

To the members of the USDBF paddling community,

Over the past few years our organization has experienced turmoil arising out of concerns expressed by many dragon boat participants regarding inappropriate and offensive behavior, and regarding the appropriate procedures for addressing such behavior and preventing its recurrence. These concerns crystallized due to a series of unfortunate incidents that occurred at the 2015 IDBF World Championships held in Welland, Canada. The manner in which these incidents were addressed over the subsequent months led to many negative repercussions for those who first brought these concerns to our attention. For that we are truly sorry.

We also recognize that up until now, we -- the Board and officers of the USDBF -- did not have a clearly stated code of ethics or a well-established and easily understood procedure in place to address complaints of inappropriate and offensive behavior or other misconduct that should not be tolerated within the dragon boat community. Because of that, there were times when we took actions, modified, or reversed actions or otherwise may have acted (or refrained from acting) in ways that left many in our community confused, angered and, in some instances, feeling that inappropriate or offensive behavior was not being properly and timely addressed.

To remedy these situations and to endeavor to prevent their recurrence, we have now adopted the attached Code of Ethics, which not only outlines what the USDBF deems to be inappropriate and offensive behavior but also outlines the means by which

any instance of such behavior will be reported to and addressed by the Officers and Board of Directors of the USDBF. In so doing, we are specifically addressing what many have deemed, with reason, to be a prior lack of a clear code of conduct for our participants and a lack of thorough and accessible means by which to address and remedy any violation of that code. In so doing we are acting to remedy any prior inadequacy in addressing the events that have caused so much turmoil in our community. We recognize that we need to do more -- and are doing so now.

We would be remiss in not acknowledging that these needed changes are due in large measure to the concerns raised by Dr. Hype Mattingly and her co-complainants who raised the issue nearly two years ago. We owe them an apology for not having handled these matters as well or swiftly as we would have liked and we acknowledge the often painful repercussions they have experienced in the intervening period. Because we value all those who have committed so much time and energy to our community, we are taking this forward looking approach. We do so in the hope and expectation that all of us recognize that the best thing for the dragon boat community in the United States is to treat each other with respect, to channel our competitive spirit into the physical challenge of the sport itself as opposed to interpersonal conflicts. And finally, to encourage – indeed, insist upon -- proper behavior going forward, whether on or off the water. We hope you will all join us in this effort.

Respectfully submitted, The USDBF Board of Directors