

**Potomac Valley Swimming
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee
Committee Chair Report**



July 27, 2020

The Diversity Equity and Inclusion Committee (DEI Committee) serves the PVS community by providing educational and outreach opportunities for members to help reach under served or marginalized groups within our LSC. Our committee is made up entirely of PVS members who volunteer their time in service of our LSC. This year's committee members are listed below. Our committee had an overall budget of \$10,000.00 for FY20.

Half of the DEI Budget is in the form of the PVS Diversity and Outreach Grant. There are two \$2500 grant disbursements - Fall/Winter and Spring/Summer. This year our DEI volunteers voted to award the PVS Diversity and Outreach Grant to Mary Bergstrom and her Swim Up initiative. [Swim Up, Inc.](#) has partnered with local charter schools and youth organizations to provide free learn to swim classes to under served youth in the Washington Metropolitan Area. In the Fall of 2019 Swim Up selected the Bishop Walker School for Boys in SE Washington, DC to provide free learn to swim classes as a part of the schools curriculum to their 3rd-5th graders. The PVS Diversity and Outreach Grant funds of \$2500 helped provide each student with a swimsuit, towel, goggles, and swim cap. Students were even treated to a pizza party and trip to a DCIAA High School Swim Meet in early 2020 to help inspire them to continue their swimming journey. See pictures below of Swim Up's work this past year.



For more information about how you can get involved with Swim Up please contact Mary Bergstrom at - swimupdc@gmail.com, or visit their website and social media platforms: Web - www.swimup.org | Instagram - [@swimupdc](https://www.instagram.com/swimupdc).

In addition to our Outreach Grant Program, the DEI Committee sponsors and organizes programs and services to PVS members to help educate and promote diversity within our LSC. As we are all aware, in March the global pandemic put a halt to many of our daily lives and plans. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic most of our anticipated programs this season had to be cancelled. Our College Knowledge Fair was set to occur in early May but was cancelled as we were unable to secure enough college coaches to hold a virtual event. The Team DMV travel meet experience to Cary, North Carolina for the annual Black Heritage Swim Meet was cancelled as well as the meet's host cancelled the event this year in early April.

The remaining DEI budget was used to help support and fund the PVS Club Support Grant Program to provide financial support to clubs that were adversely affected by the COVID-19 shutdowns.

Spring 2020 brought more chaos and unrest as the tragic deaths of Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and George Floyd sparked several weeks of protests and riots centered on raising awareness of our country's ongoing struggles with race, social injustice, and police brutality. In the wake of these protests, the call for organizations and businesses to no longer remain silent on these issues was heard loud and clear. Following the example set by USA Swimming, the PVS Board of Directors issued a statement standing in solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement and renewed our commitment to ensuring that our sport continues to grow in the area of diversity and inclusion. [You can read PVS' statement here.](#) I want to publicly thank our General Chair Tim Husson and our Board of Directors for their support and courage to stand with the Black Lives Matter movement, and we call on the athletes of our community to join the DEI committee to share their experiences, thoughts, and ideas to help us create a more equitable and inclusive swimming community moving forward.

In that spirit, our committee has remained active and has been promoting several educational webinars and events sponsored by [Diversity in Aquatics](#) this summer. Additionally, we are also in the process of planning our own virtual roundtable discussion for PVS athletes to help amplify and elevate our athlete's voices. This event is planned for early Fall 2020 and will give athletes a safe and open opportunity to discuss these sensitive subjects, so that we may begin to create a community of trust, understanding, and open lines of communication for all of our members. We believe that this is a critical step in building a truly inclusive environment for our swimmers, coaches, and non-athlete members.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rob Green - DEI Chairperson

2019-2020 DEI Athlete Committee Members:

- Jasmine Barry
- Marcus Brown
- Molly Kennedy
- Ariana Lewis
- Jocelyn Nicols

2019-2020 DEI Non-Athlete Members:

- Mary Bergstrom
- Vera Brown
- Marye Carter
- Jason Cochran
- Jeremey Cochran
- Jess Frye
- Miriam Lynch
- Monica Randall
- Rich Romero