

# Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

## Vice President Report

This season DEI continued with the momentum of growth through inclusion. With the world around us changing it is important that as an organization we continue to evolve. This year DEI had some great areas of growth that I am excited to share with you.

### **Athletes With Disabilities-**

At this past Jos, we doubled in AWD participation with 26 athletes, representing 4 different clubs in the physical and cognitive categories. This year's competition welcomed a cognitive male solo as well as a cognitive mixed duet. All the athletes were excellent to watch. The highlight (for me) was that many of the athletes with disabilities progressed into the next figure tier from the previous year! CONGRATULATIONS to them and their coaches! Thank you Betsy for all your work on the figures for AWD's as well as the new ones on the way.

### FINA Youth Worlds (AWD)

WE DID IT!! USA was the first... THE FIRST host country to include an AWD competition in conjunction with a FINA Youth Worlds Championship. It was a very well received event by the international judges and coaches. We welcomed Argentina, France, Mexico and the USA. (Clubs Miramar Mermaids, Bay Area Synchro, Gardens Synchro, Cypress Synchro Club). It was a beautifully run event with a special awards ceremony that was full of tears, not sadness, but pure joy. We look forward to continue growth in all AWD programs and are excited to hear about new clubs

### **DEI Athlete Ambassadors**

We graduated our 2nd class of DEI Ambassadors during this year's convention! The grads have offered to continue with the program and implement a fellowship program. This will help them with the mentorship of our new members. Thank you to Emma and Saloni for their leadership in helping the athletes. Thank you ladies.

**Coaches please encourage your male athletes to consider joining.**

## **Transgender Community Inclusion and Policy**

Building community is very important to me as well as for USAAS. DEI has started and is in the beginning stages of the Transgender Policy. I am working with the BOD to make sure that our policy creates an inclusive environment for Transgender athletes while maintaining fair and equitable play for the all members of USAAS.

**DEI Education Opportunities:** Angie Taylor- DEI Conventions Speaker 2021 and 2022

We had our first DEI luncheon in Reno with Angie and it was well received. I feel we all took something away from her presentation. I am very excited she will join us again in St Petersburg to share about a different topic. Please don't miss her.

These two years have been a pleasure serving USAAS as your VP DEI and I would like to thank all the DEI committee members for the support and hard work. A special thank you to the Zone DEI Chairs for their communication to the zones, Kim Kohut, Diana Wolff, Patrice Dodd, and Sahara Becker. We have made some big moves for diversity, inclusion and equity. I look forward to hopefully continuing what we started in the 2020 in a 2nd term.

Respectfully  
Ashley Johnson, VP DEI