

MEMO

Date: 08 October, 2022

To: Oklahoma Swimming Delegates at Large

From: Elizabeth Harkins, DEI Chair

Re: 2022 Report

1. USA Swimming, Sigma Gamma Rho Partnership

\* Spring 2022 I began meeting with Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority and City of Oklahoma City Parks and Recreation team members with the goal of creating opportunities to host Water Safety Clinics, give lessons and begin to create relationships within the African American community.

- summer 2021 stats showed that 18-20 water rescues are performed by lifeguards at the TWO OKC Parks public pools in these communities. Namely, Northeast Pool and Woodson Park.

Clinics were held over the summer with the help and support of Kent Nicholson, Sooner Swim Club JC Riley of Bison Aquatic Club and AESC offered to host a clinic that was cancelled due to facilities closure/low attendance. The response to these clinics was fantastic and it is the hope of OKS to continue to build upon the program started in OKC, begin the same in Tulsa and other areas in Oklahoma.

2. I am currently sitting on the Central Zone committee for the 2024 Diversity and Inclusion Meet to be held in Indianapolis, IN in conjunction with the 2024 Olympic Trials. I am looking forward to seeing OKS represented well in this historic event!

3. I am currently working closely with Susan Mechler, of Ohio Swimming, Disability Chair of the Central Zone to begin to incorporate differently-abled swimmers to compete in both state and regional events in accordance with the new para guidelines set forth by USA Swimming. This year, Oklahoma Swimming welcomed its first para-athlete to competition at the OKS State Meet. This is but one step in building and maintaining a positive and inclusive environment for swimmers with disabilities in our LSC.

4. Over the fall of 2022 and Spring of 2023 I hope to visit each club in our LSC with the hope of bringing DEI awareness to the forefront, building a committee of committed and diverse folks to help make OKS a standout in the DEI community of USA Swimming.

5. I have set both short and long term goals committed to making OKS a leader in DEI including but not limited to the items presented above. If anyone is interested in being involved with this effort, please reach out.

Elizabeth Harkins, DEI Chair

[oksdeichair.org](http://oksdeichair.org)

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