

## Black History Month Celebration Set Friday at Division 1

(Feb. 20, 2002) It's always the biggest event of Black History Month at the MTA – and this year is no exception. All employees are invited to attend a celebration and barbecue at 10 a.m., Friday, at Division 1.

The keynote speaker, YWCA Chief Executive Officer Faye Washington, will address the program's theme of "Leadership in Today's World."

Also on hand for the event will be Tom Jones of the World War II 555th Parachute Infantry Battalion and Alfred Stewart of the 8th and 9th Divisions of the Buffalo Soldiers historic re-enactment group. In addition, the MTA Choir and Sandra McGee will provide Negro spirituals and gospel music.

Prior to joining the YWCA, Washington headed a management and governmental affairs consulting firm. Earlier, she was the first African American woman to be appointed assistant general manager and chief administrative officer of the Los Angeles DWP, the nation's largest municipal utility. A graduate of Cal State LA, she earned a master's degree in public administration at UCLA.

Called the "Triple Nickles," the 555th trained in Georgia and was alerted for European duty in late 1944, but the changing tides of the war resulted in a different assignment--jumping over the blazing forests of the American northwest searching for Japanese balloon bombs, a job requiring exact skills and special courage.

### The Buffalo Soldiers

The Buffalo Soldiers were thought to have earned the nickname from the Plains Indians during their service with the U.S. Cavalry on the American frontier where they surveyed, mapped, built forts and roads, guarded rail, stage and telegraph lines. The historical focus of today's organization is to authentically recreate the lives of the men who served between 1867 and 1871.

The Black History Month program will begin at 10 a.m. and should be completed in time for lunch at 11:30

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^ A member of the Buffalo Soldiers in traditional uniform.



< Badge for the 555th "Triple Nickles" Parachute Infantry Battalion

a.m., according to coordinator Emily Beckett.

Headquarters employees who plan to attend the event can catch a bus from the Plaza. The bus will depart for Division 1 at 9:45 a.m. The division is located at 1130 East 6th Street at Central and Alameda. Parking will be provided.

This is the fifth year of the Black History Month celebration at Division 1 and the second time the division has collaborated with the MTA's African American Employees Association to sponsor the program.

For more information about the event, contact Emily Beckett at 922-6251.

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