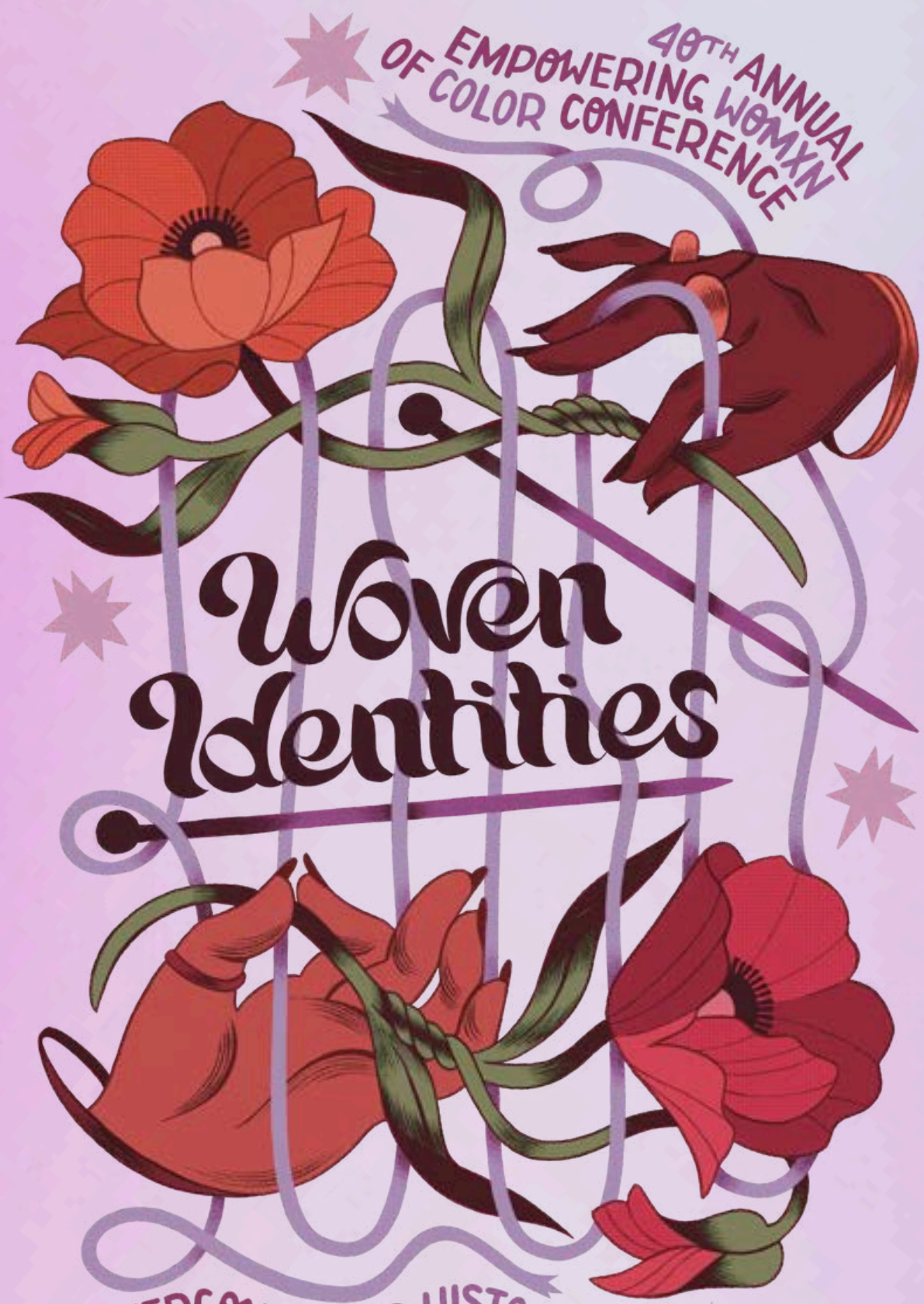


40TH ANNUAL  
EMPOWERING WOMEN  
OF COLOR CONFERENCE

# Woven Identities

INTERCONNECTED HISTORIES  
EMPOWERED FUTURES





# WELCOME!

Thank you for attending our 40th Annual  
Empowering Womxn of Color Conference!

The Empowering Womxn of Color Conference (EWOCC) was founded in 1985 by a group of undergraduate students at the University of California, Berkeley as their semester project for a DE-Cal (Democratic Education at Cal) class. The project, entitled “Women of Color in the United States,” received an overwhelmingly positive response, and students decided to organize another event with the help of the Graduate Assembly (GA), Berkeley’s graduate student government. Today, EWOCC is one of the longest running conferences in the nation to present women of color with an opportunity to address the racial, class, and gender issues facing women of color. The conference is open to all women\* of all ages.

*\*EWOCC uses womxn/women to describe all who experience life through the lens of womxn/women in body, spirit, identity past, present, future and fluid.*

## **Woven Identities: Interconnected Histories, Empowered Futures**

In this 40th Annual EWOCC, we set out to create a space to celebrate the interconnectedness of women of color across different stages of life, celebrating the rich tapestry of identities and cultures. We will reflect on the importance of community building, solidarity, and the evolution of identity while honoring the legacy of older generations.

If you have any questions or needs throughout the conference, do not hesitate to reach out to our planning committee members or volunteers.



