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# TAG CONNECTION

FALL 2022



TAG's summer interns, employees, and friends visited the de Young Museum and the Academy of Sciences in Golden Gate Park as part of their excursions



## DEAR TAG TEAM AND COLLEAGUES,

As we transition further into fall and closer to winter, we wish our summer interns continued success with their studies and other endeavors throughout the 2022-2023 school year and beyond.

Summer was our time to enjoy and explore, make new connections, and deepen our relationships. This newsletter touches on some of the many highlights from our intern trips and their summer takeaways (pages 7-8). To our interns: you are always welcome to reach out – for advice, or whatever you may need during your studies and career pursuits.

In this newsletter, we also spotlight the SF Public Utilities Commission’s Southeast Community Center (pages 4-5), which had its grand opening on October 22, 2022. Several TAG interns have supported the project over the years, including Tony Joe, who is now working full time as an electrical engineer (pages 9-10); Anjana, a Stanford graduate student; and two high school interns as part of TAG’s rewarding first-time collaboration with the non-profit NexGeneGirls (pages 8-9).

In this edition, we also recognize TAG employees Rajshree, Assistant Resident Engineer, and Sharayu, Office Engineer (pages 11-12), for their excellent work on the new BART Headquarters, which has been the recipient of multiple project awards. The dedication and enthusiasm they bring to their work is a key element of what helps make our project teams successful.

Though we continue to remain cautious of COVID, we recently enjoyed an employee gathering in our San Francisco office. Being face-to-face and having time to talk allowed us to have the kinds of conversations that rarely happen remotely. It’s easy to exchange pleasantries, but it takes a real sense of openness and trust to discuss more difficult issues.

One TAG employee told us about the devastating war in his native Ethiopia, Africa’s second most populous country. Except for a brief six-year period, civil war has plagued the country since 1994. Another TAG employee recently returned from a visit to her homeland of Lithuania and described the dislocation and disruption throughout Eastern Europe from the ongoing war in Ukraine – the home of another TAG employee, whose family is still in the country.

Issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) are foundational to so many of our experiences, and we bring those experiences, insights – and biases – into the workplace without necessarily realizing the impact they have on our

attitudes and relationships. I share some of my thoughts on this important topic in our Thought Leadership column (page 3). Please share any thoughts you have on DEI with me – I am interested to hear your ideas and experiences.

With Thanksgiving and December just around the corner...we wish you a Happy Thanksgiving, Happy Holidays, and a Happy New Year!



*Happy Holidays!*



As always, thank you for all that you do, and let’s stay connected! With respect and gratitude,

*Schatze Allen Jeffers*

## TAG THOUGHT LEADERSHIP



### **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: More Than Just Buzzwords**

*Schatzie Allen Jefferson, President, The Allen Group*

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DE&I) have become industry buzzwords, especially in the aftermath of George Floyd. Countless organizations tout their commitment to building diverse teams and inclusive cultures. For DE&I to be effective in the workplace and society, it must be treated as more than just another box for companies to check for the sake of political correctness.

This is how I define these terms:

**Diversity:** bringing people of different races, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, nationality, age, language, and (dis)abilities together. Creating diversity in the workplace requires intentional efforts to recruit, hire, and promote underrepresented groups.

**Equity:** providing equal access and opportunities. Ensuring equity necessitates measuring results – including monitoring pay and distribution of ranks across all job functions.

The National Football League (NFL) has diverse player rosters, but blacks are underrepresented in the front office and as head coaches. True equity means that individuals and companies have real and meaningful access, resources, and opportunities to succeed and grow.

Equitable outcomes must be measured and constantly monitored – this requires vigilance and maintenance. If you are serious about creating equity (results) in the workplace, it is a best practice to use an independent entity or some objective measure to see if your efforts are making a difference or not.

**Inclusion:** With a diverse mix of people, inclusion means making sure everyone can contribute to the success of the organization. For example, if you hire someone in a wheelchair but the doorways to the conference room are too narrow to allow them entry, you may be diverse, but you are not being inclusive or welcoming.

In an inclusive environment, there should be no threats, harm, or intimidation. It is management's responsibility – and each

employee's – to speak out if any of these things happen and to work to create a safe environment. At the same time, promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion, while essential, is not enough. Even a workplace that has every intention of creating a culture of DE&I sometimes fails to retain employees from underrepresented groups because they do not feel like they **belong**.

