

WHISTLE BLAST

Below are few updates on what's happening this month...

BASKETBALL IS BACK! FALL WEBINAR SERIES!

As we anticipate the start of the basketball season (fingers crossed!), CBOC will be offering four webinars to get officials ready for the season. We have a great lineup of speakers scheduled to discuss a number of topics. Click the "Register Now" next to the session you want to sign up for:

**Tokyo 2020 Debrief with Michael Weiland,
Matt Kallio, MP Malo & Nadine Crowley**
September 15 @ 7PM (EDT)

[Register Now!](#)

Perry Stothart
September 29 @ 7PM (EDT)

[Register Now!](#)

Nate Saunders
October 6 @ 7PM (EDT)

[Register Now!](#)

Nadine Crowley & MP Malo
October 20 @ 7 PM (EDT)

[Register Now!](#)



We will also be offering three online NOCP courses throughout the month of September:

NOCP 2 Course – Cohort #1
September 14 & 16
7 – 9 PM (EDT)

NOCP 2 Course – Cohort #2
September 26
12 – 3:30 PM (EDT)

NOCP 1 Course
September 28 & 30
7 – 9 PM (EDT)

To register for one of these courses, login to your **Game Plan** account and click on the "Workshops" tab to sign up.

FOLLOW US!

Make sure to follow the various CBOC & Canada Basketball channels to stay up to date with what's going on daily.





IT'S BEEN A VERY BUSY SUMMER FOR OUR FIBA LICENSED OFFICIALS...

CONGRATULATIONS MICHAEL, MATT, MP & NADINE!

Congratulations to Michael Weiland, Matt Kallio, MP Malo and Nadine Crowley on their success at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics. It was a very special tournament for our three referees, who were all assigned to medal round games.

Matt Kallio - Men's Bronze Medal Game

MP Malo - Women's Gold Medal Game

Michael Weiland - Men's Gold Medal Game

We would like to take time to acknowledge and celebrate MP Malo, who became the first female referee to be assigned to a Men's Gold Medal Game at the FIBA U19 Men's World Cup in Riga, Latvia prior to Tokyo.

CBOC is very proud of all four individuals for their outstanding performance during the Olympic Games. We hope that you will join us in celebrating these accomplishments. Look out for a special Olympics issue of the Whistle Blast in the next couple of weeks!

WELCOME HOME NATE SAUNDERS & CHRISTINE VUONG

Welcome home Nate Saunders and Christine Vuong who represented Canada at the FIBA U19 Men's World Cup in Latvia and the FIBA U19 Women's World Cup in Hungary. Both represented Canada extremely well, and Christine was assigned to the Bronze Medal game.

Other Notable News



REMEMBERING WARREN PONCSAK

CB and CBOC are deeply saddened by the sudden passing of Regina basketball referee Warren Poncsak. Warren was a friend, a colleague, a leader and a mentor to so many in the officiating community.

A national level referee with more than 30 years at the U Sports level. Warren continued as a floor official in Canada West and the CEBL until his passing. Warren was also a National Referee Coach. Universally respected we grieve for his wife Deb and their three daughters. The hole in the basketball community will be felt forever.

To read the beautiful tribute to Warren, please click [here](#).

3X3 OFFICIATING CLINIC – AUG 25

Basketball BC will be hosting a 3x3 Officiating Clinic led by Mike Thomson next Wednesday, August 25 from 7 – 8:30PM (PDT). If you are interested in attending the clinic, make sure the RSVP ahead of time [here](#). You will receive the Zoom link the morning of the 25th.

MODERN PRO: RETURN TO THE COURT

Matt Kallio is offering an online clinic to focus on basketball knowledge and applying officiating techniques that build on your foundation. This is a two-day clinic running from Sept 10-11. If you are interested in the registering for this event, click [here](#).

WISHING WASEEM HUSAINY & CHRISTINE VUONG SAFE TRAVELS

Waseem Husainy will be representing Canada at the FIBA America's U16 Boys Championships in Xalapa, Mexico August 21 – 30, 2021. Christine Vuong will be representing Canada at the FIBA America's U16 Girls Championships in Guanajuato, Mexico also August 21 – 30, 2021. This will be Waseem's first FIBA assignment and we wish both he and Christine well.

CONGRATULATIONS KAYLA HERDMAN

Kayla Herdman has been assigned by FIBA 3x3 to Hoop It Up Winnipeg, August 28 and 29, 2021 in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Good luck Kayla.



Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in Basketball Officiating: A Need to Create a Sense of Belonging and Equitable Access to Opportunities for Members

By Dr. Ardavan Eizadirad

The death of George Floyd, the recovery of the remains of approximately 5000 and counting Indigenous children buried at various residential schools across Canada, and the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic in terms of who is disadvantaged and in what ways reminds us that systemic racism remains an issue that requires a collective pro-active response rather than individual, reactionary responses. Similar to what a great official would do to succeed at all levels, we must be prepared and pro-active in mitigating problems, challenges, and barriers instead of waiting for incidents to occur and then responding. FIBA expects that officials control the game and not manage it and "be in charge with a service attitude". This is accomplished by being strong, decisive, and approachable.

