

Western Zone Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee
Represent. Advocate. Inspire. Serve. Educate. -- RAISE

Meeting Minutes
December 1, 2025
7:00 – 8:00 PM (Pacific Time)

Monday, December 1, 2025, at 7:00 PM Pacific time (8:00 MT)

1. Call to Order: 7:00 PM PT by Susan Huckeby, WZ DEI Coordinator.
2. Attendance: Keny Yoshiwara (PC), Veronica Hernandez (PC), Virgil Chancy (CA), Leslie Juarez-Michel (SN), Trisha Nickel (SR), Susan Huckeby (MT), Melina Salvador (NM), Barabra Weist (PN), Ellie Wang (PN athlete), and Sally Taggart (WZ Director – CO).
3. Review minutes from October 6 and November 3 meetings: The minutes from both meetings were approved as presented.
4. Sally Taggart, the new Western Zone non-coach director was introduced.
5. Brief review of mission statement – RAISE – Represent; Advocate; Inspire; Serve; and Educate.
 - Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanza, New Year's Eve
 - International Day of Persons with Disabilities -- December 3
 - Universal Human Rights Month – adopted December 10, 1948
 - Veronica encouraged athlete representatives to survey the athletes in their LSC to find out what holidays and cultural events they celebrate year round.
5. Unfinished Business:
 - **GOAL: LSC Outreach criteria posted on each LSC website in the WZ**
 - Outreach membership definition from the rulebook: a reduced-fee category of athlete membership for under-represented and/or economically disadvantaged swimmers. The group discussed this definition. Does it mean an athlete who is from an under-represented group may apply for an outreach membership without also being economically disadvantaged? Kent will contact Leland Brown about this.
 - All WZ LSCs have outreach information posted on their websites.
 - Encourage all WZ LSC's to have a \$0 LSC outreach fee. USA Swimming still receives \$5.
 - Do clubs in each LSC offer and promote outreach membership to their members? Is outreach information listed on club websites? Clubs need to be educated about outreach membership and what resources they and their LSC can offer to outreach members.
 - Financial need and outreach – Many people don't know what an outreach membership is. Is there a way to present outreach and financial need in a standard way in all our LSCs? The group felt LSCs should call it Outreach and Registration Financial Assistance on our LSC websites as

that was more descriptive.

- The national DEI committee discussed the possibility of changing the name at a meeting this fall.
- Expanded outreach goals for 2026. Waiting for Leland and Hilary to send them to Susan.
- New LSC DEI Chairs – send new chair names and contact information to Susan. Wilma Wong is the new Southern California co-DDEI chair with Virgil.

6. New Business:

- NDEI Outreach Task Force Report 2. Distressed Communities Index (DCI) zip code information. <https://eig.org/distressed-communities-interactive/?geo=zctas&lat=41.48&lon=-88.9&z=3.97> The NDEI committee discussed this further at meeting on 11/25. It will be one possible national outreach membership criteria. LSCs can use this if desired along with their current criteria. Pam Lowenthal chairs the committee..
 - i. The DCI zip code project was discussed during the November NDEI committee meeting. DCI apparently at this time will be optional rather than required to be used by all LSCs. The sub-committee will train all LSCs registrars in its use once approved. Concern was expressed that the DCI may then become required as the only criteria for outreach membership. Concern was expressed about further testing of the DCI to decide if it was an accurate way to determine outreach membership. Unsure if the sub-committee members are being included in meetings to discuss DCI. Eric Stimpson is working on the data for Pam. The zip code map and the values shown are based on a 5 year rolling average. Susan's question about it was not answered. Using this criteria may be more difficult for coaches to use when handling club registrations. Concerns were expressed about inclusion. If we want to let more people join USA Swimming why would we create a barrier that may keep low income people out? Is this a way to keep swimming elitist? USA Swimming membership numbers are down so we need to encourage more people to join. USA Swimming is putting together a task force to figure out how to gain more members. Water polo has been successful in building their program by using community engagement. Sally mentioned that the new CEO Kevin Ring and new BOD chair, Brent Lang, are addressing the decreasing membership and hopefully will develop some new ideas to address it. She will let us know what find out.
- National DEI committee news: There will be no NDEI committee meeting in December. The January meeting will focus on bringing on the new committee members.
 - i. Apparently the DICE acronym will be used after it was reported last month that it would not but rather the full name Diversity, Inclusion, and Community Engagement would be used by USA Swimming.
- WZ Multicultural Meet in New Mexico – Melina and Virgil
 - i. Virgil reported that the WZ DEI Committee has been working on a multicultural meet for several years beginning with smaller regional meets then culminating in a WZ championship meet proposed by Rich LaDue from Colorado.
 - ii. Melina is working on a plan to host the multicultural meet in New Mexico. New Mexico is rich in cultural heritage and has several pools that would

work well to host the meet. She and Virgil are considering the enduring value of the trip, fellowship, connectivity, and the experience of the trip in determining the meet format, cultural activities, and location. They want to combine an athletic experience with a cultural/academic experience.

