

## 2024 WILDERNESS RISK MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE

### ROCK CLIMBING AND RISK MODERATION: A DISCUSSION ON HOW MARGINALIZED COMMUNITIES NAVIGATE RISK IN THE OUTDOORS

#### Presenters:

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**Objective/Description:** “Climbing is an inherently dangerous sport” is the oft repeated phrase - but for many of us, walking through our day to day lives also involves inherent danger due to differences and prejudice based on race, class, disability status, gender, and sexual orientation, amongst others. For many folks in minoritized communities, the risk associated with climbing is one of the few that is firmly in their own control. We know there is value and dignity in taking risks - but who is allowed or encouraged to access that dignity? This panel reflected on how minoritized communities experience risk in the outdoors, engage in risk mitigation practices, and ultimately manage risk while recreating in outdoor spaces.

#### Action Steps:

1. Take time to reflect on your own assumptions and potential biases about who is “allowed” to take risks. Are there people or groups who you think “shouldn’t” be taking risks in the outdoors? Why? Where do those stories come from?
2. Consider offering marginalized/minoritized communities specific offerings to allow them to focus on the risk taking involved in the activity - not managing how their identity is showing up in a mixed group dynamic. Our experiences show that it is easier for participants to focus on mitigating and moderating their risk in an activity like climbing when they can spend their full focus on the activity.
3. Partner with local affinity groups is whatever sport of activity you represent - these groups are out there, growing, and need supportive partners.

#### Additional Resources:

- [Bibliography/supporting research materials on safety, inclusion, etc](#)
- SLAQC website: <https://www.slaqueerclimbers.org/>
- Color the Wasatch: <https://www.instagram.com/colorthewasatch/>
- SLAQC [newcomer’s guide to bouldering](#)
- SLAQC [core values and meetup expectations](#)