We need to apply these characteristics to the day-to-day functioning of basketball officiating organizations to create a sense of belonging for members. Furthermore, basketball officiating organizations at all levels, including local boards, need to create policies, practices, and intentional programs that facilitate equitable access to opportunities for its members. Institutions across different sectors have historically been resistant to transformative work, often wanting to maintain the status quo. Yet, the status quo often privileges identities who have historically been in power and benefited from this process.

This is why it is important to think about, reflect, and take action as a collective with respect to the following questions to advance equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) in basketball officiating:

- *Who is involved in the decision-making within your basketball organization?*

- *Who is represented or not represented within leadership positions? Why?*
- *What criteria are decisions based on?*
- *Are the criteria used for decision-making outcomes communicated to members in advance and clearly?*
- *How are incidents related to racism and discrimination reported and handled? Is there a procedure in place for reporting?*
- *How are we being complicit as an organization and contributing to the problem?*

Institutions, including basketball officiating organizations, can no longer resort to ignorance or silence. Phrases such as "sports are neutral" and "leave politics out of sports" contribute to the problem by refusing to admit sports as a platform plays an integral part of whether someone has a positive or negative experience whether playing, coaching, or officiating. This impacts who decides to stay in the game and who decides to leave, often having to do with whether the person feels like they belong in such spaces. This also impacts inequality of access to opportunities, whereas no matter how hard someone tries, they feel like they are overlooked and not given an opportunity to show their true potential.

Don't get me wrong. Referee associations are doing amazing work in partnership with local communities, but the reality is that there is room for improvement, and the difference between good and great is in the small details.

I felt there was a need to amplify such voices to bring the truth out, so collectively we can work towards bettering officiating organizations so this does not continue. As a result, I founded an organization called EDIcation Consulting (www.edication.org) which focuses on offering Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) programming and services to individuals and organizations. A branch of the organization focuses on EDI in sports.

Recently, I organized and moderated an equity basketball series titled Breaking Barriers through Brave Conversations which focused on perspective and lived experiences of players, coaches, and officials who are racialized and minoritized. The philosophy behind the series is that there is no such thing as a safe space. Within brave spaces, one ventures out of their comfort zone and shares vulnerabilities and traumatic experiences as a means of healing and working towards change for the better. Within brave spaces, authentic raw conversations can take place

from multiple perspectives and lived experiences for greater understanding to advance equity and social justice.

Part of this series and initiative included capacity-building amongst various stakeholders such as fans, players, coaches, and officials. Hence, the events were done in partnership and collaboration with Canada Basketball, Basketball Ontario, Wheelchair Basketball Canada, Canadian Basketball Officials Commission (CBOC), Toronto Association of Basketball Officials, and Hijabi Ballers. Sessions were 90 minutes and hosted via Zoom to make it accessible. The first 20 minutes of each session was dedicated to discussing EDI concepts in sports followed with a 70 minute discussion where lived experiences from a panel of guest speakers were heard.

Below are the video recordings of the events:

- [Being Muslim in the World of Basketball in Canada](#) (April 2021),
- [Being Black in the World of Basketball in Canada](#) (May 2021)
- [Being Female in the World of Basketball in Canada](#) (June 2021)

I highly encourage you to watch these and listen to the experiences shared from racialized and minoritized perspectives without justifying or being oppositional to the narratives shared. Stop using your position in society and the trajectory of your own officiating career as the baseline measure to judge and criticize others. I also want to provide a trigger warning, that the conversations and experiences shared by the panelists has the potential to trigger negative emotions and past traumas and microaggressions experienced in the realm of being involved with basketball in different roles.

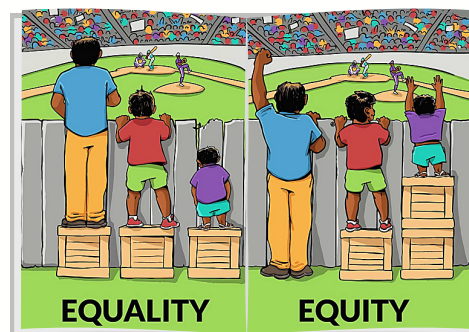
Overall, the insights shared from the panelists as part of these events clearly outlined that we can and need to do better as basketball organizations. We need to centre equity, diversity, and inclusion at all levels of officiating as a priority as many people including players, coaches, and officials are having traumatic experiences where human rights are violated through microaggressions or silencing of reported incidents by others in leadership positions.