# AGENDA

## **Check-in and Breakfast - Pauley Ballroom**

*See Catering on Page 17*

**8:00 AM**

## **Opening Ceremony - Pauley Ballroom**

*With Wakan Wiya and Sogorea Te' Land Trust*

**9:00 AM**

## **Morning Workshops - Pauley Ballroom and MLK Rooms**

*See Workshops on Page 6*

**10:00 AM**

## **Keynote Discussion and Lunch - Pauley Ballroom**

*Featuring Ericka Huggins. See Catering on Page 15*

**11:30 AM**

## **Entertainment and Vendor Fair - Pauley Ballroom**

*Featuring Azuah and Youth Speaks*

**1:30 PM**

## **Panel Discussion - Pauley Ballroom**

*"Past, Present, Future: Sewing the Threads of Our Identity"*

**2:15 PM**

## **Afternoon Workshops - Pauley Ballroom and MLK Rooms**

*See Workshops on Page 13*

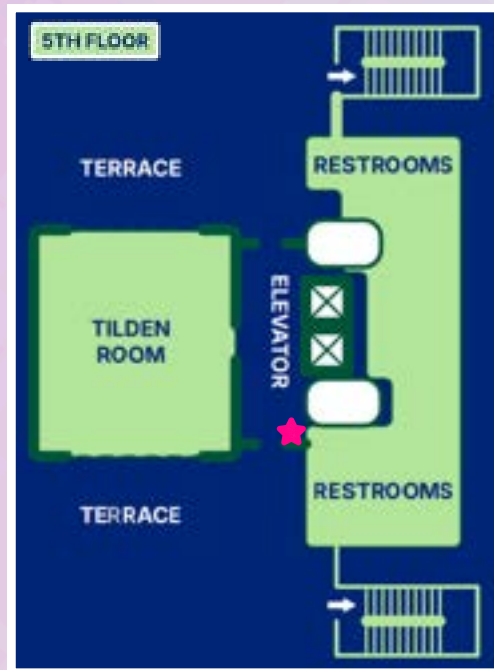
**3:30 PM**

## **Closing Ceremony and Giveaway - Pauley Ballroom**

*Featuring Napaquetzalli*

**5:00 PM**

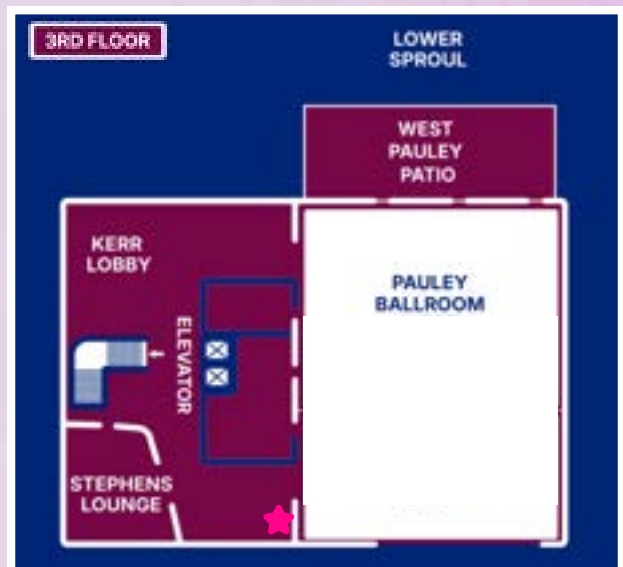
# NAVIGATION



Take the elevators from Pauley Ballroom to the fifth floor. The Tilden Room is located directly south of the elevators.



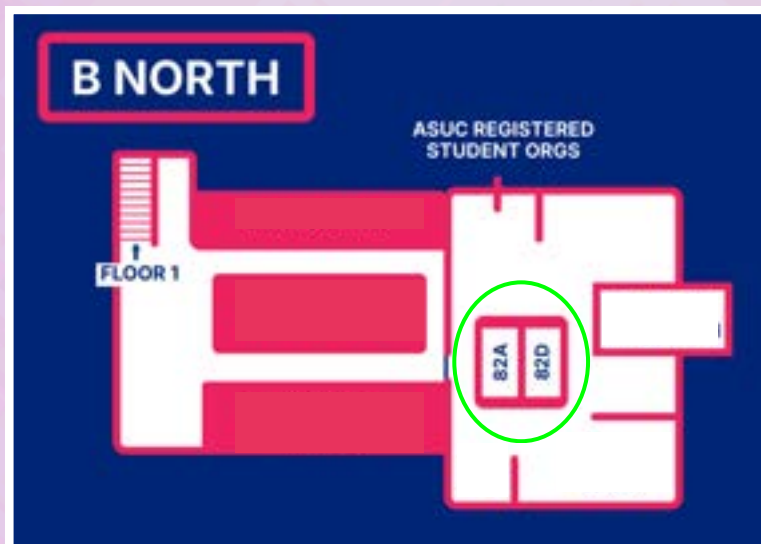
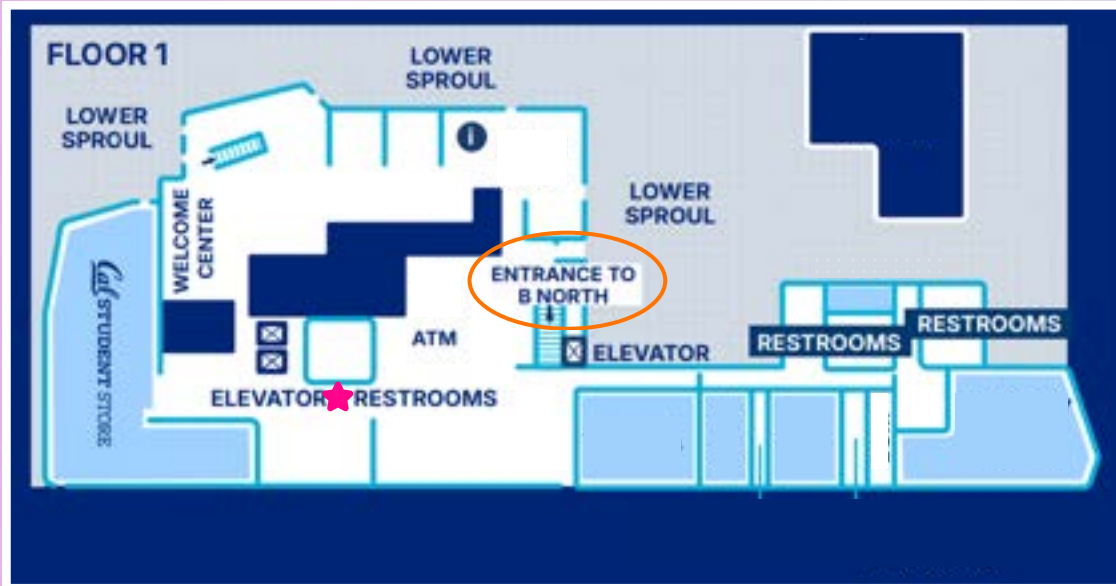
Take the AX staircase or elevator to the 3rd floor to Pauley Ballroom, Kerr Lobby, and Stephens Lounge.



The West Pauley Patio is a dedicated Decompression Area. All are welcome to step outside, as needed.

