



Freedom on Two Wheels: Bringing Bikes & Opportunity to Los Angeles

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Growing up, I rode my bike everywhere. It was my first glimpse of how safe, intuitive mobility can quietly open doors.

Growing up in Bristol, UK, moving through space felt like a right. It was not something to be purchased or even planned for—it was a public good that didn't depend on age, income, where you lived, or anything else. It was a natural, integral part of my community. I rode my bike, took trains to visit friends, and even hopped over to Paris during college—it all felt normal. And I've carried that feeling with me ever since.

Years later, when I moved to the East Coast of the U.S., I started asking a simple question: Why doesn't mobility feel like that here? Especially for older adults and those who need it most. That question pulled me into transportation—not just as a system to manage, but as a way to build equity, freedom, and connection. It's why I do what I do.

Now, in Los Angeles, I work at the intersection of policy and practice, serving at Caltrans while independently leading Happy Chaos Bike Lab. I have my hands in the messy, beautiful labor of transforming mobility to serve everyone, to try to make it feel like a right.

“It reminds me that transportation isn’t theoretical. It’s daily life. It’s liberation. It’s access—all on two wheels.”

As part of the [Happy Chaos Bike Lab](#), I run a mobile DIY bike repair space, and I teach an after-school program focused on bike safety, advocacy, and repair skills. Mentoring young people as they learn to work on their own bikes—while choosing to live car-free in a city that isn't designed for it—gives me a front-row seat to what mobility really feels like for people. It reminds me that transportation isn't theoretical. It's daily life. It's liberation. It's access—all on two wheels.

This informs my approach because when I'm doing policy analysis or shaping legislation, I'm thinking about the people I just worked with in the field. I'm thinking about the barriers they face, the gaps they navigate, and the opportunities better policy could create.

And it flows the other way too. My Caltrans work gives me language, structure, and systems knowledge that I bring back into community spaces. I can explain how decisions get made, how funding works, and how advocacy connects to policy. It helps young people see that transportation isn't just something they move through but something they can shape.

That back-and-forth of the practical and the policy is what keeps me balanced, accountable, and effective in both spaces.



Enjoleah Daye riding at CicLAvia on Jefferson Boulevard in Los Angeles, where streets transform into spaces for people, connection, and movement (February 23, 2025).

That matters because in LA, most places are not built for cyclists. And if people don't feel safe biking—or walking, or taking transit—they won't. Period.

On the individual level, safety looks like skill and strategy: reading the street, spotting conflict points, staying visible, choosing routes that protect you, even if they take longer. It means riding with confidence, not fear, and understanding how to make yourself seen and understood in a car-centric environment.

But the bigger truth is this: safety isn't just personal behavior. It's infrastructure. Investment. Political will. So, when I teach bike safety, I'm not just teaching how to ride—I'm teaching how to advocate. Because in communities that weren't built for cyclists, safety is both a skill and a movement.

Over the years, I've learned how to advocate for myself, too, which led me to the MTI-supported Master's of Science in Transportation Management ([MSTM](#)) program at San Jose State University. When I first applied, I'd already spent years in transportation in DOTs, MPOs, local government, private consulting, and community work. **I wasn't looking for direction; I was looking for refinement.** I wanted a program that could integrate into my life as a full-time worker, business owner, and parent.

I was also searching for that certain pulse you get from being in academia—a knowledge bank of what's new, what's emerging, what's shifting across industries, including transportation. I've spent nearly two decades in transportation, and even longer if you include my military experience, and it's easy to fall into the cadence of your organization's ecosystem. You know your processes, your policies, your way of



doing things, but you can lose sight of the innovative, grassroots work happening literally in the streets. Fortunately, the MSTM program has given me a space to step outside my own rhythm, challenge my assumptions, and stay connected to what's fresh and forward-thinking in the field.

With my the knowledge from the MSTM program, the front-line experience from Happy Chaos, and the structure and systems I use at Caltrans, I make progress—moving forward, even just a little—every day toward the future I envision for my community: one where the freedom and joy of mobility is not only safe and accessible but integral to our ways of being.

For those looking to join me in making a difference, I say: don't box yourself in. Transportation is one of those fields where there's no single doorway. My advice to students and aspiring professionals who don't know where they fit is: start with what feels real to you.

I have a bachelor's in civil engineering and a master's in transportation policy, and that technical foundation matters—the analytics, the systems thinking, the ability to understand how infrastructure actually works. But that's only one part of the story. The other part is lived experience: how you move through your neighborhood, what feels safe or unsafe, what frustrates you, what inspires you.

Transportation needs both: people who can run models and people who can read a street. People who understand policy and people who understand people.

“... every one of us deserves mobility that feels safe, reliable, and possible.”

You don't have to choose between being technical or community-focused, analytical or creative. This field needs all of it. Your entry point doesn't define your trajectory. And every one of us deserves mobility that feels safe, reliable, and possible.



About the Author

[Enjoleah Daye](#) is a transportation planner, policy strategist, and community advocate who believes mobility is a tool for connection, independence, and empowerment. She currently serves as Branch Chief of Legislation and Grants at Caltrans' Division of Data and Digital Services, where she helps shape statewide transportation policy and funding strategies rooted in equity and climate resilience.

Enjoleah is also the founder of Happy Chaos Bike Lab, a mobile bike repair space and youth program in South Central Los Angeles that teaches middle and high school students bike repair, safety, and neighborhood navigation, which is delivering its latest bike safety

program with funding from MTI-led California State Transportation Consortium. Enjoleah is committed to creating equitable, inclusive, and active communities, blending technical skills, advocacy, and education to make cities safer and more accessible for all.