The difference between inclusion and belonging that recently crystallized for me is this – inclusion involves efforts fostered by the organization. Belonging is something that employees feel – that the environment is safe – and a place where everyone can bring their complete selves to work and freely express their opinions.

During a recent office gathering, TAG employees shared their journeys and experiences from their homelands across the world, some of which – like Ethiopia and Ukraine – are engaged in ongoing armed conflict. I began recalling stories my mother told me about growing up in the Jim Crow South. It was clear that issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion were seminal to many of our experiences.

I know research indicates that diverse, inclusive teams perform better, and decisions occur faster. I do not need data to see the importance of DEI and creating a sense of belonging. I learned a lot from that impromptu conversation among our talented TAG team.

By discussing our backgrounds and experiences and listening to what each had to say, we broadened our collective understanding. I discovered that our varied experiences underscore the commonality of the dignity and respect that come from having clean water, sanitation, nutritious food, and feeling safe. Despite differences in race, nationality, gender, age, and several other dimensions of diversity, we are all fundamentally part of the same human experience.

To create true DEI and a sense of belonging, we must look beyond the terms as buzzwords. It requires more than giving underrepresented groups, such as women and minorities, a seat at the table. It requires more than having celebrations and potluck luncheons where everyone brings a culturally themed dish. Creating an environment of DEI and a sense of belonging necessitates the humility to see bias – from unconscious to overt – the courage to do something about it, and the honesty to measure and not sugarcoat the tangible results.

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## TAG PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

### SFPUC Southeast Community Center Provides Haven for Bayview-Hunters Point Residents



Construction on the SF Public Utilities Commission’s (SFPUC’s) new \$86.8 million Southeast Community Center finished on August 15, 2022. The grand opening occurred on October 22, 2022, and final completion is anticipated in November.

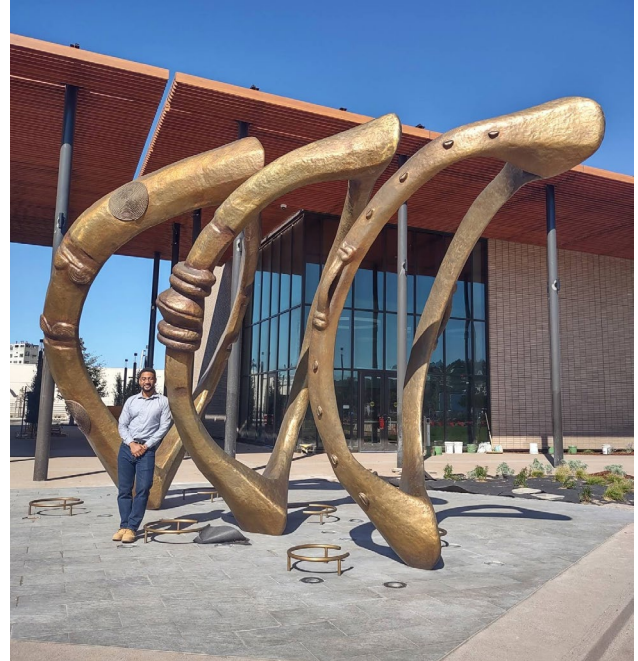
The expansive three-story center in Bayview Hunters Point provides a mix of spaces – some available for public use, others for reservation. The center also includes affordable day care services and a secure playground for children.

TAG and Hollins Consulting, Inc. (HCI) have provided construction management services on the project as a joint venture (JV) since 2019. The design for the center was completed prior to TAG and HCI’s involvement and integrates a variety of inputs from community members.

Groundbreaking for the new center began on March 7, 2020, with the first Shelter-in-Place Order going into effect just ten days later. The TAG/HCI JV team navigated a variety of scheduling difficulties, limited staff availability, supply chain issues, and material cost increases.

The new center – expected to achieve LEED Gold – offers public access to the first floor, including a café, as well as public use of a lounge and kitchen on the second floor. The Center provides meeting rooms, multi-purpose rooms, and classrooms available for reservation, as well as leasable tenant space on the third floor.

