



# U.S. Masters Swimming Diversity & Inclusion Committee

*Creating an Inclusive Culture at your LMSC*

Handout / Reference Materials  
January 11, 2022 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. He is the new chair of the USMS Diversity and Inclusion Committee.



# 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 Webinars

## 2020

- 7/23 Diversity & Inclusion for Coaches – [Presentation](#) - [Recording](#)

## 2021 Series

- 6/29 Diversity & Inclusion for LMSC Volunteers - [Presentation](#) - [Recording](#)
- 7/29 Interactive Session 1: Age + Physical / Mental Ability - [Presentation](#) - [Recording](#)
- 8/24 Interactive Session 2: Gender & Sexual Orientation - [Presentation](#) - [Recording](#)
- 10/12 Interactive Session 3: Politics + Religion + Socioeconomic - [Presentation](#) - [Recording](#)
- 11/30 Interactive Session 4: Race + National Origin / Culture - [Presentation](#) - [Recording](#)
- 1/11/22 Interactive Session 5: Creating An Inclusive Culture at Your LMSC

# Diversity & Inclusion Facilitator



# Jeff Commings



# Agenda

- Review of Materials
- Group Discussions
  - Creating an Inclusive Culture at...
    1. LMSC Meetings
    2. Workouts
    3. Events
  - Wrap-Up / Resources

The Four Lenses of Diversity & Inclusion



Source: Brandon Hall Group

*Inclusive Culture through 4 lenses of Diversity & Inclusion:*

- *Organization*
- *Individual*
- *Programmatic*
- *Systems*



# 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



## 9. Creating an Inclusive Culture at Your LMSC

- U.S. Masters Swimming believes that successful implementation of diversity & inclusion ensures that colleagues, staff, coaches, members, volunteers, and athletes are valued, treated fairly, and are encouraged to succeed.
  - LMSC leaders need to create an inclusive culture for all volunteers, and ensure club owners and coaches are creating an inclusive culture for athletes at each club.
- To be clear, increasing and maintaining the numbers of under-represented individuals in our sport is necessary, but it is not nearly sufficient. We must maintain an inclusive culture that supports the retention and success of under-represented members across all boundaries.
- Our competencies in understanding and embracing diversity are more and more important as our communities become more diverse.
- Diverse groups and diversity of thought produce a myriad of positive outcomes, including more innovative solutions to complex problems, more productive collaborations, and richer coaching experiences.





## **E. Discussion Questions:**

### Creating an Inclusive Culture at Your LMSC

1. Are the leaders and the volunteers of your LMSC open to new ideas, regardless of where the new ideas come from?
2. Does your LMSC have a documented complaint and/or conflict resolution process that allows anonymous reporting of issues and concerns?
3. Is your LMSC able to attract a diverse collection of volunteers? Are you able to retain a diverse collection of volunteers?
4. How diverse is your volunteer corps, in terms of the categories we discussed today? What diversity & inclusion training have your volunteers and coaches completed? Are you planning to provide additional training in diversity & inclusion for your volunteers and coaches?

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

# ***Small Group Discussion***

## ***Session 1 – 10 minutes***



### **1. Creating an Inclusive Culture for your LMSC Meetings**

- Physical
  - Access to meetings,
  - Ability to see presentation materials,
  - Ability to hear speakers (microphones/closed captions),
- Mental
  - Open to new ideas,
  - Fairness / Conflict resolution,
  - Training & Development
- Emotional
  - Diversity of volunteers, welcoming to all

*Think about these questions with respect to different “lenses” on your LMSC’s Diversity & Inclusion efforts*

- *Organization: what can you do at the LMSC level? What can you ask Clubs to do?*
- *Individual: what can each swimmer/volunteer coach contribute?*
- *Programmatic: what programs can support these efforts?*
- *Systems: what structures and checks & balances can you put in place to keep things on track?*



# ***Small Group Discussion***

## ***Session 2 – 10 minutes***

### **1. Creating an Inclusive Culture for your Workouts**

- Physical
  - Access to workouts & pools,
  - Appropriate locker rooms,
  - Ability to see pace clocks, see/hear coach instructions
- Mental
  - Open to different types of swimmers,
  - Fairness / Conflict resolution,
- Emotional
  - Diversity of swimmers & coaches, welcoming to all

*Think about these questions with respect to different “lenses” on your LMSC’s Diversity & Inclusion efforts*

- *Organization: what can you do at the LMSC level? What can you ask Clubs to do?*
- *Individual: what can each swimmer/volunteer coach contribute?*
- *Programmatic: what programs can support these efforts?*
- *Systems: what structures and checks & balances can you put in place to keep things on track?*



# ***Small Group Discussion***

## ***Session 3 – 10 minutes***

### **1. Creating an Inclusive Culture for your Events (Clinics, Meets & Open Water)**

- Physical
  - Access to events,
  - Appropriate locker rooms,
  - Ability to see information, see/hear event director instructions
- Mental
  - Open to different types of participants,
  - Fairness / Conflict resolution,
- Emotional
  - Diversity of swimmers & coaches, welcoming to all

***Think about these questions with respect to different “lenses” on your LMSC’s Diversity & Inclusion efforts***

- ***Organization: what can you do at the LMSC level? What can you ask Clubs to do?***
- ***Individual: what can each swimmer/volunteer coach contribute?***
- ***Programmatic: what programs can support these efforts?***
- ***Systems: what structures and checks & balances can you put in place to keep things on track?***



# Wrap-Up / Resources

- Diversity & Inclusion Committee Information
  - Legislation approved at USMS 2021 Annual Meeting
  - Guidance for Recognizing Holidays
  - Diversity & Inclusion Best Practices
  - LMSC Diversity & Inclusion Coordinator Role Description
  - Resource Links



# 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)



# 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>

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

Ally Sega, Vice-Chair: [ally98003@aol.com](mailto:ally98003@aol.com)

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