



## executive tracks

**MICHAEL J. MENDRICK,  
CEO**

### A Message to Members

By Michael J. Mendrick,  
Eastern Division CEO

As some of you may have heard by now, I made an announcement to the Eastern Board of Directors earlier a couple of months ago of my plans to step down as CEO of



PSIA-AASI Eastern in the fall of this year after 20 years of service as your division executive. I know this likely comes as a surprise but 20 years is a long run for this type of position and it's time for me to devote my energy and abilities to some other (hopefully snowsports-related) association advisory and creative efforts while I still have the energy and opportunity to do so.

I feel very fortunate that the Board of Directors of Eastern took a chance on me two decades ago and very honored to have evolved from an experiment in outside-industry management to the longest-serving executive leader in the Eastern Division's 60-year history. I hope my efforts and initiatives during my time here have made a positive and lasting impact.

I believe this change comes at a good time for Eastern in that the "table is set" now for the future with a new Eastern office, solid financial footing, Policy Governance in place and a new leadership structure approved. I feel proud that our relationship with PSIA-AASI National and our partner divisions has never been stronger, closer or more reflective of the "Three C" culture we have been striving for all these years (decades, really).

My plan for the coming months is to continue all elements of my current duties at full capacity

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## 2021 Eastern Division Membership Survey Summary

Results vary widely based on age and years of membership

By Michael J. Mendrick, Eastern Division CEO

Spring 2021 PSIA-AASI - Eastern Division Individual Member Survey

Part One: COVID-19 Responsiveness & Accommodation

The 2021 Eastern Membership Survey was distributed via broadcast e-mail and web link to 9,257 members on Friday, April 2. It was also promoted on Eastern social media sites and pages to more than 4,000 followers and a reminder broadcast e-mail was sent to members on April 9.

In addition to questions designed to help measure our effectiveness in achieving or making measurable progress with Organizational Ends, for the first time our Eastern survey also included an official Net Promoter Score assessment as provided by SurveyMonkey.

At the survey close-out date of midnight on April 15 we had 1,294 completed surveys for a response rate of 13.9%. That response rate is in line with previous Eastern surveys dating back to 2013.

- Of the 1,294 completed surveys:
- 73.9% of respondents were Alpine members.
  - 58.4% were part-time in snowsports (3 or less days per week).
  - 57% of respondents were members 50 - 69 years old.
  - 44% of respondents were members of 11 - 30 years' experience.
  - 38.6% of respondents were Level I cert members.
  - 22.8% were not active in snowsports in 2020-21.
  - 20.7% of respondents were Level III members.
  - 19% were full-time in snowsports (4 or more days).
  - 5.1% of respondents were members 15 - 29 years old.

One of the misnomers of this annual exercise is that it is our "Eastern membership survey." In fact, it is our "survey of Eastern membership segments." We don't actually have "a membership" in the traditional singular sense.

Unlike a membership association with a singular type of member (e.g. architects) in a singular location (New York), we have the following under the umbrella of PSIA-AASI Eastern membership:

- Members that live and practice snowsports in at least 14 states stretching from northern New England to North Carolina and eastern Tennessee.
- Members that are non-active, part-time instructors and full-time professionals in the snowsports industry.
- Members in Alpine, Adaptive, Nordic and Snowboard disciplines
- Members with a focus on children's education, racing and freestyle
- Members that have earned one of three certification levels
- Non-certified members
- Alumni members

In addition to the membership types, we serve members across a broad spectrum of personal, economic and political segments.

- Young and old
- Rich and poor
- Urban and rural
- Conservative and Liberal
- Athletes and intellectuals (and yes, often they are both)

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## view from the chair

ROSS BOISVERT,  
BOARD CHAIR

### Last Chair



**H**ello Eastern members! I hope everyone had an amazing season and you had the opportunity to get in some great days on the snow and achieve your goals. This will be my last View from the Chair column (so I

will call it the Last Chair). I want to thank you for allowing me to service as your Eastern Board Chair for the past four years. It has been my honor to represent you and work with such a dedicated Board of Directors. As I approach the end of my term, I will be turning over the gavel to Peter Howard at the end of June. I am confident the volunteer leadership of our organization will be in capable hands.

Over the past four years we have enjoyed some great accomplishments and I would like recap those with you.

- 1 The sale of our Eastern Division office building and relocation to office space at Excelsior College in the fall of 2019. With this opportunity we were able to avoid major repair costs of the original office building and move our office staff to a professional office building. This move saved us thousands of dollars per year and allowed us to increase our member equity. It also provide us with the opportunity and ability to nearly double our member scholarships via profits from the sale! Thank you to our CEO Michael Mendrick and his team for orchestrating this and never missing a beat in service to our members.
- 2 Quarterly Auto Pay program - This is something the Eastern Division proposed back in 2011 and we worked on for many years with National in order to make it a reality to help our members. When National changed the data base system, it allowed us the opportunity to create quarterly billing. This gave our members the option of choosing to pay for their membership in small increments over the course of the year vs a one-time payment in June. Nearly 1,000 Eastern members now take advantage of this program, it has increased the retention of our 16 – 29 year old members by 6% and it has now been adopted by other divisions across the country.
- 3 NEXTCORE - This advisory action group made up of 16-39 year old members was born in 2018. They promote the change and development of the programs and the benefits that we offer our membership to appeal to the “next core” of our membership. This group is vitally important to our future vitality and relevance and the members of NEXTCORE are the future leaders of our organization.
- 4 Policy Governance. During an 18-month discovery, approval and implementation process, we

shifted to the Policy Governance model for the Board. It provides us the opportunity to place a system of organizational governance that defines the relationship of the organization’s board members and the CEO and defines the board role as strategic vs. operational.

- 5 Elevate Eastern Task Force – In the summer and fall of 2018, this task force took a comprehensive look at how we operate our events. Through this process we designed hub areas which improved the efficiency of our event schedule and locations. This also provided additional cost savings for the organization in all disciplines.
- 6 Board Term limits & Members At-Large: The board put in place term limits to ensure continual turnover in representation and participation. All board members may serve a maximum of two, three-year terms (6 years) either consecutively or not, after which they must sit out from elections and board service for a minimum of three terms (9 years) before running for election again. The 4 at-large board members will be found via a nomination process. At-large board members will be selected for presentation to the membership based on the board’s assessment of its needs for diversity of thought, experience, demographics, disciplines, age, gender, race, and expertise, etc.

There have been many other positive topics that have been accomplished, but those are some highlights. There is still a lot of work that needs to be done for our organization to improve and be the best that we can be for our members and our guests. None of these could have been done without the hard work and support of our professional office team and our board of directors. Know that your leadership is prepared for the challenges that we will be faced with in the future and will always be working to improve.

This past year certainly has challenged us to evaluate things differently. With COVID 19 we were not sure if we were even going to be able to operate our resorts let alone conduct events or lessons. When we are faced with a challenge, we work through it. Our professional staff began to figure out what we could do within the guidelines of NSAA and each state. We all learned a lot about our operations this past year some of them, things that we will probably continue to do in the future. I would like to thank our office team and our ed staff for taking on this massive challenge and working throughout the season.

To our Board of Directors, thank you to all of you. It has truly been a privilege to work with all of you. We have accomplished many things in the past 4 years, and we should be proud of all of them. It takes a very special dedicated group of people to help steer this organization. Thank you to Eric Jordan for your amazing dedication and perspective as the Chair of our Eastern Governance Committee, Elevate Eastern Task Force and now as the current Co-Chair of the CEO Search Committee. Eric was also recently just nominated to be our Eastern Rep to the National Board of Directors. We are very fortunate to have

him on our Board.

Thank you to Tom Butler, our Current National Rep for your 15 years of service to our eastern board and as our National Rep the past three years. Tom is also serving in the important role as Co-Chair of our Eastern CEO Search Committee. I would also like to thank a few board members as they complete their terms: Bob Shostek, Steve Martin, Joe Hazzard, Dick Fox, Charlie Knopp and Joan Heaton for their many years and countless hours of service to the Board. Thank you. We welcome Shannon Rucker to the Board of Directors as the first member elected under our new system of four election zones. Thank you for offering your time to help better our organization. We look forward to working with you.

Allow me a moment of reflection: On July 20<sup>th</sup> 2020 Peter “Chewy” Holland passed away after a brief illness. Peter served on the BOD and was in his second term as well as serving as our Treasurer. Peter was an incredible individual with a true passion for skiing, PSIA and ski racing. He always the voice of support to young racers or instructors achieving their goals in certifications. He was a wonderful friend and will be truly missed. Order a Coors Light and a hot dog as a tribute to him!

I would like to thank our incredible office team, you guys perform miracles for our members. Thank you for all of your hard work and dedication especially this past year. You guys nailed it. I would like to give a special thank you to Melissa Skinner for her nearly 20 years of dedication to our organization. You have done an amazing job supporting our education department and we appreciate all you have done. We wish you well in your move to Arkansas and we are happy you will still be working with us remotely next fall!

To our CEO Michael Mendrick, thank you for over 20 years of service to our organization. You have brought us to an incredible level of professionalism and efficiency. Your continued dedication to improving PSIA-AASI Eastern with your team in the office is unmatched. Your leadership is recognized by all the PSIA-AASI divisions and our industry nationwide. I could not even begin to list all of the accomplishments you have made over the past 20 years for our organization. But I do know it was always done with communication, collaboration and consolidation. I wish you the best in your next venture and hope to make some turns with you next winter and beyond!

In closing, I would like to thank you again for allowing me to serve our organization for the past 20 years. It has been an honor for me. Our organization is in a solid position, and I am confident that you are in excellent hands with Peter Howard, who will be your next Board Chair. Thank you for all the support over the past four years as your Chair and I look forward to seeing you on the hill. I’M OUT - MIC DROP

**Editor’s Note:** We thank YOU, Ross Boisvert, for nearly 20 years of service on the Board of Directors as well as a most impressive four years as Board Chair! ☞





## *We miss winter already, too!*

### » executive tracks, continued from cover

and effort (no “lame duck” scenario – not how I roll), guide the operation through the balance of this COVID-impacted year in solid financial shape, help our staff begin preparations for what we hope will be a “boom year” in 2021-22 and assist the board and search committee (to the degree requested) with steps in the search, onboarding and training process for new executive leadership between now and next fall.

I want to say how much I appreciate that you accepted me into this role 20 years ago. I am quite

certain I’ll never again serve such a passionate membership or work with such a dedicated and talented crew as here in the Eastern Division office, out in the Eastern Division field and in the Eastern Division Boardroom - so thank YOU for that opportunity! I look forward to helping the Eastern Division transition into its next phase of evolution, relevance and positive impact on the snowsports industry.

Michael ☞

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# Eastern Division CEO Position Announcement: The Opportunity

The Professional Ski Instructors of America and American Association of Snowboard Instructors (PSIA-AASI) seeks a chief executive officer (CEO) to lead its Eastern Division. The PSIA-AASI is the nation's leading snow sports education association. Its mission is to support its individual members and member schools through top-tier industry education, and to provide high-value opportunities for professional development, personal growth, and community engagement. The Eastern Division is the largest division in the organization.

The CEO will report to the Board of Directors of PSIA-AASI Eastern division. In addition to overseeing administrative, financial, and operational functions of the division, the CEO will play a lead role in raising the visibility of PSIA-AASI and snow sports education, and advocate for issues that impact the profession and the division's membership. The CEO will represent the division at snow sports events, trainings, and national meetings. This position can be based at the organization's headquarters in Albany, NY or be virtually based with the expectation that the CEO will work from the Albany office on a routine basis in order to interact with the staff team and help maintain a high functioning environment. Some travel is required.

## PSIA-E: AN OVERVIEW

The Professional Ski Instructors of America (PSIA) and the American Association of Snowboard Instructors (AASI) are the national leaders in snow sports education. More than 32,000 individuals belong to PSIA-AASI, making it the world's largest organization dedicated to skiing and snowboarding.