The Community Center features an impressive and varied collection of art throughout the building’s interior, the adjacent Pavilion named for community leader Alex Pitcher, and a striking outdoor sculpture by Mildred Howard.

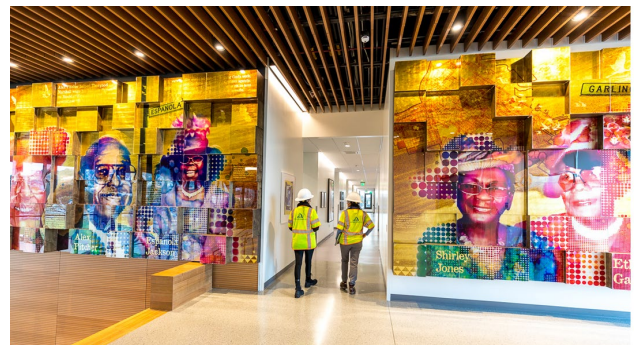


*TAG Assistant Resident Engineer, Justin Montgomery, stands in front of Mildred Howard’s art sculpture at the Southeast Community Center*

“These forms – traditionally worn as anklets – are dramatically enlarged in bronze and oriented vertically, subtly suggesting the outline of a ship’s hull,” explained Mildred Howard in her SF Arts Commission art proposal.

“The Bayview-Hunter’s Point area has always been home to immigrants,” wrote Mildred Howard. “This work will stand as an homage to the travels, trials, and perseverance of immigrants and poor residents of any race or ethnicity... standing tall as a proud and dignified reminder that we all ultimately arrived in this country from somewhere else.”

The center also includes inspired pieces by Phillip Hua in the main lobby and Kenyatta A.C. Hinkle in the Alex Pitcher Pavilion.



*Art by Phillip Hua in the Main Lobby of the Community Center*





Art by Kenyatta A.C. Hinkle in the Alex Pitcher Pavilion

In addition to the Center’s eye-catching art, the updated landscape incorporates native plants and a bioretention pond to prevent flooding, as well as log benches, swing benches, and even a slide.



The Community Center’s updated landscaping with native plants



One of swing benches at the Community Center

Over the course of three years, the project has provided internship experience for several TAG interns, including Tony Joe in the summer of 2021 (learn more about his advancing career on pages 9-10); as well as Anjana Mohan, a Stanford graduate student; and two high-school NexGeneGirls scholars, Jayla and Jaqui, in 2022.

Like the Community Center, NexGeneGirls (learn more about this inspiring non-profit on pages 8-9) is located in Bayview-Hunters Point, providing the TAG/HCI JV team the welcome opportunity to help serve the community in more ways than one – by improving its infrastructure and by helping local youth gain real-world professional experience.

TAG Assistant Resident Engineer, Justin Montgomery, who helped guide the project from the start of construction through closeout, was integral in mentoring the interns while also ensuring the project progressed according to schedule.

“The interns did a great job helping with field reports, inspections, and other critical tasks,” said Justin. “During the project, we also exceeded our local hire percentage goal of 30%.”

Justin added, “It was a unique experience to join right as construction started – we had to get up to speed quickly on the design documents and deal with all the challenges of working through a pandemic. It’s been very rewarding seeing the community’s reactions to the new Center – this is a place they can use and enjoy for years to come.”

## TAG HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATE

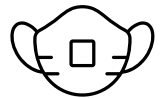
Micaela Mazzini, HR Director, The Allen Group



**COVID-19 Vaccine Mandates.** In response to the pandemic and its COVID-19 variants, TAG requires all employees to be vaccinated against COVID-19 to protect our workers and our community. We also

highly encourage staff to get boosted! In addition to our firm’s mandate, most of our client agencies (including the FTA, City and County of San Francisco, and BART) have implemented vaccination directives for employees and contractors working on site.

**Weekly COVID-19 Health and Safety Reminders and Guidance.** The Allen Group is committed to keeping staff informed of updates, guidance, and resources available during the pandemic. The Weekly COVID-19 Health and Safety Reminder email provides key updates on COVID-19 policies and guidelines affecting the workplace and other important news to our staff, COVID-19 resources, and links to more detailed information (e.g., COVID-19 vaccine availability, local mandates, masking, and social distancing guidelines). We will continue to actively monitor federal, state, and local guidance and information that prioritize



COVID-19 policies and procedures from our public health authorities.

