women's History – not just a month or day – is important to me because it gives us an intentional opportunity to reflect on and appreciate the contributions and sacrifices women have made, both in the past and present. It gives all females, especially little girls, encouragement and hope – paving the way for us to sit in the positions we have today. It also encourages me to say, "What can I do to pay it forward?"

Who are the women in your community or within CATS that you admire for their commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion, and why?

Two women come to mind. First, Michelle Obama – the first African American to serve as the First Lady. I love that she advocated for poverty awareness, nutrition and exercise.

I would be remiss if I didn't include our former vice President, Kamala Harris, as being the highest-ranked female in the United States. She's also a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., one of the Divine Nine sororities and fraternities for the African American community. She and I pledged into the same sorority during the spring of 1986 – herself at Howard University and myself at UNC Chapel Hill. That's amazing to me!



I love that I have an opportunity to help transform my city by literally moving people forward, serving the city where I was born, work, live and play.

RUTH ALVARADO

Customer Service Specialist | Customer Service

How long have you worked with CATS?

I've been with CATS for 11 years.

How would you describe your role at CATS and how it supports our CATS workforce, riders or community?

In my role, each day looks different because I'm everywhere! If they need me at the Charlotte Transportation Center (CTC), I'm there helping sell passes, pull reports or working in Lost and Found. If I'm needed at the Call Center, I assist with calls and running reports. I believe I'm a special tool because I can serve both ends of the Customer Service department. As a team, we come together and help each other.



What do you love about your job?

I love that I can help customers and my community by getting them where they need to go. You can be having a long day, and just hearing, "Thank you so much," from customers makes all the difference.

As a Latina woman, I'm grateful for this opportunity to uplift my community.

Why is Women's History Month significant to you?

Women's History Month is significant to me because it's an opportunity to come together and reflect on the incredible contributions we as women have made throughout history and present. As a Latina woman, we don't always get the spotlight we deserve, so I'm grateful for this opportunity to uplift my community.

Who are the women in your community or within CATS that you admire for their commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion, and why?

I admire our frontline workers at the Charlotte Transportation Center and the Call Center. They are the motors of CATS. Of course, we all play a part. However, our frontline workers are heroes, and for that, I want to personally say thank you for all that you do!

LASHIMA TATE

Travel Trainer Coordinator | Customer Service

How long have you worked with CATS?

I have worked with CATS for 3.5 years.

How would you describe your role at CATS and how it supports our CATS workforce, riders or community?

My role is to educate the community about the different transportation modes that we offer. I support riders by empowering them, especially seniors and those with disabilities. Teaching them how to navigate the system effectively takes some of the burden off our operators and makes passengers feel safer and more confident taking the bus or train. Travel training helps to foster a more inclusive and connected community with more people riding public transit.



What do you love about your job?

I love interacting with the community and seeing the joy in their eyes when they realize they can take control of their days! They don't have to wait for someone to take them everywhere they need to go. I love when they realize that they can be as independent as they once were.

**Women's History Month
lets the world know that,
without women, where
would we be?**

Why is Women's History Month significant to you?

It's important to me because it highlights the many achievements and contributions women have made throughout history while also discussing the struggles it took to get here. Many women have been overlooked, but during Women's History Month, women receive the much-deserved spotlight

that their actions warrant. It lets the world know that, without women, where would we be?

Who are the women in your community or within CATS that you admire for their commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion, and why?

I know it may sound cliché, but I really admire my mom. She attends different food banks and gathers food to give out to those individuals who cannot travel to food banks due to their circumstances. She has also turned her garage into a food pantry, and she invites members of the community to come and get what they need for free. I consider her a pillar of her community because she is committed to lifting up those who often feel forgotten.



With a defeat, when you lose,

you get up, you make it better,
you try again. That's what I do in
life, when I get down, when I get
sick, I don't want to just stop. I
keep going and I try to do more.
Everyone always says never give up
but you really have to take that to
heart and really do never definitely
give up. Keep trying.

- SERENA WILLIAMS





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