

2024 Speaker Bios: March 16

Inspire-Empower-Thrive Keynote

Marc Bayer



As VP Marine Operations for Marathon Petroleum, Marc is responsible for Strategy, Chartering, Commercial Marine Operations, Freight Trading, Demurrage, Marine Technical Operations, and Marine Assurance. Marc's team is headquartered in San Antonio with offices in Findlay, Ohio; Houston; and Singapore, with Port Captains in Alaska, Washington, California, Texas, Louisiana and Florida. He has been married 39 years to his wife Marya and has one son, two granddaughters, and two standard poodles, Bosun and Charlotte.

Marc is a 1982 graduate of the California Maritime Academy. He began his career working offshore in the Gulf of Mexico and North Sea as a deck officer on supply boats and anchor handling tugs. He sailed as deck officer in all ranks on tankers and spent the final three years of his career at sea as Captain on O.B.O.s before transitioning ashore with BP in 1992.

Marc is a past board member of three West Coast Oil Spill Response Organizations: Clean Coastal Waters, Clean Bay, and Clean Sound, and was appointed by the Governor of California, Gray Davis, to the San Francisco Board of Pilot Commissioners, where he served from 2002 to 2006. He is past President of the San Francisco Marine Exchange, the Marine Oil Terminals Chair for the San Francisco Harbor Safety Committee, and Co-Chairman of the Western States Petroleum Association (WSPA)-Marine Committee. Marc presently serves on the board of the California Maritime Academy Foundation and the Oil Companies International Marine Forum ExCom, OCIMF.

Misty Bain

Misty Bain is a seasoned maritime professional with over two decades of experience. Misty hails from the small island nation of the Bahamas where she was inspired to pursue a career in the maritime industry and is a proud 2004 Marine Transportation graduate of California Maritime Academy with a minor in admiralty law. Misty is a Master Mariner.

Misty began as a deck officer on bulk carriers and tankers. Following her seagoing time she transitioned ashore where she developed an extensive background in vessel operations and management. Misty has successfully navigated the complexities of International Shipping, oversaw vessel logistics and ensured compliance with maritime regulations. She is currently Commercial Marine Operations Manager with Marathon Petroleum Company, using her expertise to optimize fleet performance and prioritize safety. Misty is known for her strategic problem-solving skills and ability to lead cross functional teams to achieve operational success. Her commitment to excellence and dedication to safety inspire and empower the next generation of maritime professionals through mentorship and outreach.

Debra K. Cobb



Deb Cobb is a 1984 graduate of Texas A&M Galveston University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Marine Transportation/License Option. She sailed internationally and coastwise on product and crude tankers with Keystone Shipping and Alaska Tanker Company (ATC) for 15 years working her way up to Master Mariner. In 1999, Deb transitioned to a shoreside marine coordinator position with ATC in Oregon. In 2008, Deb joined Tesoro Refining Company as a Vetting Superintendent where she developed Tesoro's Marine Assurance program. Marathon Petroleum purchased Tesoro in 2018, and Deb's management of Marine Assurance transitioned and continues in her current position with Marathon Petroleum as Marine Assurance & Risk Director.

Ashlee Gattuso

Ashlee Gattuso is a 2009 Mechanical Engineering graduate of California Maritime Academy. Upon graduation, she sailed with Maersk Line Limited (MLL) as 3rd Assistant Engineer on the tankers Bro Hawaii and Maersk Peary, supporting Operation Pacer Goose at Tule, Greenland and Operation Deep Freeze at McMurdo Station, Antarctica. In 2013, she joined the MLL head office in Norfolk, VA as Port Engineer for the tanker fleet. In 2015, Ashlee joined the Tesoro Marine team first as an Assistant Vetting Superintendent, then transitioned to Commercial Marine Operations in 2017. Now with Marathon, Ashlee is Commercial Marine Operations

Manager supporting her team on the USWC, Canada, Mexico, and South America. She is married to her wonderful husband Nick, also a Merchant Mariner, and has four beautiful children that keep her extra busy.

Captain Michelle Jimenez

Michelle Jimenez is a 2009 Marine Transportation graduate of California Maritime Academy. Following graduation, she worked on research vessels operating in Alaska and the Pacific Ocean. In 2010, Michelle joined American Maritime Officer's Union (AMO) and in 2012, she began her career on coastwise tankers for Crowley. She has been working on Marathon chartered vessels since 2016 and has been sailing as Master since 2019.

Beyond the Buzzword: Getting on Board with Authentic and Impactful DEI Initiatives

Stephen Maher



Stephen Maher brings over 25 years of marine engineering and systems technology experience. A graduate of the US Merchant Marine Academy Kings Point, Stephen began his career as an engineer onboard internationally trading container, oil, and smaller vessels. During the telecommunications boom, he transitioned to land-based roles, working with network systems and building automation.