### 401k INFORMATIONAL SESSION



In November 2022, The Allen Group—along with Morgan Stanley, American Funds, and Pension Benefits—presented valuable information regarding The Allen Group’s 401(k) Plan. The session was intended for current participants and those interested in joining. Participants had the opportunity to ask questions and meet our Investment Adviser and Plan Administrators.

Emphasis was provided on how important it is to keep investing and increase your contributions even in the face of an economic downturn. That, and to remind your coworkers to keep investing or join the program if they have not yet done so!



Please contact me, Micaela Mazzini, with any questions.

### TAG’S LEARNING & TRAINING SERIES

TAG’s Learning & Training Series is designed to focus on building knowledge, skills, and performance goals for staff assigned to client-based construction and project management projects.



Pratima

Our wonderful colleague from EPC Consultants, Pratima Joshi, is leading our current training series on Project Controls. The training involves a series of in-depth workshops on Project Controls to support achievement of project objectives and deliverables, including cost management and risk management, as well as effective schedule control methodologies.

All sessions focus on the implementation of training material in day-to-day activities of staff members. These sessions will focus on how Office Engineers can best use data gathering and management, tools, and processes to better predict, understand, and constructively influence time and cost outcomes of a project. Project Managers and Resident Engineers are also encouraged to attend. The training is open to all TAG employees.

We will continue to provide additional details about future training sessions and workshops. If you have a specific

training topic you would like to see offered, please contact me, Micaela Mazzini: [micaela@the-allen-group.com](mailto:micaela@the-allen-group.com). We look forward to seeing all of you at a future training... let’s discover, learn, grow, and lead together!

### STANFORD’S WATSON SEMINAR

Every fall, The Allen Group (TAG) looks forward to participating in Stanford University’s Watson Seminar, which introduces masters’ students in their Sustainable Design & Construction (SDC) Program to engineering and construction companies.

This year, The Allen Group invited Geoffrey Neumayr, Chief Development Officer at the San Francisco International Airport (SFO), to discuss his career journey and the advantages of working at smaller firms, including his experience at The Allen Group prior to joining SFO.



*Geoff Neumayr, top left, shares his career path and job experiences with Stanford students*

Geoff Neumayr emphasized that working on real projects that change people’s lives gives his work in the design and construction industry its meaning. He urged students to likewise find their own purpose that drives their excitement, and that working at a small firm will expose them to many different projects, helping them discover what makes them most passionate. Geoff Neumayr’s current work includes sharing the benefits of the progressive design-build project delivery method and finding new ways to improve industry efficiencies to make projects even more impactful.

Along with speakers Schatzie Allen Jefferson and Leamon Abrams, Anjana Mohan shared her experience as a former TAG summer intern and current SDC student. Justin Montgomery, Nicholas Houchin, P.E., and Khoi Le, P.E., also shared their experiences during the Q&A.

“I enjoyed engaging with the students during and after the presentation session,” shared TAG’s Justin Montgomery.



“I’ve been with The Allen Group for over seven years and discussed the wide range of project management experience I gained early on—even after just a short time with TAG.”



*Justin (left) helps facilitate as Schatzie presents at the Watson Seminar*

Justin also shared key benefits that TAG entry level employees receive, including TAG’s career development program and mentors who assist new employee transition from school to working the industry. “TAG also provides a stipend for continual education that can go towards tuition for grad school, certifications, or professional licenses,” Justin explained.

Following the presentation, TAG received a very rewarding email: “It is clear to me that the Allen Group is a team of soulful, passionate, and talented individuals. Thank you for bringing such refreshing energy into our seminar and for using the company not only to set higher standards in relationship building across the industry, but also as a vehicle to catalyze social change!”

## SUMMER INTERNSHIP PROGRAM 2022

TAG’s graduate-student and high-school-student interns helped create another memorable summer supporting a variety of TAG projects and exploring the Bay Area.



*TAG summer interns, employees, and friends in front of the de Young Museum*

Projects included BART Market Street Entry Canopies; SFPUC’s Southeast Community Center; Concord Turntable; and 34.5kV Replacement and Fiber Optic Cable Installation.