The Eastern Division, a 501(c)(6) organization, operates with an annual budget of \$2 million and maintains a division office in Albany, NY with a staff of eight full-time and two seasonal part-time staff members, and more than 150 field education professionals. Of the eight PSIA-AASI divisions throughout the country, the Eastern Division of PSIA-AASI is the largest, both geographically and in membership.

### About PSIA-E's Members

With 9,500 members and member schools across the eastern U.S. from Maine to North Carolina, the Eastern Division represents nearly one-third of all PSIA-AASI members nationwide.

### About PSIA-E's Work

PSIA-AASI's snow sports education and certification programs are the standard-bearers for all snow sports instructors and schools, providing high expertise standards for the industry and nationally recognized credibility. With three levels of primary certifications in six styles of snow sports, advanced certification opportunities, and a diverse range of continuing education offerings, PSIA-AASI aims to elevate and increase the popularity of snow sports by training quality instructors and helping schools professionally build and market their businesses. PSIA events, summits, teams, and academies provide its members with educational and networking opportunities and a culture of comradery and community. The organization also offers scholarships through its foundation.

## THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER ROLE

The CEO of the PSIA-AASI Eastern Division is responsible for achieving results based on the association's outcomes (or, as defined in the policy manual, "ends,") beginning with the primary end stating that the PSIA-AASI Eastern Division exists to ensure all current and prospective members experience high-value education and opportunities for professional development, personal growth, and community engagement. The CEO will achieve these ends at a level that justifies the resources invested.

The PSIA-AASI Eastern Division operates under a policy governance model, using a policy manual to provide clear, proactive guidelines to the CEO and staff, as well as to Board officers, members, and committees. The CEO's work is goal-oriented, guided by policies focused on achieving the association's ends. Although the Board will not prescribe the organizational means by which the CEO approaches these ends, the CEO will be expected to work within the organization's stated parameters defining the boundaries of legality, prudence, and ethics.

The CEO serves as the Board's official connection to this division of the organization, and its achievements and conduct.

Specifically, the CEO will work to ensure that:

- Members can access, use, and receive value from relevant and inspirational education.
- Members' skill sets are validated through consistent and equitable assessment, certification, and credentialing that meet the national standards.
- Members benefit from participation in a diverse, supportive, and nationally recognized professional community.
- Members and the certifications they earn will receive recognition, reward, and respect.
- Individual members, as well as member schools and resorts, will experience high-perceived value through communication and collaboration between the Eastern Division and its national and divisional partners.
- Member snow sports schools and resorts will gain value, efficiencies and enhanced operating success from the Eastern Division's resources, education, activities, and engagement tools.

## Critical Competencies for Success

### Primary Responsibilities

- Monitor and manage all elements of the organization's operations.
- Serve as the liaison and administrative resource to the Board of Directors with a focus on achieving organizational ends and complying with management limitations.
- Determine and balance roles, duties, and responsibilities of division office and educational staff to meet the needs of the membership.
- Develop and manage the budget, finances, and assets of the organization.



- Manage and grow the 501(c)(3) PSIA Eastern Education Fund, a six-figure scholarship fund.
- Develop initiatives and programming that will support the achievement of organizational ends.
- Determine and facilitate the engagement of volunteers via task forces, action groups, and committees to achieve organizational ends.
- Establish, manage, and maintain the professional staff of the organization.
- Oversee the development of all educational programming and events to serve member needs.
- Oversee all member communication and outreach efforts including publications, website content, and social media.
- Oversee all member service efforts to ensure timely, appropriate, and professional response.
- Serve as the primary “research analyst” for the organization in identifying and responding to both sweeping trends and subtle shifts in the organizational environment that may impact the organization’s ability to serve its members and the snow sports industry.
- Represent the Eastern Division at membership events, PSIA-AASI national leadership meetings and snow sport industry events such as the NY-PA Snowsports Expo and New England Ski Summit.

### Relationships

The CEO maintains the following relationships:

- Is the partner and primary liaison to the Board Chair while remaining responsible and accountable to the Board of Directors as a whole.
- Oversees and directly manages all division office staff, including those staff members who supervise and direct field education staff.
- Works as a peer and partner with the administrative and executive directors of the affiliated divisions.
- Must develop and maintain a close rapport and partnership with the PSIA-AASI national CEO.
- Must earn the trust and respect of both the individual membership as well as the snow sports school and resort management membership.

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## CANDIDATE PROFILE

### Required Skills, Experience, and Qualifications

- A bachelor’s degree is required. An advanced degree is desirable.
- Five or more years of senior, not-for-profit management experience or similar experience in snow sports resort operations, snow sports school management or snow sports education.
- Exceptional budget development and management skills including budget forecasting, preparation, analysis, decision-making, monitoring and reporting.
- Strong organizational abilities including planning, program development and facilitation.
- Strong knowledge of technology tools and IT applications related to association management.

- Strong collaborative, team building, and facilitation skills.
- Exceptional written and oral communication skills
- Command of MS Office suite and comfort level with AMS software.
- Website and social media experience are desirable.

### Personal Qualities

In addition to the qualifications listed above, the CEO must have these characteristics:

- Thinks strategically and takes an innovative approach to managing resources and developing opportunities.
- Passion for and long-term commitment to the organization’s mission.
- Committed to the long-term success and growth of the snow sports industry.
- Dependable, emotionally intelligent, and self-aware.
- Open-minded and inclusive, seeking and encouraging idea-sharing and engagement from stakeholders before making decisions.
- Committed to finding ways to encourage diversity in the snow sports industry.
- Manages change using a transparent, creative approach that boosts staff morale and enhances membership value.
- Personable, approachable, and available to staff, Board, members, and other stakeholders.
- Positive attitude and inspirational personality.
- Resilient, adaptable, and able to respond to a rapidly changing environment.
- Demonstrates commitment to continued professional growth and development.
- Able to handle complex challenges in an effective, professional manner.

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## COMPENSATION

A competitive compensation package will be offered to attract an outstanding candidate.

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## TO APPLY

This search is being conducted by Sterling/Martin Associates. To apply, please submit a cover letter and current résumé (Microsoft Word® format preferred) at <https://jobs.crelate.com/portal/sterlingmartin/>. The cover letter should outline how your experience fits the requirements of the position as this will be an important factor in considering your candidacy.

*PSIA-E is an equal opportunity / affirmative action employer committed to inclusion and cultural diversity in the workplace. Employment selection and related decisions are made without regard to sex, race, color, age, disability, religion, national origin, sexual preference, genetic information, or any other protected class.*

For more information, contact: David Martin, Managing Partner; [dmartin@smartinsearch.com](mailto:dmartin@smartinsearch.com)

As such, the aggregate results of our Eastern Membership Survey only tells a partial story and does not reveal the more impactful data and trends of the segment break-outs. And it is the data trends in the SEGMENTS that need to be recognized in order for the organization to respond with adjustments to the Organizational Ends determined by the Board and the supporting initiatives, programs and actions developed by the CEO and staff to generate positive change where needed.

### One-minute “elevator ride” summary

The majority of new and younger members begin their PSIA-AASI Eastern experience with enthusiasm, positivity and a strong endorsement for becoming a member. There is a definitive drop-off in satisfaction and endorsement as age and experience continue. In many areas, the middle “core years” (30 - 69 and 11 - 30 years of membership) show the lowest degree of satisfaction and endorsement. That said, our most satisfied and strongest promoters are our members of 30 or more years, 70 or older in age or that have attained Level III certification.

Bottom line: We need to do a better job of sustaining the enthusiasm, engagement and positive experience of new and younger members beyond their first few years as a member. It's not enough to attract; we need to engage and provide benefits, incentives and rewards and meet the needs of our variety of member segments throughout the entire lifespan of the membership experience or we risk that our “promoters” become our “detractors.”

### Key Findings

#### Net Promoter Score

Net Promoter Score (NPS) is a measure used to gauge customer loyalty, satisfaction, and enthusiasm with a company that's calculated by asking customers one question: “On a scale from 0 to 10, how likely are you to recommend this product/company to a friend or colleague?” In our case, the question is: “How likely is it that you would recommend membership in PSIA-AASI to a friend or colleague based on your experience in the Eastern Division?”

NPS is calculated by subtracting the percentage of members who answer the NPS question with a score of 6 or lower (known as ‘detractors’) from the percentage of customers who answer with a 9 or 10 (known as ‘promoters’). Scores of 7 and 8 are considered “passive” - that is, they have both the opportunity to become promoters but also the risk of becoming detractors. This is the “one the fence” group.

In our last three National surveys (2018, 2019, 2020) our overall NPS was 35, 38 and 39 (not great but improving each year).

- Net Promoter Score of all respondents is 43 – up 4 points from the national survey 2020 NPS score of 39. That said, the NPS varies dramatically by age group and years of membership.
- **Key stat: Overall Promoter to Detractor ratio is 4.3 to 1.**

- Promoters (score 9 - 10) cite COVID responses and precautions, value of educational experience, programs and materials, increased online options, member service, education staff and strong community support as positives.
- Detractors (score 0 – 6) cite cost vs. value (expense of membership vs. pay as an instructor), access to events, inconsistency in exams, lack of public awareness or reward from schools/resorts, involvement in social issues (i.e. diversity and environment) and (conversely) lack of diversity (too male/older oriented) as negatives.
- **Key stat: Converting the 19.8% that selected the “high passive” score of 8 to “promoter” and preventing the 12.3% that selected the “low passive” score of 7 from becoming a detractor is a key to our future progress in NPS scores.**
- **Key stat: A category-high 35.7% of new members in their first five years gave a passive NPS score of 7-8 as did a category-high 43.4% of young members 15-29. As this is the “on the fence” score between becoming a “promoter” or falling to a “detractor” it is a very important set of numbers (and group of members) to address.**
- The highest NPS scores were given by Level III members (56), members of 30 or more years (NPS 51.6) or 70-years and older (NPS 49.1).
- **Key stat: One finding of concern was that new members of five or less years gave a relatively strong NPS score of 43.7 but the dropped dramatically by 10 points to 33.7 for members in years 6 - 10. This fall-off is a big concern as it is also the time period most challenging for retaining members.** The NPS then gradually climbs to 41.8 for members in years 11 - 30 and again to 51.6 for members of 30 or more years.
- **Key stat: The combination group of 15-29 members in their first five years of membership gave one of the highest NPS scores (50) and promoters outnumbered detractors by almost 13 to 1. Sustaining that positive “early impression” as these members progress in age and membership years is vital.**
- NPS for Level I members was extremely low at 31. It improves considerably with Level II members at NPS 48 and up another 12 points to 56 for Level III members (the highest NPS score of any measured member sub-sets).
- **Key stat: Getting members to Level II dramatically improves both NPS score (by 17 points) and member retention (by 15 points).**
- Related to member disciplines, NPS was highest for Alpine members at 48 but dropped dramatically to 38 for Snowboard, 28 for Nordic and 25 (the lowest of all member sub-sets) for Adaptive.

### COVID-19 Response

- 82.4% of all respondents agreed/strongly agreed that Eastern “provided timely and comprehensive communication to members regarding the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Eastern events and programming.”
- 68.1% of all respondents agreed/strongly agreed that Eastern “provided and applied appropriate safety protocols for on-site events.” This compares to only 1.6% that disagreed/strongly disagreed.
- The variance was considerable between age groups with 90% of 15-29 age group agree/strongly agree vs. only 61.6% for respondents in the 70-plus age group.
- Only 15% of members 15-29 and 15.1% of members in their first five years “did not attend an Eastern Division event this season specifically due to pandemic-related concerns.” This increased steadily by age group to 36.5% “not attending” in the 70-plus age group.
- Conversely, 75% of respondents in the 15-29 age group DID attend an event vs. only 51% of members in the 50 - 69 age group and 30% for members 70-plus.