★ water refill stations

# NAVIGATION



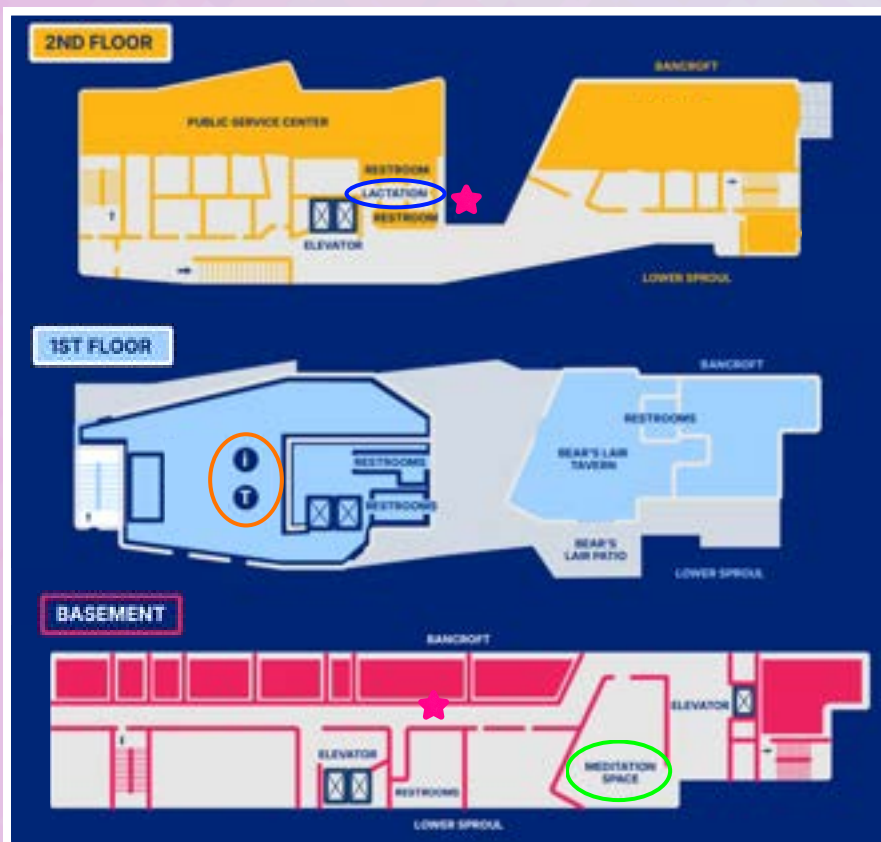
Take the elevators from Pauley Ballroom to the first floor of MLK. From the elevators, navigate to the staircase and elevators located towards the Northside of the building labeled “Entrance to B North.” Descend to the basement floor and travel towards the northside of the floor to find the 82A and 82D workshop spaces.

The entrance to BNorth is circled in orange. 82A and 82D are circled in green.

★ water refill stations



# NAVIGATION AND WIFI



Lactation and meditation rooms are available in Eshleman Hall, located West of the MLK Student Union Building. All elevators require keycard access, so if you need to use these spaces, please request access from the information desk located on Eshleman's first floor or notify a volunteer.

The lactation space is circled in blue and the meditation space is circled in green. The information desk is circled in orange.

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## WIFI

### Network: Cal Visitor

*No password. After selecting "Cal Visitor" in your wifi settings, follow the prompt on your browser to gain access to the network.*



# **OPENING CEREMONY**

## **Wakan Wiya Two Spirit Drum**

The Wakan Wiya Two Spirit Drum was founded by Indigenous Two Spirit women in the Bay Area with the manda to support Two Spirit Indigiqueer TG/GNC LGBTQIA+ communities, their families, friends and allies. We support the return of Two Spirit peoples to Indigenous drum traditions where healing medicina is for all.

The Wakan Wiya Two Spirit Drum is the Drum in Residence at Xochicalli- House of Flowers: IndigeQueer Medicine and Healing, a community organization dedicated to creating spaces centering IndigeQueer community and offering BIPOC TG/GNC LGBTQIA+ ancestral healing programming.

Follow us on IG @wakanwiyadrum

## **Sogorea Te' Land Trust**

Sogorea Te' Land Trust is an urban Indigenous women-led land trust based in the San Francisco Bay Area that facilitates the return of Indigenous land to Indigenous people.

## **Berkeley sits in the territory of Xučyun.**

The Empowering Womxn of Color Conference recognizes that UC Berkeley sits on the territory of xučyun (Huichin), the original landscape of the Chochenyo speaking Ohlone people, the successors of the sovereign Verona Band of Alameda County.

This region continues to be of great importance to the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe and other familial descendants of the Verona Band. We recognize that every member of the Berkeley community has, and continues to benefit from, the use and occupation of this land, since the institution's founding in 1868. Consistent with our values of community, inclusion and diversity, we have a responsibility to acknowledge and make visible the university's relationship to Native peoples.

As members of the Berkeley and Bay Area community, it is vitally important that we not only recognize the history of the land on which we stand, but also, we recognize that the Muwekma Ohlone people are alive and flourishing members of the Berkeley and broader Bay Area communities today.



# MORNING WORKSHOPS

## **Wakan Wiya Two Spirit Drum Healing Drum Circle**

**Location: Pauley Ballroom**

All are invited to circle up and put down tobacco prayers and intentions for our beloved communities and families! We are unveiling our visions for this year's Spring and the seeds we have planted and tend to together. At the drum we conjure for ourselves and our communities, we move medicine for and with each other. We invite you to join IndigeQueer BIPOC community in this time we make for ourselves to dream and vision our wellness, all under these skies here in Huichium, land of the Confederated Villages of the Lisjan Ohlone. Healing Drum Circles with the Wakan Wiya Two Spirit Drum and drumkeeper Zamora are a chance to tap into collective healing/prayer/ meditation work through the heartbeat.



## **Roots Restored: Reconnecting Family on the Path to Freedom**

**Location: Stephens Lounge**

Family is where we first learn connection, trust, and love, but it's also where unresolved patterns and pain can take root. Roots Restored invites you to embark on a healing journey to strengthen these foundational ties. This transformative workshop is designed to help individuals and families rediscover their bonds, heal generational wounds, and foster authentic connection. Through a blend of guided introspection, interactive activities, and actionable tools, participants will explore the roots of family dynamics, break free from limiting patterns, and rebuild relationships with love, understanding, and freedom at their core.



## **Living in Color: Tools for BIPOC Women to Manage Stress in Uncertain Times**

**Location: Tilden Lounge**

Nina Simone, in her song "You've Got to Learn," advised, "you've got to learn to leave the table when love's no longer being served. Taking care of yourself means knowing when to walk away from toxic situations." In these tumultuous and uncertain times, self-care is essential for BIPOC women. The compounding effects of political turmoil, systemic racism, and social inequality place an immense burden on the mental, emotional, and social well-being of women of color.



This workshop aims to provide practical tools and strategies for BIPOC women to manage stress in an increasingly unpredictable world. This workshop will empower participants to cultivate resilience, enhance self-care, and foster mental well-being in the face of adversity. Participants will engage in activities that help them practice self-care routines, develop practical tools for stress management, and learn how to cultivate strength during difficult times. Such activities will include meditation and relaxation techniques, interactive exercises, and activities that foster movement and connection.



# MORNING WORKSHOPS

## **Embodying Self-Determination: A Somatic Writing Workshop on Love and Liberation for Women, Femme and Nonbinary Organizers**

**Location: BNorth 82A**

This experiential workshop seeks to create a space that allows women, femmes and nonbinary folks to name and engage with the unique challenges faced in movement spaces. Together participants will explore “self-determination” as a part of movement building and an antidote. Participants will learn and have an opportunity to practice somatic skills that support embodied dignity and vision a fully liberated existence in movement spaces.