**Uravi** worked on the BART Turntable project with TAG Assistant Resident Engineer Sagar Shah and TAG Office Engineer James Mar. “This summer really helped push me out of my comfort zone,” she said. “I’m usually very shy, but my mentor Sagar gave me a lot to do that kept me an active participant on the project. I led a safety minute, carefully read drawings, and identified design issues. I learned a lot!”



**Ling** worked on the BART Market Street Entry Canopies Project with TAG Senior Resident Engineer, Luis Paez, and gained confidence communicating with others in social and professional settings over the summer.

“I’m very grateful to everyone for being so friendly. Even if it was something small

that I had a question about, everyone was willing to explain things to me in detail. I participated in meetings, helped complete and sort out Inspector Daily Reports, and checked the force account sheets along with other tasks, which were all valuable project management experiences.”

For **Hongji**, this was his second summer interning with TAG and working on the BART Market Street Entry Canopies Project. During his first summer with TAG in 2021, Hongji spent half of his time in the office (tracking submittals and completing other paperwork) and half in the field. “This summer I spent most of my time in the field.”



Hongji worked on developing his communication skills while interacting with contractors and subcontractors. “The project was in construction in 2022, requiring much more coordination between various subcontractors, such as glazers and carpenters. I also learned some carpentry basics and how to bend conduit!”



**Subodh** supported BART’s 34.5kV Replacement and Fiber Optic Cable Installation working alongside TAG Senior Resident Engineer Vanessa Young and Office Engineer Larissa Takou-Ayaoh. “This was the best summer I could have asked for,” shared

Subodh. “From the work assignment and professional sessions to the intern social events, it has been a holistic experience.”

At the farewell dinner at the end of the summer, Subodh added, “I really appreciated Larissa being willing to explain project elements and tasks so patiently. Vanessa kept us focused on the work, but also took the time to get to know me beyond the project.”

**Anjana** interned on the Southeast Community Center with TAG Director of Operations for Construction, Peter Ross, and her mentor Assistant Resident Engineer, Justin Montgomery. “Justin was extremely busy with the project nearing its conclusion, but he always made time to talk to me and answer my questions – and I had plenty along the way! He made sure to introduce me to people onsite and included me in so many activities, including contractor presentations and a volunteer event at the Food Bank. Schatzie and the rest of The Allen Group were so welcoming! I felt I could approach them at any time. I am fortunate to have found so many mentors.”



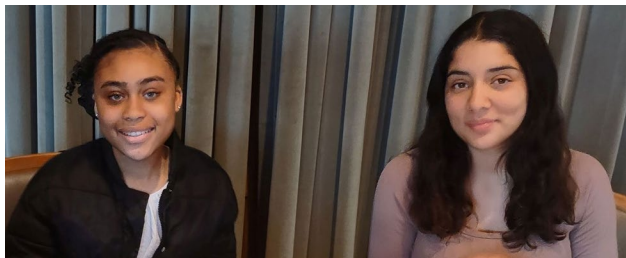
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Beyond the jobsites, summer intern activities included a visit to Alcatraz, the Academy of Sciences and de Young Museum in Golden Gate Park, a pool party on the Peninsula, and a farewell dinner at Scott’s Seafood Bar and Grill in Oakland.



*Touring Alcatraz*

Two of our high school summer interns, Jaqui and Jayla, were NexGeneGirls scholars, an amazing nonprofit that The Allen Group partnered with for the first time this year.



*Jayla (left) and Jaqui (right) at TAG’s intern farewell dinner*

We would like to express our immense gratitude to our TAG Intern Supervising Managers for their guidance, leadership, and strong support of the TAG Internship Program. By providing interns with meaningful assignments and adequate information to grow their technical knowledge and competencies, our interns feel like valuable project team members and gain useful experience of our industry to benefit their career path. Intern Supervisors are key to our program’s success.

## COLLABORATING WITH NEXGENEGIRLS



As part of our work on the SFPUC’s Southeast Community Center, the TAG/HCI JV committed \$100K to the SFPUC’s Social Impact Partnership program. A fortuitous connection led to a first-time collaboration between TAG/HCI and NexGeneGirls, a nonprofit also based in Bayview-Hunters Point (BVHP), San Francisco.