### Membership Value & Experience

- Between 88 and 93% of all respondents agree/strongly agree that “have access to relevant and valuable education.”
- Between 82 and 92% of all respondents agree/strongly agree that they “utilize and receive value from the educational programs and resources provided.”
- **Key state: While 83.2% of all respondents agree/strongly agree that they “feel motivated and inspired by the educational resources I have utilized and events that I have attended” the numbers decrease steadily from a high of 90% for members in the 15-29 age group to 83.9% for members 50 - 69, 82.1% for members of 11 - 30 years of experience and only 79.7% for members age 70 and older. Inspiration and motivation are shown to decrease with age and experience in PSIA-AASI.**
- The percentage of respondents that agree/strongly agree with the statement, “I feel my teaching, skiing and (or) riding skills are validated through consistent and equitable assessment” falls dramatically from a peak of 93.3% for the 15-29 age group to only 77.2% for the 30-49 age group and 76.6 for the 50-69 age group.
- Overall, 81.3% of all respondents agree/strongly agree with the statement, “I feel that I am a part of a supportive and nationally recognized professional community.” That said, the percentage drops measurably from members in their first 5 years (86.9%) to members of 11 - 30 years (80.3%) and even further for members of 30-plus years (78.3%).

- On the question of improvement in diversity and inclusion, only 49.9% of agreed/strongly agreed that “we are making positive strides toward the creation of a more diverse and inclusive culture.” Once again, the most positive responses came from the 15-29 age group and the “first five years” respondents. As documented in the comments, this was a polarizing question as there were a number of comments that we are not doing enough but also several comments that PSIA-AASI should not be involved in social issues.
- A somewhat disappointing 73.3% of all respondents agreed/strongly agreed with the statement, “I receive recognition from the organization for the certifications and accreditations I earn.” And again, the data trend showed a strong start with younger members (85%) that decreased significantly in “current core” members 30-49 at 72.2% and 50 - 69 to 73.6%.
- 81.6% of all respondents agreed/strongly agreed that “I am respected by my peers in the snowsports community for the certifications or accreditations I earn.” That said, the trend of diminishing agreement with age and experience continued. While 88.3% of our youngest (15-29) members agreed/strongly agreed it dropped by 7 percentage points for members 30-49 and 50-69 and 10 points for members 70-plus.
- **Key stat: The data trend continues with the statement, “I feel rewarded for my efforts to achieve PSIA-AASI certifications and accreditations.” While 86.7% of young members 15-29 and 80% of “first five years” members agreed/strongly agreed, the numbers dropped significantly with members of 11 - 30 years to only 64.6% and to 67% for members in the 50-69 age group. Part of this downward trend seems tied to younger members perceiving attainment of certification as “reward” whereas older members and members of longer tenure equate “reward” with “pay.”**

#### Member Priorities

- Overall, respondents scored “consumer awareness” as their top priority with “recognition of PSIA-AASI certification in the industry” and “improvement of value” as very close second and third priorities. “Diversity/inclusion and climate change/environment” - while expressed as “important” in numerous comments - were not judged to be as important for organizational focus as core membership needs.
- Age group and years of membership demonstrated different leading priorities and lowest priorities for organizational focus. Both 15-29 age group and “first five years” respondents as well as 30-49 age group and 6-10 year members scored “improvement of value” as their highest priority and “diversity/inclusion” as their lowest priority while members 50-69 and 70 plus and

members of 11-30 years and 30-plus years scored “consumer awareness” as their highest priority and “climate change/environment” as their lowest priority for the organization.

#### Member Services, Education Staff and Communications

- “The service and assistance provided to you by the Eastern Division office staff” earned a strong overall score of 8.33 out of 10. Scores ranged from 8.17 for “first five years” members to 8.54 for members of 30-plus years and 7.86 for members 15-29 to 8.41 to members in the 50-69 age group.
- “The educational experience provided to you by members of the Eastern education staff” earned a strong overall score of 8.42. Conversely with member service ratings, ed staff ratings were strongest with the youngest (8.56) and newest

(8.61) members will decreasing slightly to 8.36 for members of 11-30 years and 8.26 for members 70 years and older.

- Earning lower (but still overall good) ratings from respondents was “the communications provided to you via broadcast e-mails, the SnowPro newsletter, social media postings and the division website.” Overall, respondents scored this at 7.93 out of 10. Some members criticized the lack of a published SnowPro in the comments - not surprising given that 908 of the 1,294 total respondents (70%) are age 50 or older and prefer printed to digital.
- Thank you to the nearly 1,300 members that took the time to complete our 2021 Eastern Member Survey. The results and comments will help us make adjustments to our operations and programming to better meet your needs in 2021-22 and beyond! <<

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# Congratulations

Congratulations to the following members who earned their new Level II and Level III certification during this past season! Members who passed their Level I certification are listed on the website at: [www.psia-e.org/new](http://www.psia-e.org/new) - check it out!

**Alpine Level III Certification**

Dara Aber-Ferri  
Jessica Anthony  
Erin Barton  
Phil Gelenberg  
Laura Jenks  
Dennis Keon  
Trae Lamborne  
Robert McHugh  
Kelsy Morganwalp  
George Privon  
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Amanda Allen  
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James Billingslea, III  
Stephen Bowman  
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Kelly Carroll  
James Casey  
Sari Chang  
Honglei Chen  
Ryan Collins  
Scott Cover  
Ross Cowieson  
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John DeWitt  
Andrew DiPietro  
Luke Doris  
Konstantin Driker  
Genevieve Farr  
Volker Fessmann  
Angel Fraile Lax  
Jan Galica  
Richard Geddes  
Stephen Gover  
Jennifer Haas  
William Hadley  
David Harman  
Alex Hlivka  
Robert Jones  
Steven Keesler  
Victor Khmara  
Cole King  
Sarah Kneip  
Brian Koeller  
Ray LaMora  
Susan Lehnes  
Meaghan Lenigan  
Esther Linville

William Longsworth  
John Matusiak  
Daisy Mayer  
Michelle McLean  
Diane Mega  
Troy Miller  
Daniel Moore  
Mikhail Mouravski  
Brendan Mullaney  
Michelle Newill  
Anne-Sarah Nichtiu  
Paul Noyovitz  
Timothy O'Day  
Theresa Page  
Deepesh Patel  
Richard Phelps  
Eric Phillips  
Chris Pierson

Lawrence Pietropaulo  
Liza Pinder-Steinmetz  
David Plants  
Carol Redline  
Michael Ricca  
Joel Richards  
Jose Rodriguez  
Paul Rusen  
Genevieve Salinaro  
Erika Sauer  
Mark Saydah  
Elizabeth Schmitt  
Mark Scrimshire  
Nima Shokrollahi  
Todd Sigmund  
Thor Simon  
Jeffrey Stamler  
Theodore Stever  
Noriko Tani  
Max Tiffen  
Maja Tlokinska-Scroggins  
John Valinote  
Jin Wang  
Kurt Weeks  
Ted Wekstein  
Piotr Wiacek  
Eric Winter  
Joshua Yates  
Gennadiy Zaretskiy  
Alexandr Zhovnirovskii

**Snowboard Level III Certification**

Gina Basiliere  
Riley Childs  
Kevin Gillen  
Brenden Neill  
Tobin Twelves

**Snowboard Level II Certification**

Jonathan Anderson  
Sydney Bak  
John Black  
Hannah Block

Siyng Cheng  
Grace Costa  
Shannon Desilets  
Jacqueline Diaz Maldonado  
Stephanie Dommer  
Paul Everson  
Nicholas Falbo  
Trevor Glenn  
Samuel Hahn  
Ryan Hayes  
Yong-Ha Kim  
Tylan Klinker  
Zachary Kolvoord  
Jared Little  
Stephen Loquet  
Carter Mardiney  
David May  
Finn McGillicuddy  
Christopher Merenlander  
Austin Moody  
Michael Norwood  
Kayin Oyer  
Mark Reif  
Harrison Rice  
Damian Rossmann  
Zachary Simpson  
Tyler Stuebchen  
Elizabeth Wendel  
Justin Whalen  
Stefan Winnicki  
Lei Xu  
Zhangxu Zhuo

**Telemark Level III Certification**

Keith Cassidy  
Elizabeth Stefany  
Greg Whiteaker

**Telemark Level II Certification**

Donald Duthaler  
Robert King  
Jeffrey Lovelace  
Rich Lucas  
Jeffrey Speicher  
Jan Steckel  
Paul Stolar

**Adaptive Level III Certification**

Louise Cummings  
Shawn Russell

**Adaptive Level II Certification**

Christopher Baker  
John Deddens  
Larry Endsley  
Bruce Tubbs

**Cross Country Level III Certification**

Johnna Haskell

**Cross Country Level II Certification**

Matthew Pearsall  
Michele Pearsall

**Children's Specialist 2 Accreditation**

Andrea Ammendolia  
Jessica Anthony  
Simeon Bayles  
Sharon Beilinson  
Alison Berlin  
Ajay Bhala  
Cathy Blinken  
Scott Both  
Dustin Burke  
Michael Bush  
Bruce Capron  
Jeff Dec  
John DeMichael  
Robert Dixon  
Allison Goergen  
Charles Halloran  
Georgia Hegner  
Alison Hyer  
Amy Kizak  
Karl Loh  
Timothy Masterson  
Jennifer McAward  
Patrick McCord  
Sandra Lee Milroy  
Danielle Needle  
Eric Niiler  
William Parker  
Michael Pease  
Kerri Petrillose  
Linsey Phelan  
Monica Plante  
David Plants  
Joshua Pulver  
James Quinn  
Elizabeth Regan  
Bonnie Ricker  
Norella Roche  
Larry Selph  
Anna Soule  
Donald Ulatowski  
P. Mark Vivian  
Roy Whitaker  
Abby Williams

**Freestyle Specialist 2 Accreditation**

Andrew Brockelbank  
Nicholas Falbo  
Finn McGillicuddy  
William Potter  
Dylan Rowe



## zipperline

### A New Fundamental – The Dodge and Weave

By Chris Ericson

PSIA-E Examiner

Education and Certification Committee Chairperson

With the 2020-2021 season in the rear-view mirror, it is hard to believe where we came from and where we have ended this season. So many unknowns of what the season would look like, or even if our mountains would stay open. As an organization, we had to pivot quickly, make adjustments, communicate our intentions, adjust them again and then implement our plan. As instructors, the Learning Connection Model (LCM) played a huge role as we found ourselves in a world that we have never seen before, challenging us with how we conduct and approach a lesson. If you didn't have the flexibility of *Gumby*, you likely had a very challenging season. I personally believe that our organization became stronger this season as we developed ways to communicate more efficiently, developed programming that required less in-person contact and found ways to work with our partnering resorts to hold PSIA-AASI educational and certification events. The future and the strength of our organization are important and even during a pandemic, we found a way to conduct a Development Team Tryout for our Division. On the National level, we have just selected a new PSIA-AASI National Team with incredible representation from our Division with six people from the east making the various Teams. Through some well-placed and agile moves, your organization is again on its way to becoming stronger and more robust as we move into the 2021-2022 season.

Looking back at the start of the season, many of our resorts didn't completely know what programming they would be offering as the guidance for COVID safety kept being adjusted. The idea of large-group instruction was for the most part, cut out of many resorts' offerings. Private Lessons and Family Group Lessons became the choice of most, as even many group/kids' programs were shuttered. Instructors who understood and incorporated the fundamentals of the LCM into their daily coaching, found more opportunities for success with their clients under these pandemic conditions. For me, this season represented how the Teaching and People Skills Fundamentals of the LCM rose to the top and clearly showed their importance. Being able to plan and implement an engaging learning environment and developing trust that is built around refined communications relied on some creative tactics. For example:

- *Managing the emotional and physical risk* for our guest started way before they even got to the

mountain. A guest who knew there were limited ticket sales and that precautions would be taken with masking, on-line health screening and restrictions with capacity on lifts, might already feel more emotionally comfortable than if they attended a resort that had no precautionary measures.

