



**Potomac Valley Swimming
Board of Directors Meeting
March 14, 2014
Diversity and Inclusion Chair's Report**

Diversity, Inclusion & Outreach

Since the last report:

- Supported the 28th Annual Black History Swim Meet - meet was very well run, no incidents to report. The team was supported by 32 teams representing 11 LSC's with 840 athletes (about 400 PVS) and a dedicated very diverse team of officials from PVS and visiting LSC teams. PVS sponsored the polos for the officials.

- Secured USA Swimming's support for a PVS Diversity Coach's forum luncheon on Friday, April 25, 2014. (open to all PVS coaches and those from other LSC's that may be in our area for the Coaches Clinic) USA Swimming sport development consultant Peter Clark and Diversity Consultant Manny Banks will be here. Miriam Lynch, EZ Diversity Coordinator and Manny are helping me to secure a coach or two that will also lend their expertise to to forum. Also, planning on inviting Bill Kirkner (JCC - Maryland Swimming) who is USA Swimming's National Diversity and Inclusion Chairman.
 - The purpose is to give PVS Coaches that currently work with minority athletes (or would like to expand their team by working with minority athletes) an opportunity to discuss issues and challenges they face (that may be unique to the work they do with minority athletes and families) and benefit from the expertise of others on how to overcome those challenges to the benefit of their athletes and clubs. The goal is for these coaches to walk away with strategies that will help them to improve the performance of their athletes, encourage their families to be more supportive of the sport and their swimmers and help them grow the number of committed high performing minority athletes for our LSC. Formal communications will go out soon but I have been spreading the word about the event with coaches directly. There seems to be a lot of interest.
 - Working with Coach Rob Green of DC Waves/DCPR on securing their classroom space at Takoma Aquatic Center for this event.

- I am working on having PVS representation at a Make a Splash event with Cullen Jones on April 8, 2014 at PGS&L. He was just in town this week for an event on Capitol Hill with PhitAmerica and SFIA.

- "Nadar Por Vida" local swimming outreach program will be ending this May after what I believe are over 10 years of inclusion and outreach to Hispanic and other

under represented communities in Northern Virginia (it will continue as a scholarship program). Coach Art Lopez will be moving from the area and the program will not continue. "Nadar por Vida" is a Make a Splash partner program and Art was recipient of the 2009 USA Swimming Diversity Inclusion Award. I think that it would be appropriate to do something to recognize the contributions of this program and its volunteers and participants. The program is held at Providence Recreation Center on Saturday evenings. Manny Banks from USA Swimming agrees and is supportive of being here in May should we decide to do something to acknowledge and thank Art Lopez for his work in our LSC with minority swimmers. Will plan forward.

- Reached out to [Dunbar Highschool](#) a historical black high school in DC (they have a new school, new pool . no high school team, not being used by the community), I visited with Bowie College pool about the possibility of hosting a Water Safety event at their respective pools in May. Dunbar high school has received national media attention recently since it's re-opening this school year. I'm also researching other under used pools in the area and looking for ways to encourage our PVS teams to think about using these pools for practice sites or reaching out to these pools for swimming related community service projects.
- Monica Randall who is an educational consultant on our committee has agreed to take the lead helping to coordinate a College Knowledge event for PVS and will be reaching out to others to assist her including Coach Doug (DC WAVE) who has successfully done this in the past. I am thinking of reaching out to [Coach Sergio Lopez](#) from [Bolles School](#) in Florida to join us if it can work in his schedule. I am hopeful to make this a part of the PVS Swimposium in late September.. Here is a [video](#) of him being interviewed about the college recruiting process.
- Rhonda Waller from our committee has offered to coordinate a Diversity event for early fall. I'll be meeting with her soon to start the planning process. I'm thinking we may also be able to collaborate with the plans for PVS Swimposium in late September.
- Monica Randall and I are working to complete the application for PVS to host the 2015 EZ Diversity Camp for June 2015 which is due April 4, 2014. Here is link and the info on the [2013 Diversity Camp and the Application for the 2015 Camp](#). There is only one other LSC that will be placing a bid. Carrie Tupper from UMD/UMAC is providing quotes for their facility as the main site for the event. We are also working on coordinating to use the Howard University Pool and either Takoma Aquatic or Dunbar pool for two of the pool sessions during that weekend.
- I may be attending the National Drowning Prevention Conference in Orlando, FL later this month
- I'll be at EZ Sectionals meet for one of my athletes and also looking forward to observing the meet in general. Thinking about ways to better educate minority

athletes and families early on about the progression of performance and times needed to qualify for championship meets and inspire them to aspire to work hard to make it to these levels of competition and the opportunities these provide.

- Coach Green of DC WAVE along with Rhonda Waller and Don Brazelton and Erika Livingston (and others) are coordinating the trip to the Black Heritage Swim Meet in Cary, NC (Memorial Day weekend) for any athletes in our LSC from other teams that would like to go. They will manage the meet entry fees, a practice session here in May and t-shirts & caps. Non DC WAVE athletes would have to make their own travel arrangements. Rhonda Waller has communicated that she has some rooms available on hold and ERSC has a large number of hotel rooms blocked as well and information about group transportation. Any athletes that want to participate but would be a financial hardship to do so may apply for a Diversity scholarship for meet entry fees, cap & t-shirt. I'll have that communication go out asap. If I receive applications I will ask that this group review them and help me in reviewing such requests.
- I will be reaching out to our Officials Chair and Certification Official about a orientation workshop for parents on volunteering opportunities and "demystifying" officiating. Thinking of a July time frame.
- Next Diversity meeting is April 7th, location TBD
- I'll be at the Eastern Zone meeting in Fort Lauderdale on May 9, 2014

Merari
PVS Diversity Chair
[301.938.0250](tel:301.938.0250)
meraripvs@gmail.com