



# U.S. Masters Swimming Diversity & Inclusion Committee

*Interactive Discussion for LMSC Volunteers  
Racial & National Origin/Culture Diversity*

Handout / Reference Materials  
November 30, 2021 Webinar



# Diversity & Inclusion Presenters

**Jeff Commings** is Co-Founder (and coach) of Dolphins Of The Desert Swimming Academy, the host of USA Swimming's "Deck Pass Live" and a freelance journalist. Jeff is the first African-American to earn an individual medal in swimming at a major international competition (bronze medal in the 100-meter breaststroke, representing the United States at the 1991 Pan American Games in Havana, Cuba). He currently resides in Tucson, AZ. Jeff has helped run the board elections for the Arizona LMSC and has been a delegate for Arizona at three USMS conventions.

**Vicki Shu** returned to swimming in 2017, after a 30-year break, as a member of MEMO -- Marcia's Enthusiastic Masters of Oakland (USMS 2021 Club of the Year!). She has served as a Delegate for Pacific LMSC for the last two years. Vicki had a love-hate relationship with age group swimming as she swam for 6 teams in 4 states over 9 years. She managed to squeak out a year of swimming at UC-San Diego, before giving into the fact that she was just burned out. She enjoys masters swimming so much more! Outside of swimming, Vicki has worked and volunteered in the social justice space for over 30 years, currently as the Director of Development and Communications with the East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation, an affordable housing developer and social service provider in Oakland, CA.



# Welcome Everyone!

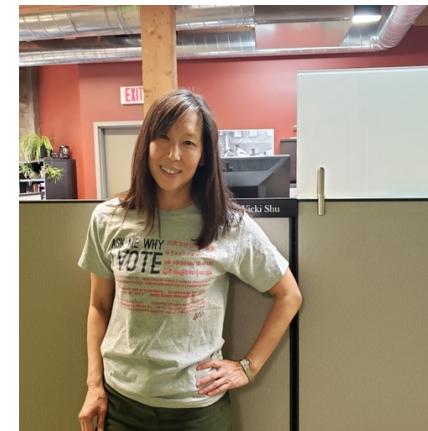
- The webinar will begin in a few minutes; please stand by as everyone gets connected
- All attendees will be muted throughout the presentation and un-muted for the Q&A segment
- You can submit questions to the moderator via the Q&A 'Chat' window





## Diversity & Inclusion Presenters

Jeff Commings  
&  
Vicki Shu



# Agenda

- Review of Materials
- Small Group Discussions
  1. Race / Ethnicity
  2. National Origin / Culture
- Wrap-Up



*People of various ethnicities and cultures*



# Reviewing--Valuing All Types of Diversity

We will review issues specific to each topic (1-9) then provide some discussion questions (A-E) for you to think about and apply to your LMSC

## A    1. Racial & National Origin / Cultural Diversity

B    2. Gender Diversity

    3. Sexual Orientation Diversity

C    4. Age Diversity

    5. Physical Ability / Mental Health / Intellectual Ability / Neurological Attributes Diversity

D    6. Socioeconomic Diversity

    7. Religious or Ethical Value System Diversity

    8. Political Belief Diversity

E    9. Creating an Inclusive Culture at Your LMSC



# 1. Racial & National Origin/Cultural Diversity

- America has become a racially diverse nation with more than 59 million immigrants arriving in the U.S. over the past 50 years alone. According to the Pew Research Center, by 2055, the U.S. is projected to not have a single racial or ethnic majority.
- Immigrants to the U.S. from all parts of the world bring a mix of cultures. Cultures are how groups of people congregate and share their way of being part of a community with like-minded individuals. Often, they share common beliefs and customs.
  - Just like teaching or coaching swimmers, there is not only one “right way” to do something. Embracing cultures other than our own should be an accepted practice.
  - Most immigrants to the US speak English, but there may be communication issues: pronunciation, speed and/or use of slang.





# ***Small Group Discussion***

## ***Session 1 – 15 minutes***

1. What is the ethnic makeup of your LMSC board? Do you have non-white members in your elected LMSC representatives? In your volunteer roles?
2. What barriers do you think exist that might prevent more non-white members from joining your LMSC Board? What can you do to knock down such barriers?

*Think about these questions related to not only your LMSC board but also events sponsored or supported by your LMSC (social events, meets, etc).*

*If you are a coach, think about these questions related to your athletes at a workout, meet, or event.*



## ***Small Group Discussion Session 2 – 15 minutes***

1. Where do your elected LMSC representatives live; do they represent a variety of geographic areas within your LMSC? How can you encourage representation from areas that are not well represented?
  
2. Do you have non-native English speakers on your LMSC board? If so (or if a potential new member with limited English-speaking ability wants to join) what options can you offer to include them? How do you communicate ‘Roberts Rules of Order’ in a variety of languages?