- In a time when keeping some distance from our student during a lesson was encouraged, *promoting exploration, experimentation and play* came front and center. Skiing and riding more and talking less just made sense (since our students can't hear us anyways from 6 feet away next to a roaring snow gun).
- For staff, our emotions ran high this season. Getting dressed in your car or having a limited amount of time in a locker room, staying distant from your co-workers and friends made for a stressful start to your day just before your first lesson. Being able to *Identify, understand and manage your emotions and actions* could never had been more important in a society that was dealing with so much conflict.
- Actively listening to my client's story – what motivated them, why they were here, what they did for a living and what they expected to achieve was incredibly important in *engaging in meaningful two-way communication*. So many of our lessons this year were for people who were looking for an escape or to just get outside and breathe some fresh air.

As an organization, as an industry and as individuals, we have learned much this season. There are some fantastic take-aways that I am hoping will continue into next season and we'll use those educational moments to make us stronger. In addition, with our new National Standards being put into place along with a Performance Guide to help you develop your fundamental skills, we are incredibly excited about our next chapter in developing uniformity in PSIA-AASI.

Most importantly, next season I am looking forward to seeing many of you at Management Seminar, Pro Jam and all the other events in the east and of course National Academy at Big Sky. Summer will be busy for us in the Eastern Division as we look to develop, build and refine the Educational programs you have come to love. As always, please feel free to reach out to me if you have comments, suggestions, or ideas for how we can better serve your needs as a Snowsports Educator. [cericson3@optonline.net](mailto:cericson3@optonline.net) ☞

## Congratulations New Alpine Education Staff Members

A special congratulations to the newest members of the PSIA-E Alpine Development Team (Dev Team)! The Dev Team is a group of highly skilled Level III instructors who are training to become members of the Eastern Division Alpine Board of Examiners. They receive training that focuses on sharpening their skiing skills, their teaching skills, and their professional knowledge. The goal is to develop highly effective clinicians who can deliver a wide range of educational events to the membership. Development Team members are required to attend annual training events and to understudy members of the Education Staff at various events throughout the season. Once a Development Team member has completed a list of required understudies, they become eligible to try out for the Examiner Training Squad (ETS).

This year the Development Team Exam was held at the end of March, at Cannon Mountain, NH. With COVID-19 restrictions in place, we were limited in the number of selectors we could use, and also the overall size of the groups. Over 50 Level III members submitted an application packet for the event. From that application packet, which included a resume, a cover letter, a video introduction, and several videos of the candidate performing specific skiing tasks, the number of applicants accepted to the on-hill portion of the tryout was reduced to 24. After two days of an intensive exam, nine new Development Team members were chosen. They are:

Kagen Dewey – Stowe, VT

Greg Dolbec – Stowe, VT

Art Menichini – Montage Mountain, PA

Erroll O'Brien – Belleayre Mountain, NY

Christa Ross – Seven Springs, PA

Tyler Sullivan – Formerly Vail, moving back to the Eastern Division

Erik Timmerman – Stowe

Evan Vomacka – Loon Mountain, NH

Xusong (Terry) Xie – Wachusett Mountain, MA

Welcome to the Alpine Development Team! ☞



From left to right: Tyler Sullivan, Coach Kathy Brennen, Kagen Dewey, Greg Dolbec, Erik Timmerman, Art Menichini, Christa Ross, Erroll O'Brien, Evan Vomacka, Xusong (Terry) Xie

## PSIA-AASI National Team Selection – April 19-22, 2021

By Don Haringa

Eastern Division Director of Education and Programs

The on-snow selection of the new PSIA-AASI National Team was scheduled to take place in April, 2020. Then COVID-19 got in the way, and the selection was postponed for a year. It still wasn't a given that the selection would take place this year, but Dave Schuiling, Nick Herrin, and the team selectors, ironed out the details, and with the cooperation of Vail Resorts and Breckenridge, Colorado, they somehow came up with a plan, and the 2021 version of the 2020 PSIA-AASI National Team selection took place. And it was awesome!

The new PSIA-AASI National Team sets the standard for snowsports instruction. PSIA-AASI hand-selected the 37 team members for their range of skills that allow them to serve as inspirational leaders and build enthusiasm for learning and having fun skiing and riding.

"I'd like to congratulate all of our members who participated in Team Selection, and to the 2021-24 National Team that will lead PSIA-AASI into the future," said PSIA-AASI Chief Executive Officer Nicholas Herrin. "Our association is constantly evolving to support our members' educational goals, and best serve guests by delivering exceptional learning experiences. I am thrilled to work with these team members as they grow enthusiasm for our profession and inspire all skiers and riders to take their skills to the next level."

The tryout for the team actually began several

years ago, and for many of those who participated in this most recent National Team selection, this part of their professional journey began on the day the 2016 team was selected.

The **Eastern Team** was selected at the end of the 2018-2019 season, and for the next two years they prepared for the National Team tryouts. Though the on-snow portion of the tryout took place in April of 2021, the participants had an extensive application process that included resumes, writing samples, a cover letter and video presentations. Once the participants made it to the actual on-snow selection, in addition to a full day of skiing/riding tasks, and on-snow teaching presentations, their evenings were filled with virtual presentations. On the mountain, they were thoroughly tested in their skiing and riding skills, their movement analysis skills, their teaching skills, and their people skills.

"Being a great teacher takes more than being the best rider, or skier, on the hill," said AASI Snowboard Team Coach Eric Rolls. "Team Selection measures a variety of skills. We want to know who can relate to their students to help them feel comfortable in a lesson while also helping their students understand the movements that will advance their skiing or riding – so they can learn faster and have more fun. People skills, like empathy and communication, are just as important as technical skills, how good someone is at riding or skiing, when teaching a lesson."

In the end, six members of the Eastern Team were selected to the new National Team. They are:

Amy Gan Bailey – Snowboard  
 Brian Donovan – Snowboard  
 Mike Ma – Adaptive  
 Keith Rodney – Telemark  
 Brian Smith – Alpine  
 Troy Walsh – Alpine

Congratulations to these amazing snowsports instructors. We are super proud of their accomplishments, and look forward to their contributions to the world of ski and snowboard instruction for many years to come!

In addition to the members of the Eastern Team who became members of the National Team, I want to recognize and congratulate all of the members of the Eastern Team. All were inspiring to watch, and I truly believe that many on this Eastern Team will be top candidates for the next National Team, to be named in April 2024.

As Eliza Kuntz, chair of the PSIA-AASI Board of Directors, said while watching the tryouts, "It is thrilling to watch these instructors; they display such a high level of expertise. Not only are they proficient skiers and riders, they're also talented educators with a knack for reading and relating to their audience. "They are truly top-notch athletes and passionate teachers..."

We are really proud of all of the members of the Eastern Team. They are:

### Alpine

Frank Cartwright – Hunter Mountain, NY  
 Ben DeBenedictis – Stowe, VT  
 Nate Gardner – Stowe, VT  
 Josh Haagen – Sunday River, ME  
 Luke Martin – Pat's Peak, NH  
 Peter Novom – Okemo, VT  
 Keri Reid – Okemo, VT  
 Charlie Roy – Cannon Mountain, NH  
 Brian Smith – Vail, CO, and Gore Mountain, NY  
 Troy Walsh – Sunday River, ME

### Snowboard

Todd Ainsworth – Okemo, VT  
 Amy Bailey – Mount Snow, VT  
 Loren Dailey – Stratton Mountain, VT  
 Brian Donovan – Mount Snow, VT  
 Greg Fatigate – Smugglers Notch, VT  
 Tom Mulligan – Sugarbush, VT  
 Tom Vickery – Gore Mountain, NY

### Adaptive

Mike Ma – Mount Snow, VT, and Mount Snow Adaptive Sports, VT  
 Augie Young – Adaptive Sports Foundation, NY

### Telemark

Matt Charles – Plattekill, NY  
 Keith Rodney – Mount Snow, VT <<



New National Team Members Brian Donovan, Troy Walsh, Mike Ma and Amy Gan Bailey (2<sup>nd</sup> term) celebrate with Josh Fogg (former Eastern Division member), Matt Boyd and Jeb Boyd (team coaches). Not shown Keith Rodney and Brian Smith. Congratulations to All!



Four new National Team Members from Mount Snow are from left to right: Mike Ma, Amy Gan Bailey, Keith Rodney and Brian Donovan



Brian Smith and Troy Walsh showing off their National Team pins >



## Thank You 2020-2021 Host Resorts!

We would like to take a moment and extend a big **“Thank You”** to the following area resorts who hosted, or offered to host, one or more of our events this past season. Their generous support continues to assist us in providing members with quality programs at the best possible value!

Adaptive Sports at Mount Snow  
 Adaptive Sports Foundation  
 Attitash Mountain Resort  
 Bart J. Ruggiere Adaptive Sports  
 Bear Creek Mountain Resort  
 Beech Mountain Resort  
 Belleayre Mountain  
 Berkshire East Mountain Resort  
 Blue Hills Ski Area  
 Blue Mountain Ski Area  
 Bolton Valley Resort  
 Bretton Woods  
 Bromley Mountain  
 Camelback Mountain Resort  
 Campgaw Mountain  
 Canaan Valley Resort  
 Cannon Mountain  
 Cataloochee Ski Area  
 Catamount  
 Chittenden Brook Hut  
 Cranmore Mountain Resort  
 Crotched Mountain  
 Dartmouth Ski Way  
 Elk Mountain  
 Garnet Hill Lodge & XC Ski Area  
 Gore Mountain  
 Greek Peak Mountain Resort  
 Gunstock Mountain Resort  
 Hermitage Club at Haystack  
 Hickory Ski Center  
 Hidden Valley Resort  
 Holiday Valley Resort  
 HoliMont Ski Area  
 Hunt Hollow Ski Club  
 Hunter Mountain  
 Jack Frost Mountain  
 Jackson XC Ski Touring Center  
 Jay Peak Resort  
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 Killington  
 King Pine Ski Area  
 Kissing Bridge Resort  
 Liberty Mountain  
 Loon Mountain Resort  
 Lounsbury Adaptive Program  
 Maine Adaptive Sports  
 Maple Ski Ridge  
 Maple Wind Farm  
 Massanutten Resort  
 McIntyre Ski Area  
 Middlebury College Snow Bowl  
 Mohawk Mountain Ski Area  
 Montage Mountain  
 Mount Abram

Mount Peter Ski Area  
 Mount Snow Resort  
 Mount Southington Ski Area  
 Mount Sunapee Resort  
 Mount Van Hoevenberg  
 Mountain Creek Resort  
 Notchview XC Ski Area  
 Okemo Mountain Resort  
 Pats Peak  
 Peek 'n Peak  
 Pico Mountain  
 Plattekill Mountain  
 Powder Ridge  
 Roundtop Mountain Resort  
 Saddleback Mountain  
 Seven Springs Mountain Resort  
 Ski Butternut  
 Ski Sundown  
 Smugglers Notch Resort  
 Snowshoe Mountain Resort  
 Stowe Mountain Resort  
 Stratton Mountain Ski Resort

STRIDE Adaptive Sports Program  
 Sugarbush Resort  
 Sugarloaf Mountain Resort  
 Sunday River Ski Resort  
 Thunder Ridge Ski Area  
 Timberline Mountain  
 Toggenburg Mountain  
 Trapp Family Lodge  
 Vermont Adaptive  
 Wachusett Mountain Ski Area  
 Waterville Valley Resort  
 West Mountain Ski Area  
 Whiteface Mountain  
 White Grass XC Touring Center  
 Whitetail Resort  
 Willard Mountain  
 Windham Mountain  
 Wintergreen Adaptive Sports  
 Wintergreen Resort  
 Wisp Resort  
 Yawgoo Valley ☐☐

## Thank you Eastern Members!

You socially-distanced, you masked-up and you showed up! Nearly 4,000 of you throughout this most challenging of seasons, in fact. Your resilience and dedication to snowsports teaching and learning was impressive and inspirational to all of us serving you from the Eastern Division office and out in the Eastern Division field! ☐☐





## Two New At-Large Board Nominees Endorsed by the Eastern Board

### Here is your opportunity to vote

**A**fter a two-month nomination, review and vetting process that included 14 submitted candidates, **the Eastern Board has endorsed Elizabeth Limerick and Brandon Pearce to serve as new at-large board members to serve a three-year term beginning June 1, 2021.** This took place after an extensive review and vetting process by the Board Nominating Committee (Dave Welch, Chair; Peter Howard, Bob Shostek, Steve Martin, Katie Brinton, Katherine MacLauchlan, Ted Fleisher and Walter Jaeger). All candidates were given extensive review and consideration. In the end, the Board felt that Brandon Pearce and Elizabeth Limerick could best serve the needs of the organization on the volunteer leadership team at this time by enhancing our diversity of skillsets, experience, expertise and representation.

