Karina Muñiz, MUA’s Political Director, has worked for over 15 years as an organizer and activist for racial and gender justice, household worker rights and immigrant rights as a Xicana ally. She has published in Working for Justice: The LA Model of Organizing and Advocacy. She holds Masters Degrees in Urban Planning and Latin American Studies from UCLA, and is an alumna of the Voices of our Nations Arts Foundation (VONA) for creative nonfiction writing.

Maria de Jesus Jimenez is one of MUA’s founding members and has been on staff since 1994. Originally responsible for launching MUA’s Oakland office, Maria oversees MUA’s support programs organization-wide.

August 27. Sonya Renee Taylor. The Body is Not an Apology
Award winning Poet, Activist and Transformational Leader Sonya Renee is Founder of the intersectional international movement, The Body is Not An Apology, a global coalition of over 26,000 people focused on radical self love and body empowerment. Sonya is also a National and International poetry slam champion, author and educator who has mesmerized audiences across the US.

September 10. Aurora Guerrero. Challenging Dominant Narratives through Film
Aurora Guerrero, filmmaker, wrote and directed Mosquito y Mari (2012) a critically acclaimed coming of age film following two young Latinas in Los Angeles. A queer-identified Chicana raised in the San Francisco, Bay Area by immigrant Mexican parents, Guerrero received her MFA from Cal Arts in Film Directing and has over 10 years of filmmaking experience as a writer/director. Mosquito y Mari was theatrically released in New York City where the New York Times praised: “An unassuming indie jewel...”.

Jane Kim, San Francisco District Supervisor, is the first Korean American supervisor in the country, representing a diverse district encompassing the majority of new construction in San Francisco. Kim’s landmark initiatives include The Fair Chance Act, $15 minimum wage, and a homeless shelter reform. She is a former civil rights attorney whose practice at the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights focused on combating new Jim Crow voting laws in California. Kim directed the youth empowerment program at the Chinatown Community Development Center, an affordable housing developer.

October 8. Sandra Garcia Rivera. Latina Empowerment through Music
Award winning poet Sandra Garcia Rivera has captured audiences throughout the U.S., Puerto Rico, Cuba, Great Britain and Holland with her Nuyorican soul, and blues inspired delivery. She is the co-founder of Yaya the all women’s Afro-Puerto Rican & Dominican music ensemble based in NYC, and is a featured vocalist and percussionist on the album Boricua Roots Music by Yerbabuena.

October 22. Stacey Thompson. Summer Search: Fostering & Empowering Marginalized Youth
Stacey is Senior Director of Talent at Summer Search, a national organization dedicated to empowering underrepresented youth to college prep. She holds a BA in Women and Gender studies from Sonoma State University. Stacey spent three years as Program Director helping launch the organization’s New York office, before rejoining their team in her hometown of San Francisco.

November 12. Dr. Margaret Hunter. Light, Bright, and Almost White: Exploring Colorism and Pop Culture
Margaret Hunter, Professor of Sociology at Mills College, holds the Metz Chair for excellence and creativity in teaching. She is author of Race, Gender, and the Politics of Skin Tone (2005, Routledge) as well as numerous articles on gender, race and constructions of beauty within African American and Latina communities. Her courses include Sociology of Hip Hop, Sociology of Immigration, and the Sociology of Oakland.

November 19. Ashara Ekundayo, Impact Hub Oakland. Cultural Equity, Civil Rights, and the Artivism of #SayHerName
Ashara Ekundayo is Chief Creative Officer of Impact Hub Oakland, a co-working space which supports artists, entrepreneurs and local businesses. Ashara has been a consultant, producer, and project manager for over 20 years, working with national and international organizations to help build capacity for increased community engagement through the uses of creative practice including performance arts ritual, exhibition, and film.

December 3. Karina Muñiz and Maria de Jesus Jimenez, Mujeres Unidas Y Activas
Karina Muñiz, MUA’s Political Director, has worked for over 15 years as an organizer and activist for racial and gender justice, household worker rights and immigrant rights as a Xicana ally. She has published in Working for Justice: The LA Model of Organizing and Advocacy. She holds Masters Degrees in Urban Planning and Latin American Studies from UCLA, and is an alumna of the Voices of our Nations Arts Foundation (VONA) for creative nonfiction writing.

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Sponsored by the Women’s and Gender Studies Department (WGS) with generous support from SSU’s Instructionally Related Activities Funds. Contact Dr. Charlene Tung, WGS, tung@sonoma.edu