If reading this makes you uncomfortable or angry, it should! The key question is what are you, and we as a collective and as a basketball officiating organization, going to do to ensure this does not continue to happen and that there are policies, procedures, and processes in place

to have an equitable, diverse and inclusive organization?

Here are a series of questions to help us reflect and grow as basketball organizations:

- *What data are you collecting? Demographical data? Race-based data? How is it collected? How is it interpreted?*
- *What roles do racialized and minoritized identities occupy in your organizations? Are they part of the decision-making at all levels?*
- *How do you celebrate members' achievements? How do you share failures and learn from it?*
- *How do you build community and relationships amongst your members? Who is under-represented and in what ways? How can this change with intentionality and pro-actively?*
- *Does your organization seek diversity with intentionality? When and where are you recruiting new members? In what ways using what platforms?*
- *Are interviews for leadership positions done by one person or a committee to mitigate bias? Are decision-making for opportunities made by one assignor or a collective committee?*
- *Who is evaluated and how often? Is there a system in place for how feedback is provided so it is constructive rather than personal?*
- *Who is promoted and for what reasons?*
- *Are there accountability and reporting procedures built into your organizational policies and practices to be equitable?*
- *How are complaints reported and who does it go to? Are the procedures outlined clearly to the membership?*



How can organizations ensure each person is supported fairly, where they are provided the resources to meet their needs and access opportunities to achieve their full potential?

Equity - is practices, processes and policies that ensure and promote fair access to opportunities and outcomes for diverse identities within an organization.

Diversity - representation in terms of difference (e.g. race, nationality, ethnic origin, gender, sexual orientation, age, ability, religion, language, etc.) that resembles the identity of the people and the larger community.

Inclusion - a sustained welcoming and safe/protected environment for all people that prioritizes diversity and equity as foundations for creating spaces where people feel valued and respected for their identity and contributions.

Microaggression - indirect, subtle put downs and insults minoritized identities experience via statements/comments, actions/inactions/reactions, or incidents in their day-to-day interactions.

Recently, Canada Basketball has launched Unified 2024 Advisory Council which is an 18-member committee ranging from players and coaches to officials and Provincial/Territorial Sport Organization representatives. Unified 2024 is a “a multi-year program designed to lead the organization’s equity, diversity and inclusion initiatives and establish the organization as a leader within the Canadian sports industry by 2024”. An organizational Diversity Statement has been established to demonstrate the intentions of this important initiative:

“Canada Basketball is committed to equity, diversity, and inclusion, and firmly stands against any form of racism, discrimination, or harassment. As an organization, we are dedicated to ensuring that basketball is used to unify people and our communities from coast-to-coast-to-coast. We will demonstrate this commitment by maximizing education and awareness opportunities, ensuring balanced representation, developing equitable policies and procedures, and by diversifying our suppliers and strategic partnerships. As we continue to examine our corporate culture and reflect on the history of our organization, we recognize our room for growth and pledge to ensure that moving forward Canada Basketball fosters free, fair, inclusive, and equitable environments, both on and off the court. We want our athletes, coaches, officials, staff, volunteers, fans, and supporters across the country, on every basketball court in Canada, to feel accepted and valued.”

Learn more about this at:

<https://www.basketball.ca/news/canada-basketball-launches-unified-2024-announces-new-diversity-statement-and-equity-commitments>

This diversity statement has been publicized to everyone to make Canada Basketball as an organization accountable for their actions and/or inactions as they move forward towards becoming a more equitable organization through various initiatives and policy changes. This is a pro-active stance in centering EDI, acknowledging past shortcomings, and working strategically and with intentionality towards mitigating such factors.

Nadine Crowley and I represent the needs of officials as members of the Unified 2024 Advisory Council. Recently, we presented a workshop titled "[From Equality to Equity: Navigating Power & Privilege as Referees](#)" at Canada Basketball's Super Clinic in May 2021.

Overall, doing the work of equity, diversity, and inclusion is a life-long process. It is not a checklist or a performative act that is done via one decision or initiative. It starts with what we decide to do on a daily basis via our actions, inactions, or reactions. Challenging barriers such as discrimination within organizations starts with you but the goal is systemic change embedded in the culture of organizations and the values it stands for! The goal is for all members to feel like they belong, valued for who they are, and who can get a fair equitable access to opportunities throughout their officiating career. Investing in equitable, diverse, and inclusive policies, practices, and processes that facilitate this outcome will help officiating organizations grow and thrive!

Dr. Ardavan Eizadirad ([@DrEizadirad](#)) is an Assistant Professor in the Faculty of Education at Wilfrid Laurier University in Ontario, Canada. He is a member of Board 102 and an international wheelchair basketball official. He is the author of [Decolonizing Educational Assessment: Ontario Elementary Students and the EQAO](#) (2019), co-editor of [Equity as Praxis in Early Childhood Education and Care](#) (2021), and the Director of Education Consulting (www.edication.org) offering equity, diversity, and inclusion training to organizations.

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