This broadcast e-mail and the forthcoming spring issue of the SnowPro serve as your invitation to “vote to affirm the slate.” Pending member affirmation, after the input period concludes at the end of May the new at-large board members will begin their term on June 1.

What follows is a Q & A session with both Brandon and Elizabeth to give you more insight on how they want to positively impact our organization via service on the Eastern Board.

#### 1) Based on what you know about our organization, what are some future opportunities for the Eastern Division of PSIA-AASI relative to increasing the value to our membership? What do you see as possible challenges to achieving an increase in perceived value or future growth of our membership?

##### Brandon Pearce

“Given the opportunity, I would like to share my considerable amount of insight on the experience of membership. I would like to advance ways the organization can be more responsive. I work in healthcare and there is a resurgence, in these pandemic times, of taking to heart the work of the “front-line” workers. I think there is a need to examine the current state of communication and marketing to get in a new posture, one that shares more common member stories, ones that shares the joy and fun of our front-line contributors. I think departing from mainly promoting our esteemed colleagues’ views and distinctions, could make room for content spotlighting mentorship and individuals that are making waves within their own schools or recognized by their own team. I think blending slightly different storylines, may broaden the pool of submitters and give an avenue for us to naturally have a wide range of people visible in the pages of our print and online materials.”

##### Elizabeth Limerick

“I believe that the Eastern Division provides an exceptional value to members. As a member, I have access to some of the best educational and training opportunities available in any profession. Of the professional memberships and certifications I maintain, our organization is the best value by a ridiculously huge margin. When you have an exceptional product, as we do, opportunities for improvement lie in two areas. Those are access/affordability and faculty quality. In other words, we can provide membership benefits to a larger group by making the cost more affordable and providing more access points for it. To be in a position to accomplish this, our faculty – the members of the ed staff – need training opportunities to stay abreast of industry trends and be able to continue providing good value in on-hill and on-line education to our members.”

#### 2) What personal skills or attributes do you possess that will help you in becoming an engaged and productive member of the Board of Directors? How and why will they be of an advantage to you in your role as a board member and ultimately a benefit to our membership?

##### Brandon Pearce

“I have been a devoted student of effective teaching for over 25 years. I first started to teach at Windham Mountain in the Catskills of New York. I found critical mentors at the time, but I feel the partnerships I created with other new instructors that were side-by-side in my development, made the journey fun. I was encouraged by many along the way. I would love to see our organization continue to give outstanding guidance and support to new members. I was encouraged by some, and discouraged by others. Given my rabid enthusiasm for the sport, I never was able to grasp the undertones of their discouragement. I am a Level 3 Alpine certified Instructor and have studied with exciting mentors that knew me as an individual and recognized my strengths and weaknesses. I have been a mentor to many who are aspiring to higher understanding of the craft. I have been a member of the PSIA-AASI Diversity Equity and Inclusion Task Force and want to see others feel there are opportunities in this organization to shine and grow in leadership. I am the Director of Academy for my school and hope to keep growing new enthusiasts. I own the task of making sure every new coach feels welcome in our small corner of the Snowsports Instruction world. As an industry, we need to take a “cottage” approach to ensuring that every individual team is strong across our Industry.

I have been mentored by Joan Heaton on connecting with students on a meaningful level to vali-

date their motivations and their journey. My initial inspiration to become a teacher was sparked by seeing the steady hand of mentors like this. I have been the lead in developing youth focused curriculum at Winter4Kids in Vernon NJ for the last 5 years. During this time, I have found ways to bring inactive PSIA-AASI members back into the active dues paying organization. The way to do this is to have a mission.”

##### Elizabeth Limerick

“I have several decades of cumulative board service, including two ten-year+ stints as a committee chair and board officer. I have served in many different organizations, some grassroots and some with multi-million dollar budgets, including the PSIA/AASI National Education Foundation, where I serve on a committee dedicated to enhancing revenue streams through charitable giving. My professional background is in finance and fundraising, so most often I have chaired and/or served on the development and finance committees. I also have experience with board governance and am an enthusiastic champion of the Ends concept. I believe that my experience in board service will allow me to come up to speed quickly. My personal and professional qualifications as a fundraiser will also allow me to provide advice and counsel on the growth of additional revenue streams. I have also been a member since 1992-93, currently hold a Level 3 Alpine certification and am actively teaching, which gives me a deep familiarity with the organization and the challenges and issues facing members. I can make a strong contribution to the sustainability and potential future growth of the organization, which will benefit members and staff.”

#### 3) Given the new governance model we are operating under, what do you as a potential board member believe are key areas that should be addressed for the health of our organization? Please pick 1 or 2 and share your reasoning.

##### Brandon Pearce

“I remember as a 17 year old on a high school program, I had the fortune of meeting a dedicated PSIA instructor who stimulated an interest in winter sports I never knew I had. I believe that the energy of the membership is the source that drives the priorities of the BOD. The Executive level is the engine that creatively achieves this mission. I think I would explore ways the organization can proactively show it remains relevant in a way that appeals to those no longer teaching, or who have not yet committed to teaching.

Mentorship, I believe there is a need to create alignment around mentoring and development. I think programs can be stashed within each school that assigns a mentor to every new hire. I believe this

could be spearheaded in partnership with the Area Reps. This type of program would be the data collection arm of the organization. Data could be collected as every new staff member is walked through many milestones in their first year of teaching. Youth I like to have input in training and fresh ideas in programming all the time. I am sure that is because I work at a “Kids” mountain. However, I think the younger generation is a spring of re-invention that PSIA-E can never get enough input from. Initiatives like the Next-Gen really are game changing, there is much feedback that can be channeled for the greater good.”

#### Elizabeth Limerick

“The new policy governance model has led us to the Ends, which are the key areas of our work. Of them, the individual members’ section is of most interest to me. End 1.1 “Members have access to, utilize and receive value from relevant and inspirational education” resonates strongly with me, carrying on the theme of access and affordability. We have an outstanding product, so it follows that the more people have access to it and can afford it through scholarships or dues waivers for the segments we most want to retain, the stronger the organization will become. End 1.5 “Individual members will experience and realize high perceived value through communication, collaboration and consolidation between PSIA- AASI Eastern Division and our PSIA-AASI National and divisional partners” seems key in maintaining the quality of our experience. Members and ed staff benefit from the relationship with National and our sister divisions both through educational collaborations and an ex-

panded community, both of which are key to the richness of the member experience.”

#### 4) What positive change you would like to see in our organization in the next five years?

##### Brandon Pearce

“I think of PSIA-E as the home that my mentors found a tremendous resource and wanted me to see the value of being in it. In my circle, there is a disconnect with people that just have busy lives and see teaching as not sustainable, yet they are still members. I believe there are many out there that are no longer paying dues that would be glad to be dues paying again if there was messaging focused in their direction. Things like friends and family participation in events may be just one avenue that would affect members decisions to return by making it easy to build community around them as they participate in the organization. I like to bring the voices of the many instructors in my organization, I would also like to invest time and planning to promote the activities of the junior instructor programs out there and make a network within the division of the milestones achieved by young instructors. In the next 5 years we would have schools that are reinventing themselves from the core in each generation.”

##### Elizabeth Limerick

“Financial experts agree that the country is in the early phase of what will be a multi-trillion dollar inter-generational transfer of wealth that’s expected to unfold over the next 20 years. The Boomer generation will transfer wealth to their children. More

importantly for us, they are also funding increasingly larger charitable legacies as part of their estate plans. I would like to see the organization be well-positioned as a potential recipient of this sort of largess from our membership. Significant bequest revenue expectations, disclosed in advance, can mean the difference between success and failure for organizations with relatively undiversified revenue streams.

I like to share the cautionary tale of Nasson College, which was (note the use of the past tense) a small college in Springvale, ME. Today, their former campus houses the Nasson Community Center because the college was forced to close due to lack of funds. A few years after they shut their doors, it came to light that they had been named the beneficiary of a 7-figure bequest. The bequest was ultimately distributed elsewhere, as Nasson was gone. Nobody wants to be Nasson. A robust legacy outreach program can only bring about good things for the organization – increased long-term financial stability in the form of realized bequests and short-term improvements in outright charitable giving that result from legacy engagement would make us strong and sustainable against the uncertainties that we will face as the climate changes.”

**We invite and encourage you to now cast your vote** to affirm or decline the slate of at-large nominees as endorsed and proposed to you by the Eastern Board of Directors. Voting period ends May 30, 2021.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/EasternBoard-At-Large-Vote>

## Thank you Melissa Skinner!

### Veteran staffer moving to Arkansas

One of the longest-serving Eastern Division office professionals is moving to a decidedly less snowsports-oriented state this summer. Melissa Skinner, our “rock” in the Education & Programs Department as Assistant Director of Education & Programs, is “semi-retiring” to Mountain Home, Arkansas to enjoy her passion – motorcycle touring – a few more months a year than she gets to do in upstate New York! And while we are sad to see her go, we are glad to know that come the fall she will be “returning” (remotely, that is) to assist via broadband connection and cell phone in a support role for both education and member services.

Melissa’s journey with the Eastern Division began in the fall of 2001 as a part-time data entry person. She quickly displayed her organization skills and work ethic and became a full-time assistant to (then) Director of Education Kim SeEVERS. And Education & Programs has been her home at Eastern ever since – serving as a valuable associate to Mickey Sullivan from 2004 – 2012 and moving up to Assistant Director to Don Haringa from 2012 to present day.

Our Alpine education staff have depended on Melissa for everything from work assignments to lodging arrangements to solving a myriad of challenges on a daily basis while helping to keep nearly 300 Alpine events running smoothly and efficiently. Our members-at-large have often commented on Melissa’s willingness to help them with speed and a smile. Said one



Melissa Skinner enjoying a well-deserved moment away from the Eastern office!

member in the recent Eastern Membership Survey, “Melissa is a wonderful resource! Always friendly and takes time out of her day to take calls and get back to me.” A snowsports school director wrote, “Melissa Skinner worked very, very hard to get my clinic running – thank you!”

Perhaps Eastern CEO Michael Mendrick summed it up best. “Melissa started in the office just a few months after me in 2001. Her journey of personal growth and development is super impressive and it has been rewarding for me to have witnessed it over the years. In fact, it’s the type of successful journey we wish for all of our members. We will all miss her but glad we will still “see her” via Zoom next fall and beyond!”

Thank you and good luck, Melissa!



## National Award Recipients

**L**AKEWOOD, Colo. (April 19, 2021) – The Professional Ski Instructors of America and the American Association of Snowboard Instructors (PSIA-AASI) recognized four individuals for their commitment to snowsports education and acting as inspirational leaders.

Tom Long received the Distinguished Service Award, Mermer Blakeslee and Stacey Gerrish both were awarded the Educational Excellence Award, and Ed Younglove was honored with the Lifetime Achievement Award.

