



MASSACHUSETTS INTERSCHOLASTIC  
ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION



## MIAA/MSAA Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Summit – January 19-21, 2021

The Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA) and the Massachusetts School Administrators' Association (MSAA) held the fourth annual Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Summit, with the theme, "Gen-Z Moving A New Dream Forward," virtually from January 19-21, 2021. More than 435 students, principals, athletic directors, administrators, teachers and coaches participated. The three-day summit included five sessions featuring topics to support and assist people wishing to advocate for change in the areas of race equity, social justice, equal opportunity, acceptance of our differences, systemic racism, and the inclusion of all. Mike Rubin, MIAA/MSAA Assistant Director and a liaison to the DEI Committee, said, "In moving a dream forward, one significant objective of the DEIC was to give our young people the tools to advocate for change, promote equity for all, and prepare them, according to Newton Public Schools Chief Diversity Officer Kathy Lopes, to be 'Upstanders and not Bystanders' in the fight for social justice."



Mack Charles, Director of Strategy and Operations at Scholar Athletes Inc. of Greater Boston, emceed the three-day summit. Responsible for designing and organizing intramural sports for high school students in the Greater Boston and Springfield Public Schools, Mack was also an assistant basketball coach at Lynn English High School and a part-time football coach at Mount Ida College. Mack's energy, enthusiasm and passion to include student voices jumpstarted each day and each session.

The Summit provided daily sessions aimed at fostering provocative thinking, active engagement and self-reflection. With over 15 presenters including adults and students, the Summit delivered insight into timely and pertinent social justice topics. As stated by a student attendee, "The enthusiasm that was brought to the sessions was amazing, and I loved the opportunities for group discussion and student input, especially the student panel that was featured in some of the sessions."



Danika Manso-Brown



Kathy Lopes



Dr. Dwayne Thomas

Summit presenters included: Robert Lewis Jr., *Founder and President, The Base*; Kathy Lopes, *Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion for the Newton Public Schools*; Kevin Ross, *Boston Supervisor, Becoming a Man (BAM)*; Jon Cross, *Founder, Cross Wellness*; Kathleen Lutz, *Schools and Unified Sports Manager, Special Olympics Massachusetts*; Joseph Walsh, *President, Adaptive Sports New England*; Danika Manso-Brown, *Associate Director of Education, Anti-Defamation League*; Ted McCarthy, Colleen Motyl-

Szary and Jen Tangen, *Sutton High School*; Kimm Topping and Ev Gilbert, *DESE Safe Schools Program for LGBTQ Students*; Deanna Schneyer, *Chief Inspiration Officer and Founder of The Winning Element*, and Dr. Dwayne Thomas, *Owner and Chief Learning Officer of Thomas Leadership Solutions, Inc.*

Kathy Lopes, a licensed clinical social worker and educator and the Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion for the Newton Public Schools system, spoke to the negative impact a harmful sports culture can have on players and teams. Her message focused around available tools and strategies to help student-athletes feel more confident in speaking up as an ally, and learning what it means to be an upstander, rather than a bystander. According to a participant, "Kathy did a good job of pushing us to be reflective about our past actions and beliefs without being exclusionary." Danika Manso-Brown, Associate Director of Education for the Anti-Defamation League, presented on the history and meaning of Black Lives Matter and reminded students that "every human in school, community, and society is deserving of dignity and respect."

Participant feedback and response to the DEI Summit included, "Well-executed and attended!" and "I'm so incredibly grateful to have attended all three days of this summit. Thank you so much for all of the time and effort put forth to make this happen (especially during Covid!)." K.T. Emerson, Assistant Executive Director Oregon School Activities Association, stated, "the Summit provided a variety of perspectives, strategies and motivational speakers that were both deeply engaging as well as inspiring. Each session provided applicable strategies to use within classrooms, performing arts groups and athletics programs. Many sessions also provided reflective stories on the development of strategies or efforts that are being provided for students which helped to emphasize the importance of the DEI work happening all over the country. I really appreciate being able to experience your DEI Summit as a participant."

The MIAA/MSAA DEI Committee consists of school administrators, supporting agencies, and representatives from higher education institutions, as well as individuals from the MIAA Partners in Prevention. The Committee provides the MIAA and MSAA memberships with extensive support, resources and expertise in the delivery of insight and programmatic initiatives leading to cultural competencies.

The DEI Committee will continue to present and provide information and resources to schools and communities. The Committee is committed to promoting inclusiveness, awareness and acceptance among the memberships of the MIAA and MSAA. You may find more information about the DEIC on their [webpage](#) on the MIAA and MSAA home pages.

## EDUCATIONAL ATHLETICS

MIAA | 33 Forge Pkwy | Franklin, MA 02038 | 508-541-7997