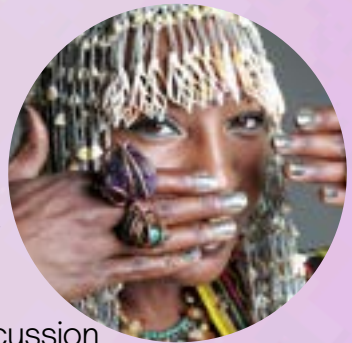
Participants will be guided through somatic exploration and writing prompts to support an embodied exploration and understanding of what it means to orient towards dignity and self determination as a north star to guide their journeys through leading in movement space.



## **From Follicles to Toenails**

**Location: BNorth 82D**

For hundreds of years, "From Follicles to Toenails" women of color bodied humans have been under attack, removed from our cultural practices and conditioned to view ourselves by European beauty standards. Western society has continued to systematically implement ineffective preventative care, healing modalities and treatments that do not align physically mentally or spiritually. With a focus on nature as our provider, "From Follicles to Toenails" is a discussion led, information based self-care workshop addressing the cosmetic products we commonly use that cause us (intentional?) harm. A safe space dedicated to initiate healing, participants will be encouraged to share their experiences, engage with one another and gain knowledge about practical ways to care for their own hair, skin and nails. Not only will individuals learn about simple, inexpensive and effective rituals that can be incorporated into daily life, they will also have the opportunity to create tangible products to take home. The stereotypes, let's talk about it. The commodified ways that our bodies are suppressed, let's talk about it. How beautiful we are from "Follicles to Toenails", let's talk about it. After we talk about it, let's take back our power and make some magic today. We can smash the system one follicle, one hair, one pore, one nail at a time.





## **KEYNOTE DISCUSSION**



**Ericka Huggins**  
**Human Rights Activist, Poet, and Scholar**

Ericka Huggins is a human rights activist, poet, educator, Black Panther leader and former political prisoner. For the past 30 years, she has lectured throughout the United States and internationally. Her extraordinary life experiences have enabled her to speak personally and eloquently on issues relating to the physical and emotional well-being of women, children and youth, whole being education, over incarceration, and the role of the spiritual practice in sustaining activism and promoting change.

Ericka is the co-author of two books, *Insights and Poems* (1974) and *Comrade Sister: Women of the Black Panther Party* (2022). Her biography, *Black Panther Woman: The Political and Spiritual Life of Ericka Huggins* was published in January 2025.



**Carmela Obscura**  
**Moderator**



# ENTERTAINMENT

## Azuah

Azuah, a queer Latinx musician native to the Bay Area now based in Oakland, has enchanted audiences across the globe for over a decade with their unique blend of alternative soul and folk music. Their music delves deep into themes of identity and queerness, creating a powerful and resonant experience that celebrates self-discovery and acceptance. Azuah's sound combines the rhythms of their Latinx heritage with contemporary influences, resulting in a mesmerizing journey of sound and self-exploration.



## Youth Speaks

We create spaces that challenge youth to develop and amplify their voices as creators of societal change. Through our Public Poets Fellowship, we innovate and create new poems, ensemble performances, digital films, and PSAs that connect individual voices to collective stories



## Gretchen Carvajal (she/her) Youth Speaks Sr. Manager of Digital Pedagogy

Gretchen Carvajal is an interdisciplinary Filipina artist from the Bay Area. She currently works as a teaching artist at the leading youth spoken word organization in the world, Youth Speaks, teaching high school spoken word at local San Francisco public schools. When she's not in the classroom, she designs, manufactures, and promotes her laser-cut earring brand BRWNGRLZ. When she's not making earrings, she's making prints, bending neon, or making films.



Gretchen's work revolves around her journey as an immigrant who came to the US at the age of 7. Her different art forms (printmaking, neon, film, poetry, jewelry) serve as languages that are able to convey her story past the tongue she was born with and the language she was forced to learn. When she's not hustling multiple jobs/art forms to sustain living in the ever-gentrifying Bay Area, she's talking about love or astrology, listening to I'm Still In Love With You by Sean Paul, taking care of her 5-year-old niece Leila, and cooking extremely large meals for her family.

# ENTERTAINMENT

## **Ariana Lee (she/her/她)** **Youth Speaks Public Poet**



Ariana Lee is a Taiwanese and Chinese American writer from Houston, TX. She is the 2022-2023 Houston Youth Poet Laureate and two-time member of Meta4 Houston, the #1 ranked youth slam poetry team at Brave New Voices 2023 (the first Houston team to win the title).



A YoungArts winner in both poetry and spoken word, Lee has opened for U.S. Poet Laureate Ada Limón and performed original work for NASA; Stop AAPI Hate; the NCAA Men's Final Four Legacy Project presented by Degree; the Aspen Institute; the Houston Mayor's Office, and more. She has collaborated with and performed for Get Lit - Words Ignite, The Battery SF, Children's Museum Houston, Anderson Collection at Stanford University.

As a 2022-2023 Youth Fellow for the International Human Rights Art Movement, she curated an international, multimedia anthology highlighting youth voices and international solidarity.

## **Pte San Win Little Whiteman** **Youth Speaks Public Poet**



Pte San Win Little Whiteman is an Oglala Lakota poet who uses poetry for advocacy and healing. Most of their poetry highlights mental health awareness, environmental, racial, and social justice, land/body relationships, and language revitalization. They are Brave New Voices alumni and have experience performing on stages such as The Kennedy Center, Native Pop, Black Hills Artist Market, and Poetry Out Loud. They were interviewed for Teen Vogue and Indian Country Today, and they won a publication with the Tribal College Journal for AIHEC's creative writing contest in August 2023. Pte San Win is a youth coordinator for NDN Girls Book Club and has experience facilitating writing workshops, poetry slams, and open mics. They hope to inspire others to read, write, and perform poetry as it is an act of oral and aural tradition. A practice that has kept many cultures alive today.







# **PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE: SEWING THE THREADS OF OUR IDENTITY PANELISTS**

## **Berna Anat Financial Educator and Hypewoman**

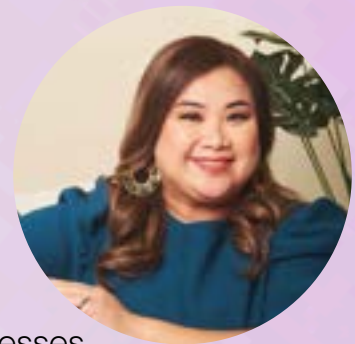
Berna Anat (@heyberna) is an award-winning author, producer, speaker, co-founder, rich auntie in training, and Financial Hype Woman—which is her made-up way of saying she creates financial education media for young BIPOC. A proud Filipina-American daughter of immigrants, she taught herself how to pay off over \$50,000 of debt and did what any Millennial would do: Yell about it on the internet.