“I’m thrilled about this year’s Award and Recognition recipients,” said Nicholas Herrin, PSIA-AASI’s Chief Executive Officer. “We are fortunate to have such strong leaders as part of our community. From improving our certification practices, learning materials, and organizational structure – Tom, Mermer, Stacey, and Ed’s commitment to lifelong adventures through education will leave a lasting impression on PSIA-AASI, and the snowsports industry.”

“PSIA-AASI is all about community – helping each other train and challenging each other so we can all excel as teachers and leaders,” said PSIA-AASI Awards and Recognition Chair Robin May. “This year’s award recipients gave their time, insight, and expertise to the association so our members could improve their skills and the guest experience. Our awards program is special as it gives us the opportunity to celebrate individuals’ accomplishments that helped strengthen our association – and recognizing our members outstanding achievements is important.”

### Distinguished Service Award

This award recognizes long-term members who have made important contributions that have added to the success of PSIA-AASI and its initiatives. Long, a PSIA-AASI member for over 50 years, has displayed commitment and dedication to the association by creating and implementing educational programming and initiatives, including the three-level certification system.

Long, a PSIA-AASI Lifetime Member and New Mexico Ski Hall of Fame Inductee, helped PSIA develop the three-tiered certification approach; making attaining a PSIA-AASI certification more accessible to newer instructors and helping more members attain their first level of certification.

Long’s inclusive approach to snowsports extended beyond certification levels – he welcomed snowboarding and adaptive disciplines into the association and helped educators in these disciplines develop their own set of certification standards. “Tom Long has prioritized our organization,” said Dana Forbes, PSIA-AASI Rocky Mountain division’s Chief Executive Officer. “He did so with integrity and grit because he is an educator at heart.”

### Educational Excellence Award

The Educational Excellence Award recognizes those exceptional few members who have authored PSIA-AASI educational materials over the years. Through their commitment to improving educational resources to helping instructors make learning to ski or snowboard fun and easy for their guests, Blakeslee and Gerrish have both significantly added to, and changed, the educational direction of PSIA-AASI.

The Eastern Division’s own, Mermer Blakeslee, is a dedicated instructor who inspired many to be better skiers and teachers. A member of PSIA-AASI since 1981, she is a former member of the PSIA-AASI National Team (1996-2000), PSIA-AASI examiner emeritus for the Eastern Division, Nancy Oakes Hall Women’s Scholarship Committee Member, former Eastern Division Development Team coach, and author of *A Conversation with Fear* (formerly *In the Yikes! Zone*). At Windham Mountain, New York, she created and directs two one-of-a-kind programs, The Fear Workshop and PowerLearn®.

Blakeslee is committed to destigmatizing fear by showing that fear is not a weakness, and that students can use skills to overcome their fears. Her book about the psychology of skiing and teaching, *A Conversation with Fear* (2012), as well as her Fear Workshop at Windham Mountain helped many snowsports enthusiasts and instructors take their skills to the next level. She also supported PSIA-AASI educational products including *Core Concepts for Snowsports Instructors*. “Mermer wrote for the association and individually to highlight the importance of emotions and how they play into learning and teaching,” said Katie Ertl, senior vice president of mountain operations at Aspen Skiing Company, sharing that Blakeslee promoted, “the importance of soft skills, relationship

building, and connection to the guest.”

Gerrish’s dedication to education has landed her squarely in the development of several PSIA-AASI publications, including *Core Concepts for Snowsports Instructors*, the *Children’s Instruction Manual*, 2nd edition, the *Alpine Children’s Teaching Handbook*, and the *Snowboard Teaching Handbook*. In total, Gerrish has helped author or review seven PSIA-AASI educational products. A member of PSIA-AASI for over 30 years, her credentials include Rocky Mountain Division Trainer, and Rocky Mountain Children’s Education Committee Chair, and Children’s Specialist Task Force member.

In addition to her writing, she is a great teacher. “Any clinic she offers will have a wait list,” said Greg Willis, Sr. Director Skier Services at Beaver Creek Resort. “She inspires others to better themselves and grow as educators by delivering the information with a fresh perspective that is incredibly creative, and effective.”

### Lifetime Achievement Award

This award recognizes exceptional members who have designed and implemented programs, projects, and procedures affecting the association on a national level. This season, PSIA-AASI recognized Ed Younglove. Younglove’s patience and commitment to continuity has helped form the long-term vision of PSIA-AASI.

Elected to the Northwest board in 1995, Younglove has served as President on the Northwest Board of Directors for five years, two terms as Chair of the Presidents Council, and three terms as the Chair of the National Board of Directors. His dedication and devotion to the association helped build PSIA-AASI’s current organizational structure based around Governance to best serve members.

“A lifetime of achievement can only be met if one is continually willing to work hard, challenge others, build positive and influential relationships, and act with kindness and consideration along the way – this is Ed,” said PSIA-AASI Chair of the Board Eliza Kuntz.

“In his roles, Ed always led with stable and consistent dedication. His levelheaded approach has brought tremendous value to this organization,” said Herrin. “Ed worked seamlessly with leaders across all levels of the organization to better align PSIA-AASI’s vision and goals. . . His attention to effective leadership frameworks helped create an organizational structure that will continue to help leaders work collectively to achieve results.”

### Previous Award Recipients Recognized In-Person

The Awards and Recognition Ceremony also honored 2019 and 2020 recipients in-person for the first time. With National Academy 2020 canceled last spring, 2019 and 2020 award recipients Katie Brinton, Krista Clayton, Mark Dorsey, Jae McKeown, Stephen Over, Shannon Schiner, Kim Seevers, and Francisco Zampini Davies were honored alongside 2021 recipients. <<



National Award Recipients from 2019, 2020 and 2021 were honored at the National Academy in Breckenridge, CO in April



## national report

By Tom Butler, Eastern Rep,  
PSIA-AASI Board of Directors

**H**i Everyone,  
As a national organization, PSIA-AASI is on the cusp of some really exciting things as our 8 divisions, staff, programs and initiatives stretch beyond divisional boundaries and work more closely together. From the National Woman's Initiative Taskforce to the Education Leadership Council, members from across the country are working together and forging connections like never before. Our identity may be linked to where we live in the Eastern Division where we are proud of our resorts, membership and history. As we move forward, I would challenge all of us to look not at the divisional map that is in our mind or displayed on the National website but to picture the nation as if you were looking at it from space. Not seeing the map with administrative divisional borders really helps build the image that we truly are one organization.



A great example of this was the recent National Team selection where it was broadcast live for the first time for all members to view. Knowing that fellow instructors were watching this with me in California, Idaho, and Michigan, among other states really helped broaden the vision and tighten the connection that not only was this selection for ONE Team, it was a nod to ONE organization. When any of us use the word "WE", again you may identify as an Eastern Division member or Rocky Mountain Division member but the more we wade deeper into the water of communication, collaboration, and consolidation and look at the entire organization as being one entity, the better the experience and opportunities for our members.

To help keep us on track, taking over on July 1 as our next Eastern representative to the National Board of Directors will be Eric Jordan. We have all been the beneficiaries of Eric's leadership over the last 15-plus years from when he served as a Region 4 Board member and Eastern Divisional President along with serving as the chair of several Board committees along the way. On a national level, he served on the search committee that hired Nick Herrin as our National CEO and is currently involved as

a co-chair of the Eastern CEO search to help identify a candidate for Michael Mendrick, who will be retiring in the Fall. Eric is a leader that we have all felt confident following since he was elected to the Eastern Board in 2002 and I am thrilled that he will now be a part of the National Board which is comprised of a dynamic group of forward thinkers and life-long learners who are constantly striving to grow professionally and personally for your benefit.

Ross Boisvert will be passing the torch as our Eastern Division Board Chair after 4 years in that role and nearly 20 years of serving on the Eastern Board. Like Eric, Ross has also served on numerous Divisional committees and most recently in addition to being Eastern Board Chair, served as the Chair of the President's Council which is a national committee comprised of all the divisional volunteer leaders. Ross has been on the forefront of helping our divisions along with the other presidents work more closely together by improving communication, collaboration and consolidation in our operations. This approach, called the 3-C's is one of the guiding philosophies of our National organization's Ends as we all seek to improve the services and education for our members. If you think of bicycle racing and the peloton, where riders ride close together to take advantage of group aerodynamics and efficiencies, the 3-C's is the tactic behind that concept at the national level.

We are wicked fortunate to have Peter Howard succeeding Ross as your next Board President. I am blessed to have been able to work with Pete not only at the Board level (he's the one who encouraged me to first run back in 1997), but also for the past 28 years at Sugarloaf. Anyone who has worked with him in any capacity knows that his integrity and humility are second to none, not to mention that he's a nationally recognized educator and leader. Peter has been a steadfast and vocal champion for all of you over the years and I expect he will continue to do the same as your Board Chair.

Finally I need to give a tip of the hat to our CEO Michael Mendrick who, after 20 years of steering the Eastern Division (with the help of a top notch educational and operational staff) will be retiring from his post to pursue other association advisory opportunities and projects. Michael's leadership and ability to see just a little bit over the horizon has put the Eastern Division on sound footing. Michael has been a leader in the National organization as well through his collaboration with other divisional CEO's and strong partnership our national CEO Nick Herrin.

Michael's fingerprints are all over this organization from championing the option for members to pay their dues in quarterly installments to initially proposing the "Three C Philosophy" way back in 2007. The idea of nationwide communication, collaboration and consolidation may be obvious to us now, but back in 2007 it was a concept from deep out of right field and not one that was immediately embraced by all. Now, through the work of our education, administrative, operational, and volunteer leadership across the country, the 3-C's is a major guiding philosophy of PSIA-AASI, and you will find evidence of it at all levels throughout the organization. The concept has been so key to our evolution and ongoing success, the 3C's is now a National Award recognizing those leaders who most embody these attributes.

Long story short, we (read: Eastern AND National) are in capable hands. Being a leader though doesn't stop at those who have an official role or title. A few of us isn't nearly as smart as all of us and with 30,000-plus members; PSIA-AASI has a lot of brains to go around. I know that there are members not currently involved with the Board or in other official capacities that want to do more and help us improve. Peter, Eric, your Eastern Board of Directors, and our next CEO are only a few of the pieces to the organizational puzzle. We don't want members to feel like they are relegated to the sidelines only to watch what your elected leadership does next. We want and need you in the game, engaged, and involved. So raise your hand and let board members know that you want in on this action, we certainly appreciate the help. Here's the link to find their contact information as well as "how to get involved and stay engaged." Check it out!

<https://www.psia-e.org/who-we-are/division-board-committees/>

<https://www.psia-e.org/download/ms/GetInvolved-StayEngaged.pdf>

If you got this far, thanks so much for reading, thanks for being a member and most importantly, thanks for being a teacher.

**Tom**

**Editor's Note:** We owe Tom Butler a huge debt of gratitude as well for his outstanding service as our Eastern Rep on the National PSIA-AASI Board the past three years. Thank you Tom! ☞

## around the east

### Region 5 Report

By Dick Fox  
Region 5 Director

**W**ell, that was crazy! I am totally blown away by how much was accomplished in the face of a constantly changing myriad of self-conflicting rules and recommendations. Western New York lost its customer base from Canada and Ohio which has historically been over half of the folks on the snow, but still managed to have record numbers of folks in children's and learn-to-ski programs.

Everyone had to invent and adapt to a variety of new approaches, and it is pretty certain that many of these innovations are going to become part of the core strategies going forward. And all of this was done with an amazingly low (almost non-existent) incidence of virus transmission. Just goes to prove what we all know: "The mountain environment is one of the healthiest environments available."

Hats off to the snow sports school directors who have all earned a summer of relaxation.