Marlena

Marlena Jackson founded NexGeneGirls in 2011 to provide science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) opportunities to BIPOC (black, indigenous and people of color) females from underrepresented and

historically excluded communities.

“I hit it off with Marlena and Jeanette [NexGeneGirls’ Program Coordinator] the moment we met,” said Schatzie Allen Jefferson. “TAG and NexGeneGirls share the same belief in the importance of cultivating diverse talent and getting youth interested in STEM. Their work is exemplary, and we look forward to continuing our partnership with them in the future.”

Growing up in BVHP, Marlena had family members who received cancer diagnoses. BVHP is a historically black community with high rates of contamination – some of the highest in the country – due to the spread of toxins from the Naval Radiological Defense Laboratory at Hunter’s Point Shipyard.

BVHP is affected by poverty and a myriad of health issues. Marlena saw the need to make a difference, not just in the lives of her family, but the larger BVHP community. “I wanted to reach back and help,” said Marlena. “That’s why we have



NexGeneGirls alums helping our current scholars, and our high school scholars teaching and working with middle school and elementary school students. Ultimately, we hope our scholars will return to their communities to apply their expertise and help make a difference.”

Since its inception, NexGeneGirls has conducted over 1400 workshops. The high school scholars frequently intern in highly-regarded academic and biotech industry labs, including UCSF and the Gladstone Institutes, and receive between 400 and 900 hours of research experience over multiple summers of participation. 100% of NexGeneGirls scholars go on to major in four-year STEM degrees, and four scholars have received full STEM academic scholarships.

NexGeneGirls is committed to making math accessible and creating positive representation to help young girls “see” themselves as scientists. “As a student in elementary school,” explained Jeanette Wright, NexGeneGirls Program Coordinator, “most of the people around me had a specific idea of what a ‘scientist’ should look like, and that image didn’t tend to include people like me.” Jeanette also commented on the tendency to give boys and girls gender-specific toys to play with. “We’re here to change those ingrained assumptions about what is and isn’t possible.”



Working with the TAG/HCI JV in 2022 has helped expand NexGeneGirls’ internship offerings. “We tend to engage in the sciences,” said Marlena, “and we feel very fortunate to have the opportunity for two of our scholars to start exploring more of the ‘E’ – the engineering side of STEM, as well as embracing the ‘M’ – mathematics, which carries across all areas of STEM. Jayla and Jaqui have been especially flexible and have cultivated growth mindsets. They went through a science bootcamp but quickly adapted to learning about design and construction work with The Allen Group.”



*Jaqui (center left) and Jayla (center right) at the NexGeneGirls graduation*

NexGeneGirls Scholar Jayla shared some of her thoughts on the experience: “My sister did NexGeneGirls in high school and later pursued a major in biology – that’s how I found out about the program,” said Jayla.

“My summer with The Allen Group was educational and fun,” added Jayla. “We went on trips to Alcatraz, Mission Rock, Crane Cove, and Pier 70, just to name a few. I’ve learned about construction materials and differences in types of concrete, such as permeable and impermeable. This internship helped me become more knowledgeable of cosmetology, a career I’m interested in, by learning about hair porosity, and how hair absorbs moisture.”

## TAG HELPS FORMER INTERN TONY JOE LAUNCH ENGINEERING CAREER

TAG is committed to helping underserved communities and students of color break into and succeed in the design, construction, and engineering industries.



*Tony Joe*

TAG’s Chief Growth Officer Leamon Abrams first met Tony Joe at the National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE) 2018 Conference in Detroit and remained in touch over email. “Even though we met in Detroit, and he was working on finishing his engineering studies at the University of Nevada Las Vegas, Tony hoped to start his career in his hometown of San Francisco, where The Allen Group is also located.”

TAG also connected Tony with TAG Senior Project Manager Robert James, both of whom share an academic background in electrical engineering. “I was struck by Tony’s character, integrity, and honesty,” said Robert. Robert helped Tony update his resume and provided suggestions on showcasing Tony’s skills and their application to different industries. When TAG started its work supporting the Southeast Community Center, Leamon reached out about a summer

internship with TAG that would present a valuable opportunity for Tony.

