

Civil Rights Division



The Civil Rights Division celebrates Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month by recognizing some of our employees.



Employee Spotlight: Jaishan Pandey

Transportation Project Specialist
Region 4, Project Development

He enjoys traveling, hiking, reading, watching sports, fitness and boxing.

Joined TDOT Family July 2021

CELEBRATE DIVERSITY

What does Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month mean to you and why?

For me, Asian American & Pacific Islander Heritage Month is a chance to celebrate this community's rich heritage and cultural diversity. It provides a platform to promote dialogue, understanding and appreciation for the experiences, challenges, and successes of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. It advocates for an inclusive society that appreciates and respects the experiences and achievements of this community within this diverse American society.

What had the biggest influence on your career?

My family and friends that I have made along the way have been the biggest influences on my career.

Explain how you see EPIC (Empowering People and Influencing the Culture) creating your own success as well as the impact of your work contributing to TDOT's success.

From my understanding, the goal of EPIC is to bring together different teams in TDOT to achieve a common goal of serving the people of Tennessee. It would assign people with specific yet diverse responsibilities to bring the big picture together, promoting communication, productivity, and efficiency. I see this as an exciting opportunity for everyone involved.

How do you suggest we create a workforce that supports diversity, equity, and inclusion?

In my opinion, creating a workforce that supports diversity, equity and inclusion is a complex and on-going process that requires continuous effort, learning, and adaptation. Diverse recruitment and hiring, equal opportunities advancement, fostering an inclusive culture with flexible policies and accommodations as well as regular assessment of diversity to identify areas for improvement are some great ways to achieve this goal.

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CELEBRATE DIVERSITY

Employee Spotlight: Leah Ross

TDOT Operations District Specialist
Region 1, District 18 Admin – Knoxville

She enjoys kayaking, hiking, playing slow pitch softball, and hanging out with her dog, Louie.

"We live now in a global village, and we are in one single family. It's our responsibility to bring friendship and love from all different places around the world and to live together in peace." – Jackie Chan

Joined TDOT Family June 2021

What does Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month mean to you and why?

It means a time to celebrate, embrace, and learn about the culture. Being adopted from China at a young age, my parents always incorporated pieces of my culture throughout my childhood. This month reminds me to take the time to appreciate my background.

What had the biggest influence on your career?

My uncle and parents had the biggest influence on my career. My uncle was a Metallurgical Engineer for a large steel company in Ohio. I always enjoyed listening to his stories and discussing the different projects he was working on. He explained the different types of Engineering and that's when I realized I wanted to go into Civil Engineering. My parents always pushed and guided me to pursue a career that would be in high demand for the course of my lifetime.

Explain how you see EPIC (Empowering People and Influencing the Culture) creating your own success as well as the impact of your work contributing to TDOT's success.

EPIC provides a great opportunity to employees and allows collaboration among many people who come from different backgrounds. This collaboration gives the opportunity for each employee to recognize and learn about each other's cultures.

How do you suggest we create a workforce that supports diversity, equity, and inclusion?

Continue to give everyone no matter his or her background an equal opportunity. TDOT does a great job with celebrating and embracing all cultures.

