

EMELINE KING: A TRAILBLAZER IN THE AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY

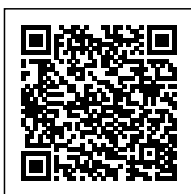
Posted on November 26, 2024 by OAKLAND POST



Emeline King is recognized as the first African American female transportation designer at the Ford Motor Company. Let's take a look at her life and career at the Ford Motor Company. The post Emeline King: A Trailblazer in the Automotive Industry first appeared on Post News Group.

Categories: [#NNPA BlackPress](#), [Black News](#), [Community](#), [Featured](#), [Featured](#), [National](#), [NNPA](#), [NNPA Newswire](#)

Tags: ["What Do You Mean A Black Girl Can't Design Cars? She Did It, 1989 Thunderbird, auto shows, automobiles, Black History, Business, Community, Earnest O. King Sr., Emeline King, Europe, featured, Ford Motor Company, Ford Mustang SN-95, History, Koln Germany; Brentwood Essex England, Oakland, Oakland Post, Pasadena, Post News Group, Tamara Shiloh, the 1990 Thunderbird Super Coupe, the 1993 Mach III, the 1994 Mustang, the ArtCenter College of Design, the auto industry, the first African American female transportation designer at the Ford Motor Company, transportation design, Turin Italy](#)



By Tamara Shiloh

Emeline King is recognized as the first African American female transportation designer at the Ford Motor Company.

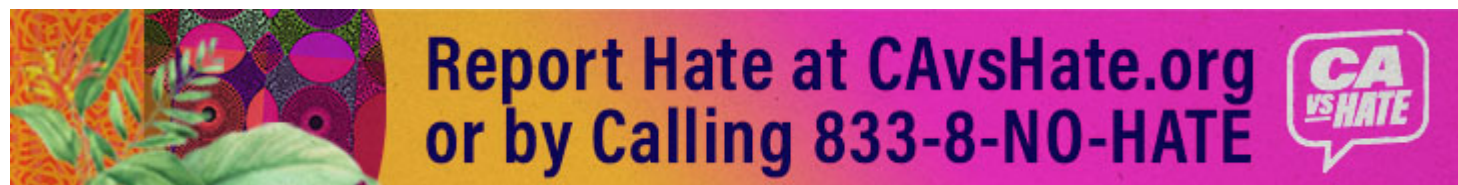


Let's take a look at her life and career at the Ford Motor Company.

King's fascination with cars began during her childhood. Growing up, she was captivated by the sleek designs and mechanical complexities of automobiles. She loved playing with toy cars and considered it an insult if anyone gave her a doll.

King pursued her interest in cars by studying at the ArtCenter College of Design in Pasadena. There, she improved her skills in transportation design, gaining the technical expertise and artistic vision she needed to break into the male-dominated industry.

However, her true inspiration came from her father, Earnest O. King, Sr., who worked for Ford as a Fabrication Specialist. She remembered the father-daughter trips to the auto shows, and the Saturday mornings with the famous Black sculptor, Oscar Graves, who her father assisted in some of his commissioned art works.



She said Graves would mentor her in clay relief sculptures. She was always fascinated by the smell of clay that was a constant in his studio.

However, it was her first visit to her father's job that became the catalyst for King to want a career in transportation design. At the company's annual employee Christmas parties, she got the chance to meet his co-workers and learned about the roles they played in the auto industry. It was a chance to see some great cars, too.

Trending

[Obama decries leaders "who demonize those who don't look like us"](#)

Her career at Ford began in the 1980s, when women — particularly women of color — were scarcely represented in the automotive industry. King's role at Ford was groundbreaking, as she became the first African American woman to work as a transportation designer at the company.

At Ford Design, she worked on the Ford Mustang SN-95's interior. She also made several design

contributions on other vehicles, too, including the interior components of the 1989 Thunderbird, the 1989 Corporate Steering Wheel, the 1989 Thunderbird Wheel/Wheel cover design program, the 1990 Thunderbird Super Coupe, the 1993 Mach III, the 1994 Mustang, to name a few.

King also served three foreign assignments: Turin Italy; Koln, Germany; and Brentwood, Essex, England — designing Ford cars for Europe.

Leaving Ford after about 25 years of service and along with her many speaking engagements, she wrote an autobiography about being Ford's first female African American transportation designer titled, "*What Do You Mean A Black Girl Can't Design Cars? She Did It!*"

She's quoted as saying, "I'm now so proud to have written a book that I hope will inspire young girls and boys to never give up. To influence them so that they can stay focused and alert, and so they never look back. There are mentors who are placed in our lives to serve as our 'Bridges to Destinations' and allow us to cross over them to reach our dreams. Hoping they gain inspiration from my book, my motto for them is simple: 'OPPORTUNITY IS NOW, SO GRAB IT! IF I DID IT, SO CAN YOU!'"



Oakland Post

There are no comments yet.