



TAG CONNECTION

WINTER 2022



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Dear TAG Team,

I am hopeful and optimistic that 2022 will bring us some light at the end of the very long tunnel that has been the global pandemic. With all that we've endured, I am particularly grateful for the hard work and dedication everyone has provided to our projects and clients. Your contributions are truly inspiring. Challenges will continue to come our way, but I'm confident that with your resiliency we will rise to the occasion. Every day we emerge a stronger company, ready for the future.

The Allen Group (TAG) Executive Committee has been working on employee initiatives that reflect our commitment to health, safety, and professional development to meet the diverse customer requirements we oversee every day. This edition of **TAG Connection** provides a high-level overview of the training initiatives introduced in 2021 and future sessions.

These trainings are available to all employees and cover topics such as PM/CM Methods, Injury and Illness Protection, Site-Specific Health and Safety, and a BART-specific bootcamp. These trainings ensure a collective understanding and application of our practices as we continue to move forward and meet the objectives of our company, industry, and clients.

Read on to learn more about 2021's Stanford University's annual Watson Seminar in Construction and Engineering Management. This marks The Allen Group's 10th year of participation in this vital graduate engineering student forum. We also look back at our successful 2021 summer internship, revived after 2020's hiatus due to the pandemic.

For our next edition, you'll find a new column, "*Best Practices*." In it, TAG employees will share authored reports that discuss and digest TAG's application of proven best practices for sectors where we provide services. We look forward to sharing the principles and methodologies that guide our team's work, and other key insights gained from the specialized support we've provided our clients over the years.

Between our own resilience and the company's ongoing commitment to values and new initiatives, I'm confident that 2022 will be an outstanding year – a year that brings health, peace, and happiness to each of our employees and partners. It is during difficult times like these that having family, friends, and a professional support system are more critical than ever. We are always here to assist you. We encourage you to reach out at any time. Please stay safe and

healthy. Take time to practice self-care; thank you for all that you do.



With respect and gratitude,

TAG HR SPOTLIGHT

The Allen Group Continues its Learning and Training Series, Micaela Mazzini, HR Director, The Allen Group, LLC

Continuous learning and enhanced staff agility are integral to keeping pace with shifting operations and rapidly changing industry requirements. In 2021, TAG began offering a series of online courses and discussions, *The Learning & Training Series*, which serves to refresh PM/CM core competencies and provides the opportunity to generate new insights. Supporting our staff in their professional development is deeply valued at The Allen Group. We are always looking for opportunities to build on the technical and professional knowledge and talents of our team.

In order to deliver continuous improvement through structured leadership and professional development sessions, these trainings focus on enhancing the core competencies needed to meet and exceed client requirements and expectations. The Series is designed to focus on building the knowledge, skills, and performance goals for staff assigned to client-based construction and project management projects.

In 2022 we hope to provide a more robust training schedule to cover CalOSHA 30-hour Safety Training, QA/Inspection and Risk Assessment, and related topics. If you have a specific training topic you would like to see offered, please contact Micaela Mazzini, our HR Manager, at micaela@the-allen-group.com.

Stay tuned as we continue to provide additional details about future training sessions and workshops for 2022. We look forward to seeing all of you at the next training. Let's discover, learn, grow and lead together!

TAG'S RECOGNITION PROGRAM

A new way to say "thank you" for high performance on the job is coming to The Allen Group! There's some terrific work taking place, and we want to recognize and reward these outstanding TAG contributions and performances in a meaningful way. Performance is something we should celebrate every day – not just at the end of the year, not just during a review.

The TAG Recognition Program will make it easy for you to praise a co-worker, support a supervisor, or acknowledge your own professional development, hard work, and dedication. The reward and recognition program will involve both formal and informal recognition that everyone can earn and enjoy.

More details coming soon, including how to give and receive recognition. Future communications will explain the types of performance that should be recognized and the relevant recognition tools.