Berna's 2023 debut book with HarperCollins, *MONEY OUT LOUD: All the Financial Stuff No One Taught Us*, is a Bookshop.org Bestseller and has received starred reviews from Kirkus and Booklist. Berna is the co-founder and Head of Community and Culture at New Dimes, a network for first-generation breadwinners moving past stability to generate wealth and make progressive change.

## **Christine R. Melendres, LCSW CEO and Founder of Sweet Mango Therapy Group**

Christine R. Melendres, LCSW, is the Founder of Sweet Mango Therapy Group, Inc., a psychotherapy group practice dedicated to serving the Filipina/x/o and AAPI community. With a BA in Sociology from UC Berkeley and an MSW from San Francisco State University, Christine specializes in empowering Filipina and AAPI women through culturally responsive, trauma-informed care. A Certified Brainspotting Therapist, she addresses issues such as burnout, anxiety, depression, trauma, and imposter syndrome. As the Bay Area Chapter Lead for Therapinay and a board member of the Filipino Young Leaders Program (FYLPRO), Christine advocates for mental health and wellness within the Filipinx community.



# PANELISTS

## **Kyra Lumpkin** **Owner of Karl Marie**

Kyra Lumpkin is a third-generation perfumer with over 20 years of aroma chemical experience. Growing up, Kyra Lumpkin lived in pretty much every major city in the United States. With every new environment, she quickly learned that the concept of home had to mean more than just four walls. "I had to make peace with the idea that home was not going to be a place for me," says Lumpkin. "It was always going to be an ideal or set of people or a moment in time. Fragrance is my way of keeping a little bit of every home I've ever had."



## **Sylvia L. Blalock** **Chief Executive Poet of the Queendom Network**

Sylvia L. Blalock is no stranger to the Empowering Womxn of Color conference. Sylvia has been a committee member for EWOCC as well as workshop presenter, open mic performer, Theme artist and audio-visual coordinator. Sylvia was empowered by her experiences with EWOCC to make a pivot on her own trajectory.



In 2020, she fired her job and launched Queendom Network, in an effort to utilize her skills as a graphic designer and writer to bring women and paying projects together. She has provided opportunities for poets, artists, musicians, chefs and more through coordinating meetups, interviewing people live on her show, Poetry in the Raw or otherwise facilitating connection. Sylvia considers the Empowering Womxn of Color Conference to be one of the most cherished and pivotal events of every year she has attended.

Sylvia Blalock is a student at Diablo Valley College, pursuing a degree in Business Administration. She is the owner of Queendom.Network and the author of "Uprising: A book of Poetry". When not planning for the next chapter of life with her husband and business partner, Stevan Edgecombe, she works on building community alliances and artistic opportunities for resistance.



**Denise Lyttle**  
**Moderator**



# AFTERNOON WORKSHOPS

## **Zine Zen: A Self-Discovery Zine-making Journey**

**Location: Pauley Ballroom**

In this workshop participants will design an 8-page handmade zine centered on self-affirmation. They will combine personal poetry, favorite song lyrics, inspiration quotes and collaged visuals to craft a unique narrative that expresses their inner journey.



## **Liberatory Biomimicry: a practice to escape oppression and reclaim your power as a living system**

**Location: Stephens Lounge**

In this engaging, interactive workshop participants will use the Unleashing Aliveness Liberatory Practices Card Deck to explore Liberatory Practices that subvert, undermine, replace, and heal white supremacy cultural characteristics and oppressive practices (such as perfectionism, urgency, and imposter syndrome). Then, through powerful group coaching with an expert, participants will build the confidence to use the deck at home or at work to claim their personal liberation and become even more effective catalysts for collective liberation. This workshop is best suited to those familiar with antioppression concepts including Social Identity, Intersectionality, and The 4 I's of Oppression.



## **Rooted Resistance: Ecofeminist Resistance, Decolonial Healing, and Climate Justice**

**Location: Tilden Lounge**

The climate crisis disproportionately impacts women of color, and the burden of activism often falls on those most affected. This workshop creates space to reflect on this weight while also honoring the unique perspectives, knowledge, and resilience that come with it. Through discussions, healing exercises, guided reflection, and case studies of women of color eco-activists, we will examine how colonialism and capitalism shape our relationships with land and each other. Drawing from ancestral ecofeminism, queer theory, and decolonial thought, we will explore ways to heal our environmental relationships and sustain ourselves in the struggle for justice. Participants will leave with tools to reimagine environmentalism beyond extraction and exhaustion — toward a practice of collective care, resistance, and renewal.



# AFTERNOON WORKSHOPS

## **We Grieve Different: Healing through Writing and Creativity**

**Location: BNorth 82A**

‘We Grieve Different’ is a workshop that provides practices, resources, and tools to help Women of Color navigate through grief. Death, grief, and mourning can be very isolating, but also a time where support is needed most. Through music, writing, and collaging, we will explore ways to hold space for our grief. With grace and creativity, we will learn and share impactful tools to tangibly, and creatively navigate grief as a community.



## **Art as Healing: Creating for Self-Care and Connection**

**Location: BNorth 82D**

This hands-on workshop invites participants to explore art as a therapeutic tool for self-expression, emotional release, and healing. Designed with simplicity and accessibility in mind, this session focuses on cost-effective materials and techniques that anyone can use to create art for personal growth and self-care. Participants will engage in reflective and creative activities while learning how to integrate art into their daily routines as a powerful method for mindfulness and connection.





# CLOSING CEREMONY



## Closing Limpia Circle with Napaquetzalli

Napaquetzalli is an indigenous healer and herbalist of Yaqui/Purepecha descent. She grew up in Southern California in a family of artists devoted to their ancestral practices. Being raised in a ceremonial way of life, Napaquetzalli has always been deeply in tune to her intuitive connection to spirit and nature. Napa has continued her studies of curanderismo and indigenous healing through the Ancestral Apothecary school in Oakland, CA, as well as training with renowned traditional healer Doña Enriqueta Contreras in Oaxaca, Mexico. She is a co-founder of Curanderas Sin Fronteras, a collective that provides wellness services to Latinx communities in the Bay Area and beyond. She studied Western herbalism at the California School of Herbal Studies in 2016 and has worked in herbal apothecaries for many years, most currently as a clinical herbalist and teacher at the Scarlet Sage Herb Co. in San Francisco. Napaquetzalli is committed to providing culturally relevant and accessible medicine to her communities and helping folks reconnect to intuitive and ancestral knowledge as a source of guidance. Her practice is rooted in self-healing as a method to decolonize our relationships to the earth, our bodies and each other.