- iii. LSCs would select their teams. Once entered the athletes would be divided into four mixed teams.
- iv. The meet would include a competition type swim festival, a visit to a museum, and an outreach activity such as teach swim lessons to underprivileged kids as well as a team meal and guest speaker.
- v. Melina met with the foundation personnel last week. They have access to pools on tribal lands. The NM athlete representatives are also working on this project.
- vi. Melina and Virgil are working on lodging, food, the agenda, and the costs.
- vii. Parents could accompany their children and optional parent activities will be planned.
- viii. Age range for swimmers would be possibly 11-16.
- ix. LSCs could sponsor a certain number of athletes to participate in the complete multicultural event. The meet would be open for additional athletes to compete, but they would not be included in the other multicultural activities.
- x. Looking at lodging at a college campus dorm. We would need to determine availability if held during the school year.
- xi. Plan is to keep it small to start and then grow the event.
- xii. Sally wants the group to put the financials together with the planning information before asking the WZ board for funding.
- 2027 WZ DEI Camp and summit update at UNR Camp in 2027. Kent is still waiting for information from the University of Nevada Reno.
- 2026 WZ DEI Chair Meeting, Reno: Kent is still waiting for information from the University of Nevada Reno. If we don't host this DEI chair meeting at Reno in 2026, we need to plan for a site visit for the camp directors.
- Susan will send Kent, Melina, and Virgil the bid information form we have used in the past.
- Video/Webinar project – Barbara reported she is still pursuing the project with USA Swimming. She spoke with Michael Mares with USA-S safe sport about it. Could USA Swimming include a section about DEI on how to make a safe space for diverse athletes as a component in the safe sport training modules? Michael wants Barbara to continue working with Leland and Hilary on this. Michael will also contact the US Center for Safe Sport about this.
- USA Swimming Summit in September will have a DEI Chair track.

7. LSC Round Robin: Due to time constraints, the notes below were submitted separately.

- AK – (Jackie Savina)
- AZ – (Laurel Hill and Porter Olstad)
- CA – (Virgil Chancy and Wilma Wong)
- CC – (Kacy Ota)
- CO – (Emily Altier)
- HI – (Joyce Follis)
- IE – (Shelley Sobek)

- MT – (Susan Huckeby) Sy Pizzolato represented Team USA at the Deaflympics in Tokyo in November.
- NM – (Melina Salvador)
- OR – (Lissa Parker)
- PC -- (Kent Yoshiwara /Veronica Hernandez)
- PN – (Barbara Weist /Ellie Wang) PN is hosting a DEI camp on January 25 at WEST. Matthea Gaines, KING, competed at the Deaflympics in Tokyo.
- SI -- (Juli Arzave)
- SN – (Leslie Juarez-Michel)
- SR – (Trisha Nickel/ Nicole Dumitrascu, athlete)
- UT – (Heather Hale)
- WY – (Codi Jorgensen)
- WZ Directors – (Sally Taggart/ Scott Shea)
- WZ Athlete Reps (Simran Jayasinghe/ Lara Robertson)
- Guests:

8. Report from the National DDEI Committee: Emily Altier, Virgil Chauncy, and Ellie Wang: See the NDEI outreach task force discussion.
9. Report from National Disability sub-committee and/or WZ Disability Chair: No report

Next meeting: Monday **January 5, 2026**, 7:00 PM Pacific Time (8:00 Mountain). The meeting link is the same each month and the zoom link is below.

The monthly zoom meeting link is:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84531002323?pwd=uLGZ2cMLG5Gt00wOf8sNHnr6CrnGCb.1>

Meeting ID: 845 3100 2323

Passcode: 318616

Thank you to Pacific Swimming for providing the zoom meeting link.

Adjournment: 7:58 PM Pacific Time