“Tony was a quick learner and willing to work on any assignment given,” said TAG Assistant Resident Engineer Justin Montgomery, who worked with and mentored Tony during his internship on the Southeast Community Center Project. “Tony has a calm and likable demeanor and is very easy to work with. At the same time, he wasn’t passive. Tony would ask questions and speak up if he noticed something wrong. Tony added a lot of value to the team by assisting with various project tasks. It’s been a privilege to work with him.”



Tony Joe working onsite at the Southeast Community Center

Speaking of his experience, Tony shared: “The internship and project team did a great job of preparing me to succeed in a full-time position. Having an electrical engineering background and working in construction management provided me with a unique opportunity to experience an engineer’s day-to-day life in this field.”

“I was exposed to a variety of useful areas beyond electrical engineering,” said Tony, “from decision making, budget tracking, to field surveys. I also learned the business side of engineering and how essential management and planning are on a daily basis. All of this helped me become a more well-rounded professional and better able to succeed in my full-time employment.”

Tony added, “As a San Francisco native, working on the Southeast Community Center Project was really inspiring. This state-of-the-art building is located in one of SF’s most underserved areas – Bayview-Hunters Point. I hope the Center will help support those residents who need it most.”

Following his internship, The Allen Group worked with Tony to help him to secure a position as an engineer. Tony applied and received a full-time offer from TSE, one of the firms TAG identified for consideration. Tony Joe’s successful transition from school to starting his career was made possible in part by

TAG/HCI’s collaboration with the SFPUC and the Southeast Community Center Internship, resulting in relevant job exposure and networking opportunities.

## TAG ANNOUNCEMENTS

### TAG Birthdays



#### August 2022

Phil Adams  
Thomas Aguilar  
Steve Kappler  
James Mar  
Ventress Sanford-Ware

#### October 2022

Rajshree Bhardwaj  
Schatzie Jefferson

#### November 2022

Leamon Abrams  
Peter Ross  
Luis Paez

#### September 2022

Gloria Abdullah-Lewis  
Hanna Asfaha  
Khoi Le

#### December 2022

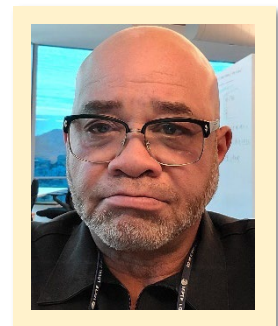
Sagar Shah  
Bianca Mallory  
Nicholas Houchin  
Julie Ruetz

## Welcome to our new TAG colleagues!



Robert Sebez

FIELD  
INSPECTOR



Marti Martin

FIELD  
INSPECTOR



## Schatzie Jefferson Named SFO Museum Advisory Board Member

“We are thrilled to have Schatzie join SFO Museum’s Advisory Board,” said Tim O’Brien, Director and Chief Curator of the SFO Museum. “The Museum is very fortunate to benefit from her insights as we continually improve our organization.”

Tim explained that as a member, Schatzie will join quarterly board meetings. During these meetings, the SFO Museum reports on exhibition installations, collections acquisitions, terminal operations, construction updates, and personnel concerns. “Museum administration will also provide a forecast of what lies ahead in the following quarter,” he said.

Advisory Board Members are encouraged to share any questions or concerns and to provide feedback. An open line of communication will be maintained for members to provide any inputs between meetings or requests for additional information.

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In our next TAG newsletter, we will delve into the history of the Allen family’s contributions to art at the San Francisco International Airport.

## BART HQ Project Wins More Awards!

Previously Won:

- **Construction Management Association of America (CMAA):** Project Achievement Award: “Buildings under \$100M”
- **CMAA:** Project Achievement Award: “Project of the Year”

Additional Awards:

- **International Partnering Institute (IPI):** Diamond Level John L. Martin Partnered Project of the Year Award 2022
- **IPI:** Sue Dyer Innovation Award 2022
- **Engineering News-Record:** Best Projects Award in the Interior/Tenant Improvement category - ENR California region 2022

## EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT: RAJSHREE BHARDWAJ & SHARAYU BODE

The success of the BART Headquarters Project – which has since won five project awards – would not have been possible without the dedication of Rajshree (TAG Assistant Resident Engineer) and Sharayu (TAG Office Engineer). Both Rajshree and Sharayu started at The Allen Group as summer interns: Rajshree in 2019 and Sharayu in 2021, and each subsequently became full time employees.