*Think about these questions related to not only your LMSC board but also events sponsored or supported by your LMSC (social events, meets, etc).*

*If you are a coach, think about these questions related to your athletes at a workout, meet, or event.*



# D&I Legislation Approved at 2021 USMS Annual Mtg

- **Section 402.4 “Unsporting Conduct”**
- **Update 402.4.5 to apply to all “activities” (not just ‘events’) and to all people present**
  - Any intentional nonconsensual physical contact, obscene language or gesture, or other threatening language or conduct directed toward members, volunteers, or staff, or bystanders in connection with a USMS administrative activities, events, or workouts.
- **Add 402.4.6 to prohibit discrimination, harassment or offensive comments**
  - Any discrimination, or harassment, or expression regarded as offensive based on an individual’s age, gender, race, ethnicity, culture national origin, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, genetics information, mental or physical disability, protected health and medical information, or any other status protected by federal, state, or local law, where applicable, directed toward members, volunteers, staff, or bystanders in connection with a USMS administrative activities, events, or workouts. Application of Part 1: Swimming Rules regarding age groups, gender categories, swimwear, and guidelines for officiating swimmers with disabilities activity. Age requirements for USMS membership shall not be considered a as violations of this article.

# Diversity & Inclusion Committee

## Guidance for Recognizing Holidays



- When selecting meet dates, be aware of:
  - Federal and state holidays
  - Other key religious holidays and observances (such as Jewish holidays, Holy Thursday, or Ascension Thursday)
  - Ethnic holidays (per local custom)
  - Local observances: Canadian Thanksgiving coinciding with a meet, acknowledge in programming/announcements, but can still hold an event.
  - Avoid the major Christian, Jewish, Islamic holidays (reflect on your community)
- For other Diversity dates, they could be a conversation starter, or at least something for the announcer to bring up (such as after a break):
  - <https://www.diversitybestpractices.com/2021-diversity-holidays#january>
  - Suggestion: Someone on the meet committee can review the list prior to the meet and take some ideas to use at the meet.

# Diversity & Inclusion Committee

## Guidance for Recognizing Holidays - 2022



- January
  - Martin Luther King Day 1/17
- February
  - Black History Month
- March
  - Women's History Month
  - Nat'l Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month
- April
  - Ramadan starts Fri 4/1
  - Passover starts Fri 4/15
  - Easter Sun 4/17
  - Passover ends Sat 4/23
  - Ramadan ends Sat 4/30
- May
  - Asian Pacific Heritage Month
  - Jewish American Heritage Month
  - Memorial Day Mon 5/30
- June
  - Pride Month
  - Juneteenth Sun 6/19
- September
  - Labor Day Mon 9/5
  - 9/15-10/15 Hispanic Heritage Month
  - Rosh Hashanah Sun 9/25-Tue 9/27
- October
  - National Disability Employment Awareness Month
  - Yom Kippur Tue 10/4-Wed 10/5
- November
  - National Native American Heritage Month
  - Veteran's Day Fri 11/11
  - Thanksgiving Thur 11/24
- December
  - World AIDS Day Thur 12/1
  - Hanukkah starts Sun 12/18
  - Christmas Sun 12/25
  - Hanukkah ends Mon 12/26



# Diversity & Inclusion Best Practices

- D&I Best Practice write-ups available on the USMS website here:
  - <https://www.usms.org/about-usms/diversity-and-inclusion/how-clubs-can-improve-diversity-and-inclusivity>
- If you, your team, or LMSC did something noteworthy for Diversity and Inclusion, the Diversity and Inclusion Committee wants to hear from you! We are creating a collection of proven, distinct ideas, programs, and best practices that encourage all adults to swim. Email us at [Diversity@USMastersSwimming.org](mailto:Diversity@USMastersSwimming.org)



## LMSC Diversity & Inclusion Coordinator

- Several LMSCs have recently implemented a “Diversity & Inclusion Coordinator” on their board of directors
- Role write-up provided to LMSC Development Committee
- For more information, contact Ally Sega [ally98003@aol.com](mailto:ally98003@aol.com)



# Diversity & Inclusion Webinar Series

- 6/29: “Diversity & Inclusion for LMSC Volunteers”
- 7/29: “D&I Breakout: Age + Physical/Mental Ability Diversity - Discussion”
- 8/24: “D&I Breakout: Politics + Religion + Socioeconomic Diversity - Discussion”
- 10/12: “D&I Breakout: Gender & Sexual Orientation Diversity - Discussion”
- 11/30: “D&I Breakout: Race + National Origin / Culture Diversity - Discussion”
- Upcoming Sessions:  
1/11: “D&I Breakout: Creating an Inclusive Culture at Your LMSC - Discussion”
- List of all upcoming webinars (2-3 months) always available at  
<https://www.usms.org/volunteer-central/lmscs/peer-to-peer-calls>  
(Includes links to recordings of past presentations as well as links to materials/notes)



# Resources / Contact Info

- Best Practices for Diversity & Inclusion:
  - <https://www.usms.org/about-usms/diversity-and-inclusion/how-clubs-can-improve-diversity-and-inclusivity>
- Coach Interviews:
  - <https://www.usms.org/about-usms/diversity-and-inclusion/how-coaches-can-improve-their-clubs-diversity>
- Diversity in Aquatics
  - <https://www.diversityinaquatics.org/team>
- USMS Transgender Athlete Competition Policy
  - [https://www.usms.org/admin/lmschb/transgender\\_policy.pdf](https://www.usms.org/admin/lmschb/transgender_policy.pdf)
- USA Paraswimming
  - <https://www.teamusa.org/us-paralympics/resources>

## Contact Info:

Sarah Welch, Chair: [sarahwelch@comcast.net](mailto:sarahwelch@comcast.net)

Jeff Commings: [jeffswim@aol.com](mailto:jeffswim@aol.com)

Vicki Shu: [vicki.pei.shu@gmail.com](mailto:vicki.pei.shu@gmail.com)