Learn more and book sessions at: [napaquetzalli.com](http://napaquetzalli.com)

# COMMISSIONED ARTIST

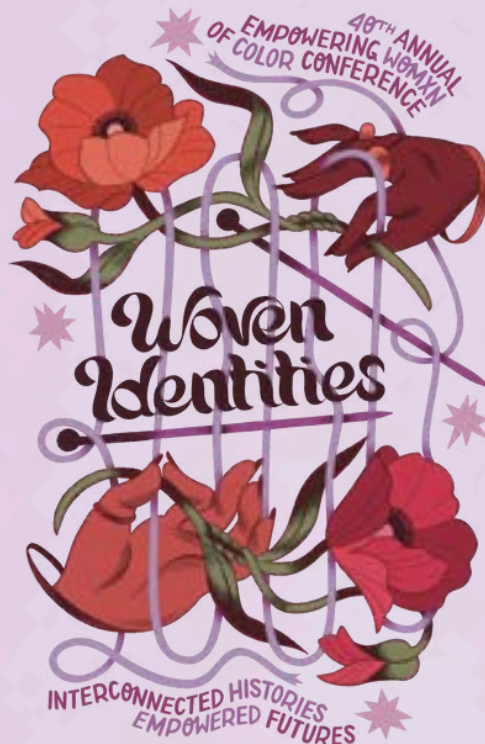


**Michelle Perez**

Michelle Perez is an illustrator and designer based in Providence, Rhode Island. Growing up across coasts of the US, she bases her art in the stories she's gathered along the way. You can find her work in the pages of The New York Times, The New Yorker, and The Boston Globe. You can find her wherever iced lattes are sold.

Website: [www.michiperez.com](http://www.michiperez.com)

Instagram: @michiperezart





# CATERING



*Brenda's*

## Founded by Brenda Buenviaje

Brenda's French Soul Food is inspired by owner Chef Brenda's childhood experience growing up in Louisiana. Brenda has an BFA in Paint and Drawing from Louisiana State University and pursued her creative passion through cooking in New Orleans kitchens. She moved to San Francisco in 1997 and opened up Brenda's first location in the Tenderloin in 2007. Brenda's French Soul Food now has several locations, including one on Broadway in Oakland.

## Menu

### *Breakfast*

#### Main Dishes

Creole Seafood Frittata  
Vegan Tofu Hash  
Vegetarian Frittata  
Potato Hash

#### Sides

Beignets (Plain, Chocolate,  
and Granny Smith Apple)  
Big and Fluffy Biscuits w/ Butter  
and House made Jam  
Mixed Fresh Fruit

### *Lunch*

#### Main Dishes

BFC - Fried Chicken  
Chicken-Andouille Jambalaya  
Vegan Jambalaya  
Vegan Red Beans and Rice

#### Sides

Cornbread  
Creole Potato Salad  
House Salad  
Hush Puppies  
Mac and Cheese  
Spicy Fried Cauliflower

# CATERING



## Founded by Lila Owens

Cupcakin' Bake Shop is the realized vision of owner Lila Owens. She started a home-based cupcake catering business in 2007. But the ultimate goal was to open a cute little bake shop where she could showcase her passion for baking to a larger audience. Lila wanted a fun culture, adorable décor and artisan baked goods made from high quality, sustainable ingredients. With the awesome support of some key people in her life Cupcakin' Bake Shop became a reality with the opening of the Berkeley, CA location in 2014. With its unique, creative and eco-friendly culture, Berkeley proved to be the ideal place for Cupcakin' Bake Shop to take root. As an advocate for sustainability and the natural and local food movement, Lila found Berkeley to be the perfect place to set up shop.

## Dessert Menu

Chocolate Raspberry  
Cookies and Cream  
Gluten Free Raspberry Lemonade  
Key Lime Pie  
Madagascar Bourbon Vanilla  
Red Velvet  
Vanilla Salted Caramel  
Vegan Chocolate Coconut



# CATERING



## MOTHER TONGUE COFFEE

### **Founded by Jen Apodaca**

Jen Apodaca started Mother Tongue Coffee in 2019, she has been roasting since 2005 for a range of well-loved businesses, including McMenamin's, Intelligentsia, Blue Bottle, and The Crown. She likes to think of herself as a roaster's roaster. She is also a certified Q-Grader, former chair of the Coffee Roasters Guild of America, the 2019 US Cup Tasters Champion, and won second place in the 2022 Roasters Championship.

In 2017 she founded #shestheroaster - which is a visibility campaign that women do indeed roast coffee and also promotes and encourages women in the coffee industry to become professional coffee roasters.

### **Drink Menu**

Hot Coffee: Dark, Medium, Light, and Decaf

Hot Tea: Green, Black, and Herbal

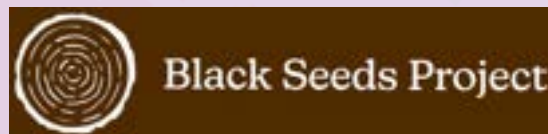
Milk Options: Oat, Organic Whole, Half and Half

Sweetener: Sugar in the Raw, Artificial Sweetener, Honey

# VENDORS



## KARL MARIE



Illustrated truths



Native Sol



# ABOUT THE WORKSHOP HOSTS

## M. Zamora

Drumkeeper M. Zamora is a Chicana, Yoeme (Yaqui) and Tongva Two Spirit feminist educator and community organizer. Their ancestors come from the Los Angeles Basin and northern Mexico's Sonora and Chihuahua regions. They served as ceremonial singer/drumkeeper in their Two Spirit community for over 18 years. Zamora has led several drums, and brought the Wakan Wiya Two Spirit Drum to Casa Tia Luna in 2020 where it is now the drum in-residence. Zamora has taught Ethnic Studies, Chicana/o Latina/o Studies, and Gender Studies and Feminist Theory at California State University East Bay, University of San Francisco and Stanford University.



## Crystal Bolton

Crystal Bolton is an Oakland native, a homeschooling mother of two, CEO/Founder of Nubian-KreativGoddess LLC and a passionate Spiritual Transformation Coach. She has answered the call of her ancestors by guiding women through profound healing journeys that foster self-awareness. Her mission is clear and impactful: breaking generational cycles, overcoming addictions, healing trauma, and empowering women to B.O.S.S. UP—Build On Self Sustainability. Crystal is committed to transforming lives and creating lasting change in her community.