Even with everything that was going on and all of the difficulties in working around limitations on travel and course conductor availability, many schools also produced a bumper crop of new PSIA-AASI members and certifications. For example:

#### Holiday Valley added:

- 21 new Alpine Level 1 members
- 7 new Snowboard Level 1 members
- 6 new Snowboard Level 2 certifications
- 2 new Alpine Level 2 certifications
- 2 new Children's Specialist 1 accreditations
- 5 new Children's Specialist 2 accreditations
- 4 new Freestyle Level 1 accreditations
- 1 new USASA Freestyle Level 1
- 1 new Cross Country Level 1 certification

#### Kissing Bridge also moved forward by adding:

- 3 new Snowboard Level 2 certifications
- 3 new Alpine Level 1 members
- 1 Telemark Level 2 certification
- 4 new Children's Specialist 2 accreditations

I heard similar success stories all across the Region. I am impressed!

While some capital projects got put on hold, Holiday Valley is in the construction phase of replacing the Yodeler Chair with a new high-speed lift (I still remember the leg burn from the T-bar.)

The combination of a great Lake Effect season and snowmaking at the ready produced one of the best snow packs in memory. The die-hards are still climbing or skinning up and earning their turns, even while foursomes are working the golf courses.

On the Divisional level, so much happened this season that I hesitate to try and summarize it. We have made the switch to Policy Governance, removing the BOD from daily operational decisions; we cut the Board size in half and changed the process of selecting a Board of Directors with an eye toward creating an efficient group of diverse perspectives; and we initiated a six year term limit to insure that we will have input from new perspectives continuously. These are incredibly important evolutions that make PSIA-AASI and the Eastern Division much more relevant to our membership and responsive to our industry. I am very proud of these efforts (and they WERE efforts).

On a personal level, these changes mean that both Joe and I will rotate off the Board in June. I have enjoyed and been challenged by being the representative of the "western frontier." It has allowed me to meet a great number of very interesting and committed snow sports educators. I am very enthusiastic about the direction that our Division is moving and confident that the new group of volunteer leaders will continue to improve our educational offerings, our methods of delivering educational materials, and our membership services. Thank you very much for this opportunity.

Joe and I are always eager to discuss "all things Eastern" so feel free to email us at any time. The new interest groups online and Facebook are a great way to become involved and find your voice within the organization.

See you on the mountains,

**Dick and Joe**

[dfox@wmf-inc.com](mailto:dfox@wmf-inc.com)

[j-hazard@hotmail.com](mailto:j-hazard@hotmail.com)

### Region 7 Report

By Ty Johnson  
Region 7 Director

**W**hat a long strange trip it's been!" With that line, the Grateful Dead summed up the 2019/2020 season for Region 7 and PSIA as a whole. That's how I started last spring's Region 7 report and it held true for the 20/21 season in Region 7, but with an entirely different outcome! In the fall as we sailed into to some uncertain dark storm clouds, it looked bleak as to what kind of season Region 7 would have. A brief flurry of cold around Thanksgiving got most resorts open but then it warmed to just above snow making temps and Christmas was okay. Of course, Covid played a part as we all had to learn new protocols with our teaching, chairlifts and masks! Then it got cold for a long-sustained time for the south and the guns took over and started to really pump out the snow. A few weeks of storms also dumped new snow on the south in nicely spaced intervals for an added bonus. The one bright point from the fall was that mountain resorts nationwide had seen a significant surge

in summer/fall business since people wanted to be outside. This notion combined with a cold winter propelled our season to be beyond expectations. True - lift lines were long on weekends as social distancing and limited amounts of folks were allowed on the slopes and chairs, but skiers and riders were smiling and happy to just be there! Lo and behold, the Snowsports staffs had really pulled together as a family and were facing the tough times with a smile and having fun!

What a difference from the start of the season with major concerns and constant change to teaching and sliding with care and having fun! You all, throughout Region 7, made a GIANT contribution to the wellbeing of the southern skiers and riders!

#### Quick notes here:

Welcome back Timberline as I got rave reviews of the changes and season there. More improvements to come!

Region 7 did exceptionally well in all exams and certifications held south of the Mason Dixon Line!

- A total of 15 members attended Adaptive events, 182 members attended Alpine Events, 41 members attended Snowboard events, 18 members attended XC Events and 21 members attended Children's events for a total of 277 members.
- Alpine, Snowboard and Adaptive Level 1 Exams 7 exams – 63 candidates – 100% pass!
- CS1 certification: 3 certifications – 21 candidates – 100% pass!
- Alpine Level II Exam: Skiing – 16 full candidates – 12 passed! Teaching – 9 full candidates – 6 passed! 1 retake – 100% pass!
- ASSI Level I Exam: 26 candidates – 20 passed! And 6 more are able to retake the exam at no charge!
- All adaptive Level I candidates were successful as well 4 new Level I members!
- Three members attempted the Adaptive Visually Impaired (VI) accreditation – all 3 passed, two members attempted the Cognitive Diagnoses (Cog) accreditation– both passed!

Kudos to all the area resort trainers for a job well done – you make a difference!

I also want to give a huge shout out to Region 7's own - Chip Coxe – Alpine DEV Team from Cataloochee - for carrying a heavy load of clinics, certifications and exams throughout our region this year. Unfortunately, the clinicians and examiners from the northern regions could not travel out of state due to their state's (NY, NH, VE) 14-day return quarantine requirements, so a lot fell in Chip's lap and he truly stepped up to the plate and did great! Thank you, Chip!

Please reach out to either Walter or me with any questions or concerns that may come up before the season. We would love to hear anything new that is going on at your resort! Have a safe and healthy summer!

**Ty Johnson** – [stycman55@gmail.com](mailto:stycman55@gmail.com)

**Walter Jaeger** – [wjaeger1@me.com](mailto:wjaeger1@me.com) ☞

## around the east

### Shannon Rucker wins the Mid-Atlantic Zone election

**C**ongratulations to Shannon Rucker of Liberty Mountain, PA for achieving a close victory for a seat on the Eastern Board of Directors in the Mid-Atlantic (NY, NJ, PA) zone election. Shannon came out on top in a close election amongst an impressive and diverse group of nine candidates. Her three-year term on the Eastern Board will formally begin on April 1.

Shannon is an 11-year member and has achieved Alpine L2, AASI L1, CS 2 and FS1. She is also a founding member of the NextCore Action Group.

**In her candidate profile, Shannon listed the following three priorities as a new board member:**

1. Encourage additional interaction/engagement between the membership and the leadership of the organization.
2. Encourage collaboration between disciplines.
3. Effectively communicate the rationale for strategic decisions made at the Board level.

**Welcome Shannon! ☞**



## kids, kids, kids

### Great Children's Instructors

*By Bonnie Kolber*

*AASI-E Examiner, ACE Team Coach*

**R**ecently I was asked “What makes a great children’s instructor?” When I think of the instructors that really make connections with the kiddos, who they follow like the Pied Piper, who develops relationships that last until the kids “graduate” ski school, or even join the school as junior instructors, I envision several characteristics that are consistent across the board (or skis, hahaha). How many of these characteristics do you relate to, or recognize in the top children’s instructors at your mountain’s school?

Great children’s instructors have a sense of humor and can be silly or serious as needed. Keeping things light and playful, even silly, can engage younger students who love to laugh and have fun. On the other hand, some kids are quieter, and it is important to honor that space as well. Sometimes a well-timed pun or G-rated joke can break the ice and get them to crack a smile and open up. Be inclusive and sensitive to where your students are emotionally so you can create a positive one-on-one or group dynamic.

Great children’s instructors listen to students and treat them with respect. Part of developing relationships built on trust is actively listening to your student’s words, as well as observing their body language. It may be a clue into their comfort level with the skills they are being asked to perform, or it may be a story they tell that will give you insight into their learning preferences or mode of intelligence. Treating them with respect as young people, and paying attention to what they are telling you – both verbally and non-verbally – lets them know that you are interested in them which will help develop meaningful two-way conversation.

Great children’s instructors develop vocabulary with children that helps them identify key movements and sensations. Most children are still acquiring vocabulary, and much of our mountain terminology is brand new to them. Intro-

ducing new terms through movement is a great way to help them understand the key things they are supposed to be doing, and you can even make up vocabulary to identify movements. For example, you can show them what a “traverse” is, you can also “zig” across the trail and then you can “zag”. You can even start to make connections with which edges students are using when they zig or zag. Part of being a great children’s instructor includes checking for understanding and using students’ words and interpretations to build the lesson. The possibilities are endless when you start using that two-way communication to build understanding through movement in lessons.

Great children’s instructors make creative connections between students’ interests and new skills on snow. Not only can you build vocabulary with students, you can create a whole theme unique to the students in your lesson. Making a clear connection between a student’s interests and key movements makes a game out of any drill. This goes beyond “athletic stance” and may require some creativity to connect piano, bike, or race car pedals to foot-to-foot movements, or turning boots into a bucket of fish to find appropriate edge angles. Metaphors like these can be carried through the lesson to allow students to explore outcomes and applications of different movement patterns.

Great children’s instructors break progressions down into bite-size chunks. We know that most young kids can only remember one or two directions at a time. The same rule applies for learning snowsports; too many steps at once and they are lost! Imagine each step in the progression is its own progression and introduce steps slowly, giving students time to modify and practice and develop some ownership of the movements on appropriate terrain before moving on.

Last but certainly not least, a great children’s instructor knows how to have fun!!! Whether it involves engaging with their young students, teaching them to enjoy the sensory experience of sliding on snow, or setting up a creative and engaging progression for the class, great children’s instructors know how to play!

What makes a great children’s instructor? A fine blend of people skills, teaching skills, and technical knowledge playfully tailored toward the kids’ ages and developmental phases makes the kind of instructor you will find kids sliding behind like the Pied Piper of Hamlin...but with a happier ending! ☞

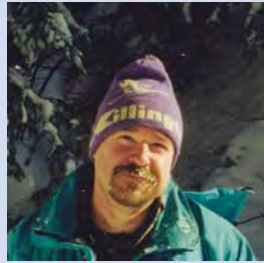


## In Memoriam

### James K. Kapp

James K. Kapp of Monroeville, age 59, died from ALS, also known as Lou Gehrig's Disease.

Jim leaves behind his amazing wife of 29 years, Kathy (Harman) Kapp and his wonderful children, Dillon (Amanda), Kelly (Brandon Miller), and Ricki. Jim is also survived by his brother, Bernard (Lee) Kapp and his sister, Terry (Ron) Miller, along with nieces, nephews, and his entire ski family.



He was preceded in death by his parents, Bernard and Gladys (Smith) Kapp, his sister, Janet (late Peter James) Gottardi and his brother, Kenneth B. Kapp.

Jim was an East Allegheny Wildcat (swimming and diving) and a Michigan State University Spartan. Jim taught hundreds of children and adults to swim and dive through the American Red Cross' after school learn-to-swim program, first at Woodland Hills High school, then at Gateway High School. And as a Water Safety Instructor and a Water Safety Instructor Teacher, he taught other swim coaches at the University of Pittsburgh Aquatic School.

Jim was the adventurous type. He enjoyed SCUBA diving (being a PADI master diver), sky diving, mountain biking, and aggressive road bicycling. Jim pedaled his bicycle 150 miles from Pittsburgh to Erie for 12 consecutive years for the MS Society, raising funds to combat that neuromuscular disease.

Jim's profession was as an Ophthalmic Technician, specializing in electrophysiology and he also was an Optician. Over his career, he was employed with Jones-Kapp and Joyce, the Chang Eye Group, UPMC Eye Center and 360 Care.

Jim also was employed for over 30 years by Seven Springs Mountain Resort. He was a professional ski instructor who had attained high levels of certification through the Professional Ski Instructors of America (PSIA). He attained Level 3 Alpine, Level 3 Telemark, Level 1 Snowboard, and he was Master Teacher certified.

Jim resurrected the Western PA Ski Council, and its 17 ski clubs, from dormancy and served as its president and as a representative for several ski clubs.

He is a life member and past president/social director of the Westmoreland Ski Club. He most recently has been the treasurer for the Appalachian Telemark Association and produced for over 15 years, the two-day ski festival known as Telepalooza.