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



TAG PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

BART Headquarters (BHQ) Project, Raphael Garcia, PMP, BHQ Oversight Manager, The Allen Group, LLC

In December 2019, BART purchased a 244,287 square foot building at 2150 Webster Street in Oakland. The purchase had multiple goals: to avoid a 60% rent increase, save public funds, and support Oakland and regional economic recovery. As of last July, all 1,300 Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) staff successfully moved into the new building.

TAG has played two important roles on this project: first, by providing project/construction management support as part of the agency's first Progressive Design-Build project; and second, by helping the District achieve an overall 30% participation goal for small businesses.

Prior to the move, BART's headquarters had been located at 300 Lakeside Drive in Oakland's Uptown Area since October 2004 where BART staff occupied approximately 360,000 square feet across 14 different floors. However, when the agency's lease faced expiration in July 2019 and a \$3M rent increase to renew, the BART Board sought to identify a more cost-effective solution for its headquarters.

In early 2019, BART decided to pursue a course of action that would save the agency at least \$210 million over a 25-year period on a future lease. In December 2019, BART purchased the 10-story building.

In June 2020, the BART Board of Directors voted to award a \$58 million Progressive Design-Build contract to Turner Construction Company and RIM Architecture to design and build the new headquarters. The Allen Group was

selected to provide Construction Management services, with Raphael Garcia serving in a lead project implementation role as Oversight Manager. This role required taking on a wide range of duties, including acting as the project, design, and construction manager, in addition to being responsible for scheduling and project controls.

Construction began on January 11, 2021 and Turner completed the necessary work on levels 1-10 to allow BART to move in on schedule in July 2021. This critical project was successfully fast-tracked through the tireless efforts of the entire project team using a largely virtual process of remote meetings. The Substantial Completion date has since been moved to March 2022 as additional work is now underway.



Exterior of New BART Headquarters, Oakland, CA

TAG's project team included the support of Darshit Jasani (Office Engineer), Rajshree Bhardwaj (Assistant Resident Engineer), and Sharayu Bode (Office Engineer) who carefully adhered to strict company and client health and safety protocols and best practices.

"I really want to thank you [TAG] for adding valuable members to our BART team to deliver the BHQ Project," said Emilia Sánchez, BART Group Manager. "Raphael, Rajshree and Sharayu were flexible with the varying needs of our Progressive Design Build contract. They were aware of the hard deadline and took ownership of the project from day one. They never approached me with issues without potential solutions. They have set the bar at a new high and I look forward to working with other members of your staff that bring the same enthusiasm and positive attitude to future projects."

The new facility features a modern industrial aesthetic and new art pieces. The interior of the building provides open workstations, enclosed offices, several conference rooms, sealed concrete floors, and exposed ceilings. The new Board Room includes platform seating for a 9-member dais

and state-of-the-art digital technology and equipment. In the future, there will be a street-activating suite for a third party tenant on the northwest corner of the property.



New Boardroom, BART HQ, Oakland, CA

Also significant for the BHQ project was the Small Business Goal. BART was fully committed to ensuring local businesses participated in and benefited from this project. TAG's Small Business Support Services provided pre-award and post-award assistance to help achieve the small business goal. The Allen Group team is very pleased to be a part of a project that is both for the people and by the people of Oakland.

As the fifth largest rapid transit agency in the United States, the new headquarters reflect BART's priorities and values. With the pandemic challenging many transit agencies that rely on ridership revenue and federal funding, BART's new headquarters showcase the operational resilience of the organization to keep moving forward and achieve cost efficiencies during unprecedented circumstances. The new BHQ has been an exciting project that we are privileged to have helped the agency deliver.



