2017 Diversity and Inclusion Chair Report Fall HOD

Congratulations to Oshay Birdinground (BY) and Andrea Three Irons (HOT) for being featured in the new USA Swimming Native American Cultural Resource Guide released this year! It is great to have two Montana athletes featured in a national USA Swimming publication. The guide can be found on the MT Swimming website under the diversity and disability tab.

Congratulations to the BMA Brookies club coaches and athletes for hosting three diversity splash camps in June and July targeting underrepresented populations in the Bozeman area. 4t swimmers received 230 hours of instruction form their coaches and two-thirds of the kids began the camp as non-swimmers. From the splash camps, eight graduates joined the BMA team. The team received a grant from the Charlotte Martin Foundation to support the camps. Great job BMA!

In September I was asked to be a member of the USA Swimming Outreach Eligibility Membership Task Force. We will examine eligibility issues for outreach membership and develop information for LSCs to use. We will also discuss various topics such as how to include homeless and migrant athletes and may discuss outreach memberships for officials.

I have been an active member of the Western Zone Diversity and Inclusion Committee since it was formed. I a member of the WZ diversity camp committee and chair the outreach committee.

The 2018 Western Zone Diversity and Inclusion Select Camp will be held June 14-17 at San Diego State University in San Diego, California. The purpose of the camp is to instill a vision of success and inspire athletes from under-represented populations to become leaders in the sport of swimming. I have included a proposal to provide the funding for this camp. I hope the House of Delegates will vote to support this proposal.

Each LSC may send two athletes ages 13-16 who have achieved the qualifying time in any event as a 13-14 or 15-16 year old athlete. There are secondary qualifications if no athlete in the LSC qualifies under these requirements. Each LSC may also send a coach and the Diversity and Inclusion Chair as well as other interested Diversity and Inclusion Summit participants. The LSC may also submit the names of four alternate athletes for the camp. If there is room available for additional athletes, alternates may be considered. The camp cost is $250 per participant paid by the LSC along with transportation to and from the camp. Applications are to be submitted to the LSC who will select the athletes and coach. Applications are due to the LSC by March 20, 2018. The athletes will be coached by two national level coaches and a national athlete will also speak at the camp. Coaches, diversity chairs, and summit participants will take part in various activities and hear from several speakers. AJ Popp attended the camp in Salt Lake City in 2016.

My hope is that Montana Swimming will send at least two athletes, a coach, and the diversity and inclusion chair to the camp. It is an excellent experience for everyone who attends.

The Western Zone Diversity and Inclusion Committee is discussing how to encourage more LSCs to hold LSC diversity and inclusion camps and other activities for swimmers who are ethnic minorities, LGBTQ, or outreach members. The committee is also discussing changes to the outreach program, funding for diversity and inclusion activities, and a meet fee reimbursement program for outreach swimmers. Nationally there have been discussions that reflect USA Swimming's commitment to diversity and inclusion such as requiring LSCs to participate in the zone select diversity and inclusion camps, adding the diversity and inclusion chair as a voting member of LSC boards and bringing the diversity and inclusion chair to convention each fall. The committee encourages LSCs to offer expanded outreach eligibility, meet fee waivers, outreach scholarships, grant programs, LSC and Zone diversity camps, and diversity workshops. The committee provides information to interested individuals, groups, and LSCs on how to promote diversity and inclusion.

I also submitted this fall a proposal to create a Reach Out Montana grant to allow clubs to apply for grant funding for a two year period to develop and support programs to assist low income, multicultural, ethnic, and disabled athletes and encourage them to participate in swimming. The amount requested is $5000 per year. Grant application will be received, reviewed, and awarded by a committee of three people as specified in the proposal. Possible funding requests could include learn to swim programs for low income athletes or ethnic minorities, meet fee assistance for low income members, purchase training equipment for eligible athletes, low cost team memberships, purchase caps, goggles, parkas or t-shirts or eligible athletes, water safely programs, etc. This grant program proposal was modeled after a very successful grant program used in Pacific Swimming. I hope the House of Delegate will support this proposal.

Another proposal I submitted is in response to a request sent out by the Western Zone Directors asking each LSC to fund sending their Diversity and Inclusion Chair to the USA Swimming convention each fall beginning in 2018. Hopefully the HOPD will also support this proposal.

In the next year I would like to indentify athletes and adults who are interested in being a part of the Montana Swimming diversity and inclusion committee. If you are interested please contact me. Discussion topics will include possible diversity and inclusion activities that could be held in Montana and funding for those activities.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Huckeby

September 30, 2017