## Maiya Lanae Evans

Maiya Lanae Evans, MPH is a health educator, entrepreneur, and consultant. Much of her work examines the intersection between holistic health, public health, and social justice. She currently teaches courses in public health and holistic health at San Francisco State University and Skyline College, and was a 2020-2021 EPIC fellow at Stanford University. In addition to her work as a health educator, Maiya is a facilitator and consultant for the anti-racism organization, The Mosaic Project. From 2019-2023 Maiya was on a research team and was a mindfulness educator for SFBUILD, an NIH-funded organization that works to enhance diversity of the biomedical research workforce at San Francisco State University. Maiya additionally works as a consultant and lead facilitator for the anti-racism organization, The Mosaic Project, as well as a mental health consultant for the Santa Cruz Black Health Matters Initiative. Her podcast, the Hey Girl Health Show, focuses on health issues that impact women of color and the communities they live in.



# ABOUT THE WORKSHOP HOSTS

## Ashley Kelly

Ashley Kelly is a Black, queer, and southern, and lives in Oakland, CA. She's been engaged in social justice work for over a decade, and is most interested in healing justice work in service of community-building. As a coach, Ashley has been focused on heart-centered leadership for many years. Ashley has focused her practice to include embodiment coaching in partnership with Southern Soul Wellness and transformative justice work in partnership with the Stronghold Collective. Ashley holds a Masters in Social Welfare from the University of California at Berkeley, and loves swimming, theme parties, and eating good food with loved ones! Learn more at [southernsoulwellness.com](https://southernsoulwellness.com).



## Melissa Charles

Melissa Charles (she, her) is an educator-organizer and a teaching artist who writes across various genres. she has organized across various pan-afrikan spaces building movements for self-determination, bringing a lens of queer-socialist-feminism. she is the co-founder and minister of education for a TK-8 militant/liberatory community school based on nisenan land called Malcolm X Academy for Afrikan Education (@916mx) and serves as a college and university professor in black and ethnic studies across the state of california. melissa's work finds grounding in assata shakur's poem, r/evolution is love, and she engages a personal-political "trial and error" practice in its message daily.



## Toshia Christal

A minister of "purpose and potential" Toshia Christal is an Oakland native. "Down to earth" and consistent, she is a realist, optimistic in her way of thinking and highly focused on addressing disparities that provide tangible solutions as it specifically pertains to those of the African diaspora. Currently teaching at Laney college, she is a graduate of Berkeley High School. With over 17 years of entrepreneurship experience she is an artist of many mediums. Toshia is a photographer, jewelry designer, licensed cosmetologist, poet, and spiritual healer to say the least. America withhold necessary information and its evident that artist and creators of the African diaspora have always been inadequately recorded and documented. This is why she has always felt the need for community connection and urban youth involvement. To create a circle of power and knowledge. Her work often represents shape/form, spirituality, self healing or politics.





# ABOUT THE WORKSHOP HOSTS

## Zuzu Gong

Zuzu is an illustrator, instructor, and co-illustrator coordinator for Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators, San Francisco North and East chapter. Her love for reading and drawing since childhood leads her into picture book making. Through a variety of mixed media, Zuzu enjoys creating whimsical illustrations and exploring her voices as an immigrant and feminist. In her spare time, Zuzu gets her inspiration from reading, hiking and connecting with her community through Substack.



You can find her at @zuzuart.substack or @zuzu.draws.create on Instagram.

## Selahm Beman

Selahm Skybird Beman (they/them) is an executive coach and founder of the Antioppression Reiki School, the Rage Camp liberated movement practice, and the Organizational Biomimicry Process. Their Unleashing Aliveness Liberatory Practices Deck coaches leaders and organizations to fully divest from white supremacy cultural norms and reclaim their power as living systems. Their work has been used by nonprofit leaders across the United States to institutionalize liberation in their organizations. Selahm has worked with leaders at The United States Department of Agriculture, Colorado State University, and the Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future. [linktr.ee/selahmbeman](https://linktr.ee/selahmbeman)



## Shreya Chaudhuri

Shreya Chaudhuri is a senior at UC Berkeley, majoring in Environmental Science and Geography with minors in Global Poverty and Practice and Data Science. Passionate about Indigenous sovereignty, Traditional Ecological Knowledge, and equitable climate solutions, she runs Project Planet, a nonprofit for decolonial environmental education, including teaching the class Decolonizing Environmentalism at Berkeley that she created. As a Climate Action Fellow at the Student Environmental Resource Center and UC Office of the President, she advances equity in UC Climate Policy and leads the Decolonial Environmental Network on campus. She is also on council for the Students of Color Environmental Collective. For her senior theses, Shreya studied Indigenous ecological knowledge and climate resilience on her family's ancestral tea farm in India. Her work integrates research, policy, education, and advocacy, uplifting Black and Brown communities globally.



# ABOUT THE WORKSHOP HOSTS

## Maud Farquhar

Maud Farquhar is a writer and poet that hails from Oakland, California. Since 2017, Maud has performed spoken word, facilitated poetry and writing workshops, and curated events around the Bay Area. In 2018, they co-founded Gold Beams, an organization that produced events to provide a stage and community for their fellow Black creatives. Maud authored a collection of poems, quotes, and micro-essays titled 'Black Girl Flesh', a necessary moment of reflection and uplifting of herself and Black femmes in 2020. She is currently writing a series of essays and interviews entitled, 'on death, and life, and death,' that works to release the taboo around death.



## Tiphereth Banks

Tiphereth Banks (aka T. Banks / Heru) is a Multimedia Artist, Actress, Filmmaker, Muralist, Painter, Emcee, Writer and Entrepreneur, who was born and raised in the Bay Area. She graduated from Berkeley City College in the Summer of 2021, earning an Associates for Transfer in Studio Art. At an early age, Tiphereth had grown a strong passion for art, music, and film. She has art that has been submitted into contests, competitions, art shows, exhibitions, and worked on mural projects between the years of 2007 up until now. While working at an art based youth training program as a junior artist, from the years 2011 - 2013, Tiphereth discovered another passion; to help teach and support the youth of the urban community. Spending a great amount of time at organizations like Urban Peace Movement, Green Eyed Media, United Roots Oakland, Youth Impact Hub, Youth Radio, Blackball Universe, and Beats Rhymes and Life opened her mind as well as many doors of opportunity. [linktr.ee/reallyfebanksy/](https://linktr.ee/reallyfebanksy/)







# CONFERENCE COORDINATORS



**Elena Ojeda (She/Ella)**

Elena Ojeda is the proud daughter of Mexican immigrants, a first generation college student, and a public library enthusiast. When not working on her dissertation, she can be found with her hands in the dirt tending to her garden, learning about her ancestral medicine, crafting, or listening to audiobooks. Elena believes cultivating community is essential for our collective liberation and is proud to help create that community through EWOCC.

She is currently a Ph.D. Candidate in Economics at the University of California, Berkeley. Prior to starting her Ph.D., she worked as a Research Associate for the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City. She received an M.S. in Applied Mathematical Science from the University of Central Oklahoma and a B.B.A. in Economics and B.A. in Spanish from Oklahoma City University.