Interior Space, BART HQ, Oakland, CA

STANFORD WATSON SEMINAR: ENGINEERING CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT

Elizabeth McDonald, Senior Project Manager, The Allen Group, LLC

Last October, TAG participated in Stanford University's annual Watson Seminar in Construction Engineering and Management, a student-to-industry forum sponsored every fall by Stanford's Graduate School of Engineering. The sponsoring professor, Brian Sedar, invites Bay Area companies in the construction management industry to share information about their project experiences, industry trends, lessons learned, and professional opportunities for graduate students seeking internships or career openings across various engineering disciplines. TAG has been a participant-sponsor of the Watson Seminar for many years, presenting in their fall forum and providing mentorship, internships, and full-time employment opportunities.

Following a remote presentation in 2020 via Zoom due to COVID-19 restrictions, The Allen Group was pleased to travel to Palo Alto this year to meet with students in person. Schatzie and TAG employees spent the afternoon with Professor Sedar and approximately 45 students, including Masters and PhD candidates in Civil and Environmental Engineering, Management Science & Engineering, and Sustainable Design & Construction. Schatzie introduced The Allen Group and described the distinctiveness of TAG as a competitive supplier of construction management services, and the uniqueness of a small, diverse, woman-owned company with an unparalleled commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Justin Montgomery, Nick Houchin, Amudhini Konguvel, Raphael Garcia and Libby McDonald, along with former TAG employee Dr. Anthony Kinslow, spoke to the students. In addition to presenting highlights of TAG's SFPUC Southeast Community Center, BART Market Street Canopies, and BART Headquarters projects, they shared unique career experiences and perspectives, and discussed the advantages of working in a small construction management firm on large, complex, public projects.

Following the presentation, the TAG representatives joined Stanford students at a reception and learned about their studies, work experiences, and goals, and answered any student questions. Engaging with diverse and exceptional students is always a highlight for The Allen Group team, and this was another enriching event.



Watson Seminar, Stanford, CA

TAG SUMMER INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Julianne Ruetz, Marketing Communications Specialist, The Allen Group, LLC

After pausing the Summer Internship program during 2020 due to COVID-19, TAG was excited to welcome five interns in 2021 for a rewarding summer of valuable project experience, mentorship, and bonding.

The interns worked on a variety of projects, including the BART Canopies Project, SFPUC Southeast Community Center, and the relocation of the BART Headquarters. Several TAG employees served as hands-on mentors.

Mentors included Peter Ross, Raphael Garcia, Vanessa Young, Luis Paez, Justin Montgomery, Rajshree Bhardwaj, and Nick Houchin, who generously offered their time and expertise to ensure successful project experiences. Thank you again to our TAG employees for taking the time to share their knowledge and expertise while making our interns feel supported and welcome.

This year's program combined virtual activities, including a Trivia Night that drew participation across The Allen Group, with several in-person outdoor meetups: a hike in Muir Woods, a trip to Angel Island, and a scavenger hunt in Golden Gate Park.

The scavenger hunt in particular was a highlight for the interns, according to Justin Montgomery, who led the event. He provided a series of clues about different locations and local history within the park as the interns worked together to navigate from place to place.



TAG Summer Interns at Muir Woods National Monument/Mount Tamalpais, Marin County, CA

At the farewell dinner, former intern Sharayu Bode (BE in Civil Engineering, Sinhgad College of Engineering) expressed how much she enjoyed her summer experience at the intern farewell dinner, including the opportunity to not only make new connections, but lifelong friends. She stated that this had been her best summer experience in the U.S., having previously moved from India to attend graduate school in California. She has really enjoyed working with TAG employee Rajshree, with whom Sharayu found she had a lot in common.

TAG employee and intern mentor Justin Montgomery noted: “Every year, I look forward to working with our interns. Whether it’s personal or project-related, it’s rewarding to share information and mentor others in the same way I’ve been mentored in the past. The interns had a great time with the outdoor activities and it was fun to see them laughing and getting to know each other over the summer, improving their skills, and reaching out with work questions.”