For the past 17 years, Stephen has been a valuable member of Chevron Shipping Company, focusing on vessel design, construction, lifecycle management, and operations. His diverse experience includes supervising the construction of lightering and dynamic positioning (DP) shuttle tankers in South Korea, shipyard life-extension work from Portland, OR to Cape Town, SA, and supporting operations for 9 LNG (liquefied natural gas) Carriers while living in Singapore. Recently, he managed a team of modern marine systems engineers, specializing in shipboard systems of electrical power, automation, navigation, communications, environmental, operational technology (OT), data utilization, and cyber security. Stephen has now shifted roles to Chevron's Operational Excellence and Health Environmental Safety team as a process advisor.

Originally from Massachusetts, Stephen calls California home, where he resides with his wife and two children. He is excited to share his perspective as the Chevron Shipping Business Unit's Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) Advisor. In this cyclic position, he leverages the collective efforts of his corporation, local initiatives, and liaises with maritime industry organizations.

Meagan Nance



Meagan Nance (she/her) serves as California State University Maritime Academy's Director of Inclusion Initiatives & EOP. With a background encompassing ten years as a lecturer within SFSU's Ethnic and Communication Studies departments and four years as an academic program coordinator for historically disenfranchised students of color, she assumed her position as a Keelhauler in January 2023. Drawing from her experience as both a former student and employee of the CSU, Meagan's guiding philosophy echoes the words of James Baldwin: "Not everything that is faced can be changed; but nothing can be changed until it is faced." In her current role, she prioritizes assisting the campus community in cultivating interconnectedness, celebrating diversity, and curating human sustainability.

Sophie Scopazzi



Master's student at Rutgers University who works with uncrewed underwater vehicles, marine engineering, and programming. Sophie is a Coast Guard licensed 3rd Mate and have worked on a tanker, research vessel, and an expedition cruise ship in the Pacific and Atlantic Ocean. She helped design and build a research buoy, and some other sensors deployments. In her other spare time, Sophie ran a film business since 2013 and has been working as a professional chef for ten years.

Lauren Kinky



Lauren Kinky is an accomplished Maritime Compliance Manager specializing in emergent Environmental and MARPOL cases. Ms. Kinky leads Hudson Marines technical and training team with the most up to date regulations and console. Ms. Kinky graduated from the United States Merchant Marine Academy with an 3rd Mates Unlimited Tonnage Oceans license, including endorsement for Tankerman, and Bachelor of Science in Logistics and Intermodal Transportation. Upon graduation Ms. Kinky was active-duty Coast Guard hailing with qualifications including but not limited to, Incident Command System roles and responses, Vessel Inspections for Foreign Freight, Chemical Carriers, Oil Carriers, LNG and LPG vessels, and small passenger vessels. Ms. Kinky was instrumental in the first few national MARPOL whistleblower cases and inspections, resulting in jail time, fines and expulsion from the United States. During her time with Hudson Marine, Ms. Kinky has lead multiple MARPOL and Environmental Compliance cases, to include but not limited to; in depth audition (SMS, ORB, Garbage Record Book, Engine Logs, Deck Logs), whistleblower activities, vessel examination, crew interviews, crew training, evidence handling, root-cause analysis, authority coordination (USCG, CBP, DEP, CGIS, CG Cyber Task Force), flag state and classification society coordination, technician coordination, cleanup coordination, legal coordination, vessel rehabilitation and release from applicable holds. Other notable actions to include but not limited to Vessel Stowaway with CBP hold, Oil Spill Response in Major NY/NJ port affecting approximately 10 vessels and pre-examination findings which were able to then avoid vessel detentions.

Elizabeth “Bets” McNie



Elizabeth C. McNie is an Associate Professor of Marine Transportation at California State University Maritime Academy and holds a USCG Second Mate’s License, Unlimited Tonnage with STCW endorsements. Dr. McNie earned a Ph.D. in Environmental Studies at the University of Colorado at Boulder with a concentration in Science Policy; a Master of Arts degree in Psychology-Organization Development from Sonoma State University; and a Bachelor of Science degree in Marine Transportation and Minor in Marine Engineering from the California Maritime Academy. She also received a pre-doctoral fellowship from the Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, and a National Science Foundation IGERT Fellowship. Dr. McNie also worked as an assistant professor at Purdue University and as a senior research scientist at the University of Colorado, Boulder. Dr. McNie researches how to improve the use of scientific information in decision making and policy, the role of ‘boundary organizations’ to facilitate the co-production of usable scientific information, and sexual assault/sexual harassment policies in the maritime industry. She has been published in numerous peer-reviewed journals, books, and white papers. She has also consulted with academic and research organizations in programmatic evaluation and organization excellence. Dr. McNie has worked on fishing boats, supply boats, oil tankers, and deep-sea offshore oil-drilling rigs and ships.

FACILITATOR: SCOTT NYCUM