

CULLEN JONES



At age five Cullen Jones nearly drowned while splashing around at a Pennsylvania water park. Immediately after that incident his mother Debra enrolled him in swim lessons and it soon became clear that Jones had natural talent as a swimmer. Jones was born on February 29, 1984 in the Bronx borough of New York City. Jones grew up in Irvington, New Jersey. He started his age group swimming career with the Metro Express Marlins Swim Team in West Orange, New Jersey before switching to the Jersey Gators Swim Team in Cranford, New Jersey. In those years, Jones was one of a small number of African-American competitors in the sport, but now he uses his notoriety and influence to inspire more children from minority communities to become swimmers.

Besides his celebrated swimming career, Jones has been passionate about bringing more diversity to the sport of swimming. One project in the works is the Cullen Jones Diversity Invitational. The goal of the invitational is to create a truly multi-ethnic swim meet that would also combine education on water safety and the culture of competitive swimming. Jones is also an ambassador for the USA Swimming Foundation's Make a Splash initiative.

- Bronze medalist in the 400m free relay at the 2015 Pan American Games
- Won three medals at the 2012 Olympic Games in London
- Took home gold as a member of the 400m medley relay team and won silver in both the 50m free and 400m free relay
- Qualified for the 2012 Olympic Team by finishing first in the 50m free and second in the 100m free at Trials
- Second-place finisher in the 50m freestyle at the 2010 ConocoPhillips National Championships
- Broke the 50m free American record and won gold in the men's 400m free relay at the 2009 FINA World Championships
- Earned a gold medal and set a world record as a member of the 400m free-relay at the 2008 Olympic Games
- 2007 world champion as a member of the men's 400m free relay
- Captured silver in the 50m free at the 2007 FINA World Championships
- Won gold in championship-record time in the 50m free at 2006 Pan Pacs
- Became the first African-American swimmer to break a long-course world record
- Captured his first U.S. national title in the 50m free at the 2006 Nationals
- Silver medalist in the 50m free at the 2006 SC World Champs, setting the championship record in the semis.