Trip to Angel Island, San Francisco, CA

The TAG interns gained varied and valuable experiences. Hongji Lin (BA in Architecture, University of California, Berkeley) was extremely appreciative and shared his gratitude for being given the opportunity to work with The

Allen Group for the summer and having Nick Houchin as his mentor. Harrison Forch (currently completing both a BS in Computer Science/Computer Engineering, University of Southern California; and a BA in Computer Science and Mathematics, Lewis & Clark College) developed an app to help BART IT track equipment leased to other BART employees, driving efficiency and streamlining a formerly manual process. Daniel Lopez (completing a BS in Civil Engineering, Santa Clara University) was immersed in the office work integral to the Programming, Planning, and Design phases of a project. Tony Eldridge (BS in Electrical Engineering, University of Nevada) enhanced his interpersonal and project management skills working alongside Justin Montgomery on the SFPUC Southeast Community Center.



Scavenger Hunt in Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, CA

TAG’s internship program is also a conduit for finding full-time employees. Two summer interns from our 2019 program, Larissa Takou-Ayaoh and Rajshree Bhardwaj, have since joined full-time and are invaluable members of the TAG team. From the 2021 summer program, interns Tony Eldridge and Sharayu Bode continued to work for TAG through December 2021. We are excited to welcome back Sharayu – who graduated with a Master’s in Civil Engineering from California State University, Fullerton in December – as a full-time TAG hire. We are also excited to welcome back Amudhini Khonguvel, a former intern from our 2018 summer program, as a full-time employee. If you know of any individuals for our Summer 2022 program, please contact Micaela Mazzini at micaela@the-allen-group.com.

TAG BIRTHDAYS

During the long pandemic and associated changes to our office operations, we've missed the opportunity to celebrate our TAG employee birthdays. So, here's to you!

HAPPY YOU-DAY! We wish you a safe, healthy, and fantastic year ahead!



We would also like to wish a very happy birthday to our TAG founder LaVerda O. Allen, who turned 90 on January 30th!



TAG ANNOUNCEMENTS

A warm welcome to our new TAG colleagues!

- **Amudhini Khonguvel:** BART Canopies, *Office Engineer*
- **Gloria Abdullah-Lewis:** Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Program Management Oversight Project(s), *Contracts and Procurement Manager*
- **James Mar:** BART Concord Yard Turntable, *Office Engineer*
- **Leamon Abrams:** San Francisco Office, *Director of Business Development and Communications*
- **Olga Keselman:** Oakland Office, *Accounting Assistant*
- **Roshni MacFarland:** San Francisco Office, *Executive Assistant to Schatzie Allen-Jefferson*
- **Sagar Shah, PE:** BART Concord Yard Turntable, *Resident Engineer*
- **Sharayu Bode:** BART HQ, *Office Engineer*
- **Simon Yohannes:** Oakland Office, *Senior Accountant*



PORT OF OAKLAND CONTRACT WON!

In January, TAG was selected as a consultant for the On-Call Construction Management Support Services Contract for Non-Federally Funded Projects at the Port of Oakland. Our winning team also includes Orion Engineers & Associates, Arcadis, Hollins Consulting Inc., and M Lee Corporation, and is well equipped to deliver CM services for the Port's Aviation, Maritime, and Commercial Real estate construction projects.

The Allen Group is a well-regarded partner of the Port; most recently providing field inspection services for the Port's \$2.3-million Sewer Replacement Program, and previously providing construction management services for the \$140-million Oakland International Airport Roadway Project. We look forward to serving the Port once again in helping to deliver successful projects with enduring value.



M LEE CORPORATION



FUTURE NEWSLETTERS:

WE NEED YOUR INPUT AND IDEAS

Your contributions help make this newsletter possible! As we get back into the rhythm of a quarterly publication, a gentle reminder that we may reach out to you for contributing information to subsequent newsletters. We hope you are as excited as we are to continue sharing pertinent information and employee insights across the firm.



2021 Summer Intern Trip to Angel Island, San Francisco,