Rajshree came to the US from India in August 2018 to pursue her master’s in Civil Engineering at the Georgia Institute of Technology.



*From coworkers to close friends: Rajshree (left) and Sharayu (right)*

Sharayu arrived two years later from India in January 2020 – a big life change undertaken just before the pandemic – and earned her master’s in Civil Engineering at California State University, Fullerton, graduating in January 2022.

As Assistant Resident Engineer, Rajshree was responsible for mentoring then-summer-intern Sharayu on the BART Headquarters Project.

“When I first met Sharayu, I only planned on shaking her hand, but then she came up and gave me a big hug and was so friendly and open that I knew we would get along after that,” said Rajshree.

When Sharayu joined the project, it was already nearing completion, but there was still a lot for her to learn.

“Rajshree is smart and empowering,” said Sharayu. “She excels at explaining concepts in a way that’s easy to understand. There’s so much to catch up on when you join a project. Rajshree helped me understand a lot of important project aspects in a short time period: what the design-build project

delivery method was, the project status, roles of other team members, submittals, change orders, etc.”



*Enjoying project success at the CMAA Awards Gala*

After taking the lead on the project, Rajshree ensured the project continued to run smoothly while minimizing impacts to the current building occupants. “Time was valuable, so we carefully coordinated multiple project activities to take place simultaneously,” she said.

Sharayu found it particularly helpful that Rajshree would record their virtual meetings when she provided a tutorial – such as how to execute a change order – for Sharayu’s future reference.

Rajshree also maintained a monthly check-in for Sharayu. Together, they set goals. Each month, Rajshree and Sharayu assessed if the previous month’s goals were met, or if not, why. “These meetings really helped me stay on track,” said Sharayu.

As a result of these check-ins, Rajshree realized Sharayu had a knack for estimating and made sure Sharayu had future opportunities to leverage this skill on the project. In another instance, they set the goal of Sharayu having more interaction with the contractor and architects during meetings. Rajshree typically provided project updates to the contractor but gave the responsibility to Sharayu to help her gain experience.

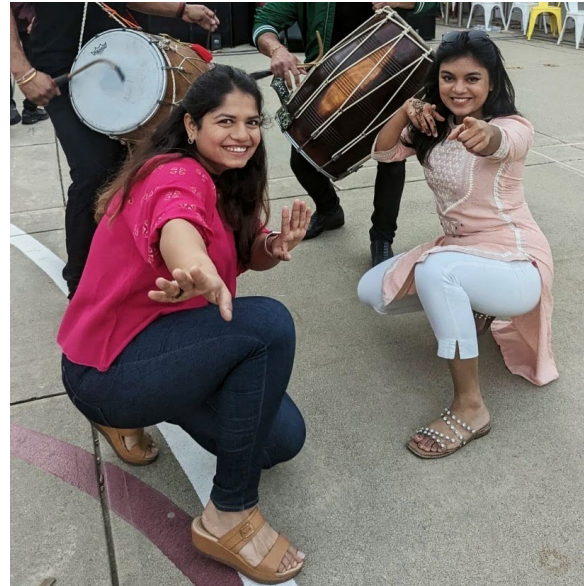
Outside of work, lunch became a fun time to further build their bond. “Sharayu is a foodie, so we kept trying new places,” said Rajshree. Some of their favorites included trying out coffee places (including one where Sharayu became a regular and the owner would start making her chicken shawarma order as soon as he saw Sharayu approaching), Gregory’s Gourmet Desserts, Farley’s East – among several others.

The personal and professional trust Rajshree and Sharayu built helped them work even more effectively. “At first, I would always ask Rajshree to go over my work,” said Sharayu,

“and then at some point she said, ‘I trust you,’ and was confident in me being more independent.”

Rajshree agreed on the importance of trust, adding that her relationship with Sharayu and having each other’s support helped them take better informed, calculated risks.

“Sharayu was really fun to work with, and I knew I could always rely on her – it was a great team effort,” said Rajshree. “Addressing issues and overcoming challenges together helped us deliver the project successfully.”



*Rajshree and Sharayu at a Diwali celebration*