**Maureen Muñoz (She/Her)**

Maureen Munoz is a Filipina American born and raised in California's Central Valley. The first of her family to obtain a graduate education, she hopes to engineer equitable solutions to water justice issues across California, especially as it impacts communities close to home. Overall, she aims to help nurture a kinder world where resources are more accessible to communities who need them most and is grateful to EWOCC for bringing some of that kindness to today's world.

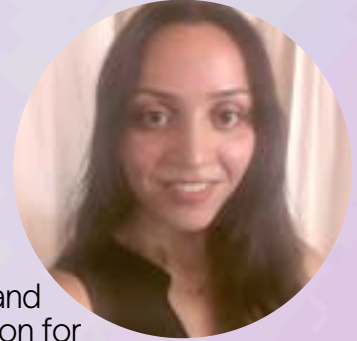
She is currently a Master's student in UC Berkeley's Environmental Engineering program and previously obtained her B.S. in Civil Engineering from Cal. Outside of her graduate education, Maureen loves spontaneous adventures, playing music, and gaming with friends.

# PLANNING COMMITTEE



## **Genna Enguidanos (She/Her)** **Catering**

Genna is a Bay Area/East Bay native who attended Ohlone Community College in Fremont, CA prior to transferring to UC Berkeley to complete her B.S. and M.S. in Civil and Environmental Engineering. She is a 2nd and 3rd generation Mexican-American and Californian, and is deeply interested in the promotion and advocacy of women and Latinas in STEM. The EWOC conference and committee have provided her a sense of community and appreciation for the amazing work being done in the Bay Area to support all women of color to achieve their highest potential and goals.



## **Sylvia Gin (She/They)** **Catering Committee**

Sylvia Gin is serving on the EWOC Planning Committee for the first time this year and is on the catering subcommittee. She was born in South Bay, raised in Sacramento, and returned to live in the Bay Area ten years ago. She is excited to use her experience trying diverse local food to help provide a delicious catering experience for the conference attendees.



Sylvia is a staff member on the Student Services team at Berkeley Social Welfare. A recent alumni of UC Berkeley, Sylvia holds both a Master of Social Welfare (MSW) and a Master of Public Health (MPH). She is a first-generation college graduate, multiracial, queer, the eldest of four siblings, a cat mama, and an Aquarius.

## **Maura McDonagh (They/She)** **Outreach Committee**

Maura is a Neuroscience PhD student at UC Berkeley studying the gut-brain axis in multiple sclerosis with the Baranzini Lab at UCSF. Born and raised in Chicago, Maura attended the University of Wisconsin-Madison and graduated with a B.S. in Biomedical Engineering with a double major in Communication Arts in May 2020. Outside of lab, they have a passion for community-led arts activism, brain health awareness, and reading novels.





# PLANNING COMMITTEE



**Carmela Obscura (She/Her)**  
**Panel and Art**

Carmela Obscura is a 1st-gen Afro Filipina, multi-faceted overachiever: She's a Somatic Therapist, classically trained sound healer, tenants' rights activist, volleyball mom and a 4th-year EWOCC planning committee member. She advocates for immigrants' rights, notarizing immigration documents and serving as a Notary Public for the state of California. She also serves as planning coordinator for the seasonal retreat, Woo Woo in the Redwoods.

[www.diyosasomatics.com](http://www.diyosasomatics.com).

**Bianca Gonzalez (She/Ella)**  
**Social Media**

Bianca Gonzalez is a dedicated member of the social media team for the Empowering Womxn of Color Conference Planning Committee. She is currently a first-year MSW student at UC Berkeley, where her background in social work has provided her with the skills and passion to contribute to the success of this event.



As a Chicana, Bianca feels honored to be part of such an impactful committee and is committed to ensuring that diverse perspectives are prioritized throughout the event. She is proud to work alongside strong, inspiring women in bringing this vision to life. Contributing to the ongoing success of the conference has been a rewarding and enriching experience for her.

Outside of her academic and professional pursuits, Bianca enjoys spending time outdoors and finds joy in reading a good book or crocheting on rainy days. She looks forward to connecting with passionate individuals at this year's conference and is excited to be part of a collaborative team dedicated to making the event a memorable and meaningful experience for all attendees.



**Denise Lyttle (She/Her)**  
**Social Media**

Denise Lyttle is a Caribbean-American Afro-Latina, storyteller, poet, and writer from Texas. She received her B.A. in Health and Society with a minor in Communication Studies from the University of Texas at Austin, and is currently a public health marketer at Salesforce providing global public health organizations with technologies that simplify access to social benefits and enhance the effectiveness of public services that promote community well-being. She is passionate about supporting the Bay Area local arts community, democratizing knowledge about how technology can be used for good, and creating nurtured communities through collective care practices.

# PLANNING COMMITTEE

## **Batool Zaro (she/her)** **Vendors**

Batool Zaro is a first-generation Palestinian-American who studied civil engineering at San Francisco State. She got her masters from San Jose State University in Transportation and Construction Management. She currently works for the City of East Palo Alto's engineering department. As a Palestinian living in the diaspora, she is dedicated to the Palestinian liberation cause.



## **JahniahOmi Bahari (She/Her)** **Workshops and Website Design**

JahniahOmi Bahari is a multi faceted musician, spoken-word artist, sound healer, singer/songwriter, producer, dancer/choreographer, photographer, fashion designer and medicine woman. Mother. Creator of 999 The House of Celestial and one of the Bay Area's diverse Reggae Fusion bands JahOmi. She heals and offers healing through art expression. Sound, visual movement, sustainable fashion are her prominent mediums. Her expression is Spirit. A fusion of ethereal psychedelic vibrations, soulful voicings of jazz and reggae, spirituals, Black Roots, deep folk. Poetry in motion. She creates sustainable fashion from jewelry, upcycled vintage, eco printing to fiber art. She dances intergenerational movement from traditional west African, afro Haitian and afro Brazilian, Orisa to samba, modern jazz, breaking and pop locking. Free is her style.

JahniahOmi returned to her healing journey through embracing creative arts once more, especially dance and music. She began teaching dance at her old middle school Ascend through the Oakland Leaf Project. Through teaching she became more inspired to do healing art/spirit work within the community manifesting a healing circle for sistren empowerment called (the WOMBS) Women of the Mind Body and Soul: Spiritually Ascending. Through her spirit work she has connected with so many powerful healers and have become passionately active for Human Rights, Food Justice and Urban Gardening, the abolishment of Human Trafficking and cultivating healing arts for all aspects of Oakland, The Bay Area and The World.



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# FEEDBACK SURVEY



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Thank you for joining us for our 40th Annual Empowering Womxn of Color Conference! Please complete this feedback survey. We appreciate any and all comments, and always look for ways to improve our conference each year.

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