



Ask Me Anything: Pride Season

Featuring: Kirk/Kaiya Hamilton, Esrom Tesfamichael and Shelby Racine

Co-hosted by: Natasha Lim, Events Officer and Communications Advisor, Canadian Coast Guard and Samantha Moonsammy, Diversity and Inclusion Advisor, Department of National Defence

Date and time: Wednesday, July 14th, 2021 at 1:00 to 2:30 PM EST

Audience: Open to all Government of Canada employees

To register: Complete the [registration form](#)

Link: [MS Teams Live Event](#)

More information and resources can be found on the [Serving With Pride intranet page](#).

Access [past recordings of AMAs on YouTube](#).

Event description

Join us as we welcome our speakers Kirk/Kaiya Hamilton, Esrom Tesfamichael and Shelby Racine to the AMA stage. June to September is Pride season and we want to celebrate our LGBTQ2S+ peers. This year's Pride season marks the 50th anniversary of the first LGBTQ2+ rights protests in Canada, which took place in Vancouver and Ottawa in 1971 and marked a turning point for the LGBTQ2+ movement in Canada.

Registration

We encourage everyone [to register](#) for our session. This session will include live questions directed to the panelists. The panelists will be sharing their stories and experiences with us.

If you are interested in being a speaker at an upcoming Ask Me Anything or if you need accommodation to participate, please contact the CCG Internal Communications Team.

Meet our amazing panelists

Kirk/Kaiya Hamilton, Strategic Community Advisor, Infrastructure Canada

Kirk/Kaiya holds a B.A of Psychology, a diploma in business administration and a certification in change management. He/she joined the Public Service in 2005 and has worked in a variety of areas primarily across the Human Resources spectrum at the operational, tactical and strategic levels. Kirk/Kaiya is an openly genderfluid man and woman, pansexual and polyamorous with a wife of fifteen years and a boyfriend of three and a half years. Kirk/Kaiya was one of the founding members of the National Defence, Defence Team Pride Advisory Organization and is a Positive Space Ambassador and member of the Public Service Pride Network Action Committee on Policy. After coming out at work, Kirk/Kaiya has experienced situations where he/she has been told to “keep your gender issues at home, they have no place at work”. As a result, Kirk/Kaiya is an advocate for creating spaces where people can come to work as their whole selves without fear or repercussions. He/She is also an advocate for gender diverse communities where there is a lack of awareness and information / research gaps.

Esrom Tesfamichael, Co-chair of the Defence Team Black Employee Network

After attending school in Ottawa Esrom has been grateful for the opportunity to travel, live and work across Canada. Esrom joined the Naval reserve at the age of 16 and has served at sea, ashore, and has deployed overseas in support of CAF operations. In 2011 Esrom joined the federal public service at the Department of National Defence and has held several positions within the organization since then. Esrom’s preferred pronouns are they/them as a way to support the dismantling of the binary gender status quo. Esrom enjoys working in the fields of social justice and community building at work and through their volunteer activities. Esrom is a founding member and currently the military co-chair of the Defence Team Black Employee

Network, which is an organization geared to the support of Black employees and Black CAF members, as well as, building a sense of community among that cohort within the greater Defence Team. Esrom lives with their partner and their two-year-old Doberman in Ottawa.

Shelby Racine, Events Management Officer

Shelby is a 20-year-old Algonquin College student who is studying Advertising and marketing communications management. On the surface, she looks ordinary but she has many layers. Since she is only 20 she is still finding her place in this world and discovering her layers. She is a proud pansexual woman who enjoys conversations with others about the LGBTQ2S+ community and loves to hear other's experiences. Shelby learned a few years ago that she is Metis and is still learning about her Indigenous identity. She enjoys learning about important issues and having open discussions. She believes it is important to see and hear everyone's opinions and sides. This is imperative to have an open, honest, and civil conversation.

About the Ask Me Anything Series

This session is part of a series of Ask Me Anything sessions that are giving us a platform to share stories, listen, ask respectful questions and continue on our journey to becoming more inclusive organizations.

As individuals you can't necessarily change where you live, you certainly can't change your past, but you can adjust who influences you—through the authors you read, music you listen to, movies you watch and interactions with your community. The Ask Me Anything series provides you with an opportunity to increase your perspective—to learn from the lived-experiences of individuals who are bravely sharing their experiences to help educate and move the public service towards a culture where equity is embedded.

The series also provides an opportunity for you to know that you aren't alone, these experiences, especially the negative ones are systemic and happen all too frequently throughout the public service. The objective by shining this light is to continually increase the network of public servants ready to take action and move forward towards a culture of inclusivity and belonging.