Jim also taught both Snowshoeing and Wildlife Tracking Through Snow at Community College of Allegheny County.

Jim was a long-time volunteer and board member for the non-profit 501 (c)(3), Trail Pittsburgh organization and was one of the Boyce Park stewards.

Jim is laid to rest in Good Shepherd Cemetery. ❄️

### Madeline Rockwell

NORTH RUPERT - Madeline Neilson Rockwell, 71, passed away peacefully on March 4, 2021 in the home she designed for her family and lived in for nearly 40 years, surrounded by her daughters, Katherine MacLaughlan and Susan Rockwell and her husband of nearly 50 years, senior alpine examiner Charlie Rockwell. Her passing followed a vigorous but short battle with cancer.



Raised in Maryland and Pennsylvania, Madeline received word of her acceptance to Middlebury College while on an epic European ski adventure with her mother during her gap year. She arrived on campus and joined the ski team. Along the way she met Charlie and shortly after graduation they married. After a summer in Kentucky for Charlie's army basic training, the two found themselves employed as instructors at Killington for the '71-72 season- "just something to do for the winter" and Madeline's first official foray into teaching.

Back then, you were either certified or not, and she headed off to the certification exam in February of 1972. Passing easily, so began her adventures with PSIA. She was a member of the first Development Team, making the cut March 31st, 1981 at Stratton Mountain. Madeline worked with Charlie running the ski school at the Middlebury Snowbowl, taught at Bromley and was an integral part of their Beginners Circle Program, was a line instructor and later supervisor at Pico Mountain, then back to Bromley to raise their two daughters. She ended her 50-year career as a volunteer and board member with the Bart Adaptive Sports Center at Bromley.

Teaching at the Bart Center exposed her to new challenges and opportunities, and 46 years after her first certification, she headed off for her Adaptive Level 1 in March of 2018. It was one of her proudest accomplishments and one of the hardest exams she remembers. In lieu of flowers, the family encourages you to donate to the Bart Center (<https://www.bartadaptive.org/donate.html>).

To read her full obituary with all the other facets of her life, click [https://www.tributearchive.com/obituaries/20191736/Madeline-Neilson-Rockwell/Manchester/Vermont/Shea-Funeral-Homes?fbclid=IwAR1Kr6XM89Tmi4BwdRrk5iBlx-7NpH5ePokq2YRY4a5ASp\\_9UjkKVLpiE](https://www.tributearchive.com/obituaries/20191736/Madeline-Neilson-Rockwell/Manchester/Vermont/Shea-Funeral-Homes?fbclid=IwAR1Kr6XM89Tmi4BwdRrk5iBlx-7NpH5ePokq2YRY4a5ASp_9UjkKVLpiE) ❄️

*Skiing is a dance, and the mountain always leads*

## In Memoriam

### Michael D. McDermott

Michael D. McDermott, 68, of South Kendall Avenue, Bradford, passed away Thursday, February 11, 2021, at Bradford Regional Medical Center.

Born December 5, 1952 in Punxsutawney, he was the son of late Thomas William "Bill" and Bettie M. (Crawford) McDermott.

Mike was a 1970 graduate of Bradford High School. He was employed at GAI Consultants as a Lead CMT.

For the past 20 years he was a Professional Ski Instructor at Holimont in Ellicottville.

Mike enjoyed skiing, hunting, mountain biking, kayaking, motorcycling and was an avid-outdoorsmen. He enjoyed working on his home and was known for his amazing sunflowers. He was a friend to everyone he met.

He was a member of PSIA, the Italian Club, and Fireman's Club of Limestone, NY. He also enjoyed spending time with his grandson Reggie.

Surviving is one daughter, Casey (Greg) Buckner Jr., one son, Sam (Beverly) McDermott, one grandson, Greg A. Buckner III, his former wife Jamie McDermott, all of Bradford, one sister, Cynthia McDermott, of Colorado Springs, CO, one nephew Andrew McDermott, two cousins, William Chapman, and Robert (Michele) Chapman, both of Bradford. He was preceded in death by his parents, and three aunts, Marilyn McDermott, Beverly Chapman, and Geraldine McDermott.

Memorial contributions if desired may be made to the Kinzua Valley Trail Association, 23 CCC Rd., Westine, PA 16740, or Kids and Cancer P.O. Box 1299, Bradford, PA 16701. <<



### Paul C. Best

Paul C. Best, 84, of Allentown, passed away suddenly Thursday, April 1, 2021 at Lehigh Valley Hospital – Cedar Crest. He was the husband of Barbara J. (Rau) Best to whom he was married 60 years last May 28. Born in North Whitehall Township, August 8, 1936, Paul was the son of the late Clinton H. and Esther S. (Kern) Best. He faithfully and honorably served his country in the U.S. Air Force during a peacetime era. He attended Kutztown University while pursuing an art degree, but left school to take a job with the product development center at Mack Trucks, where he designed truck cabs for more than 40 years before retiring in 2000.

In his early 20's, Paul was introduced to the sport of skiing by friends who took him to Elk Mountain on the weekends. He fell in love with the sport and was soon an instructor at Apple Hill ski area in Kersville. He became co-director of the ski school until the area closed in 1976, then taught at Hahn Mountain in Kempton for three years and finally at Little Gap Ski Area, now Blue Mountain, where he shared his love of the sport with students for more than 40 years. Countless numbers of ski instructors credit Paul with teaching them how to ski "back in the day," and he passed his love of the sport onto his daughters and grandson Nevyn, who is a racer on the Blue Mountain Race Team.

He also loved Corvettes and visited car shows with his fellow enthusiasts for many years. In his retirement, he could most often be found in his garden, tending to his many plants and trees. He was a member of the American Rhododendron Society – Lehigh Valley Chapter.

Survivors: In addition to his wife, Barbara; daughters, Jennifer E. Best and Jessica D. Best both of Philadelphia; sister, Eleanor R. Kistler of Allentown; grandson, Nevyn; predeceased by siblings, Betty A. Beidler, Christine Sauerwine, Dorothy Correll, and Henry F. Best.

Contributions: In lieu of flowers, please perform an act of kindness for someone less fortunate in remembrance of Paul. <<





## adaptive airtime

### Ableism or Inspiration

By Kathy Chandler

Adaptive Advisor

PSIA-E Adaptive Examiner

It came to me during discussions and events of this season that we need to understand and address the concept of ableism and how it relates to the development and growth of our adaptive programs throughout the country and specifically for us in the east.

What is “ableism”? Google tells me that “Ableism is the discrimination of and social prejudice against people with disabilities based on a belief that typical abilities are superior.” It is rooted in the assumption that people with disabilities need to be “fixed” and defines people by their disability. It comes in many forms including: segregating students with disabilities into their own groups, lack of compliance with ADA regulations, refusing to provide reasonable accommodations, or using the word disabled as an adjective describing a person. It was at least 10 years ago that I started telling the PSIA-AASI Board that more and more of our customers are wanting their children/adults with disabilities mainstreamed into the regular snowsports classes. We see it all the time now and all instructors need to understand and make the accommodations for those students.

Some things that happen every day that we don't always recognize as ableism may include choosing

an inaccessible venue for a meeting or gathering, using the accessible bathroom stall when you are able to use another non-accessible stall, talking to a person with a disability like a child, or talking about them, rather than directly to them. Assuming that all disabilities are visible and not believing a person is disabled or believing that people with disabilities need our help and not asking before assisting are other examples of ableism.

We often think that having a disability is tragic and feel sorry for the person. When they are skiing with us, we are amazed and the first feeling we have is how inspirational they are. We hear that word all the time in the media. As instructors we need to get over that feeling of awe and watch that person as a skier. Are they able to make the ski/board work the same way in the snow? How is that happening? Do they have the same movement patterns and if not, why? Is it their disability, their equipment, or just their level of ability? When you break it down and watch the ski/board on the snow and analyze their movements to make it work, you are looking above the ableist view and are seeing them as a skier, not as a disabled person with a tragic injury or disability. You can see them as a skier and give them the respect that they deserve for pursuing the passion that we all have.

We are working nationally towards a “One Team” concept of PSIA-AASI. No matter what equipment we are on, skiing and snowboarding are just that. We are all doing the same thing and excited to be out there flying down the mountain. To move forward, we need to embrace that concept and educate ourselves in really watching people with disabilities and how they make the ski/board work. Please join us in this collaborative effort to make us all one. <<

### Advancements in Joint Replacement Surgery for the Snowsports Athlete

By Mary Ellen Whitney

PSIA-E Adaptive Clinic Leader,

Adaptive Level III, Alpine Level II

Director of the STRIDE Adaptive Ski Program

It's been 11 years since I had my joint replacement on my left knee and published an article about my experience and tips for the professional skier. Here's a link to that original article on page 10 of the Winter 2012 SnowPro: <https://www.psia-e.org/download/snowpro/SP2012Winter.pdf>. I have shared that information hundreds of times with people who are considering going under the knife. While tips for preparing for the procedure haven't changed much in a decade, a lot in the field of medical devices and prosthetics has. In the world of adaptive sport, we have seen the industry transformed because of medical advancements of this nature. Prosthetic devices in general have become so technologically advanced that they enable an athlete to use their (exterior) prosthetic as if it were a functioning body part, instead of removing it for participation. Therefore, we've seen a huge decline in three-track and four-track alpine skiing. A new advancement in external prosthetics will be permanent attachment of prosthetics to the body or implants called osseointegration surgery.

## Have a great teaching story or testimonial?

Share it with us so we can share it with the public on the Make Winter More Fun website and Facebook page! Let the public know the value of what we do!

Please send your teaching stories or testimonials to [psia-e@psia-e.org](mailto:psia-e@psia-e.org).

**THANK YOU!**

The number of joint replacement surgeries today has increased exponentially in the last decade with the average age at 65. Joint replacement surgery has become considerably better, and therefore more people with milder conditions and much younger are being recommended for this type of surgery to minimize pain from arthritis or injury. Physicians recommend joint replacement more readily.

### Types of Total Knee Replacement (TKR) Surgery

There are many new variations of a TKR surgery:

**Removal of the posterior cruciate ligament (posterior-stabilized).** This is a large ligament in the back of the knee that provides support when the knee bends. If this ligament can't support an artificial knee, a surgeon will remove it during the TKR procedure. In its place, special implant components (a cam and post) are used to stabilize the knee and provide flexion.

**Preservation of the posterior cruciate ligament (cruciate-retaining).** If the PCL can support the implant, the surgeon may leave it when implanting the prosthesis. The implant used is "cruciate-retaining" and generally has a groove insert that accommodates and protects the ligament, allowing it to continue providing knee stability. Preserving the PCL is thought to allow for more natural flexion.

**Partial knee replacement (PKR),** referred to as a uni-compartmental knee replacement, is an option for a small percentage of people.

**Minimally invasive quadriceps sparing surgery (MIS)** reduces trauma to tissue, lessens pain, and decreases blood loss — consequently speeding recovery. A minimally invasive approach reduces the incision to 3 to 4 inches.

### Advancements/changes in implant devices

When the first knee and hip joint replacement implant devices were used about 30 years ago, there were only 2 manufacturers. Today there are multiple choices for type of implant and the materials they are made of. Because there are so many, FDA regulations have subsided into a very questionable pattern of safety. The first implant devices were studied and researched for longevity and safety in regard to body rejection and complications. Athletes and highly active people were wearing them out and needing revision surgeries. Therefore, manufacturers began using new materials to make them last longer. Another major advancement is a **cementless knee replacement** in which cement is no longer needed to attach the implant to the bone.

A few years ago, Oxinium was created by oxidizing zirconium, to make a surface into ceramic. The new metal was introduced primarily to avoid an allergic reaction that some patients had to other devices. Researchers recognized Oxinium's durability — especially when combined in the knee device with new formulations, making the implant last for up to 30 years. Today, the FDA need only approve the modification on a previous implant device regardless of whether that device failed or not. For example, a hip joint modification using metal on metal instead of plastic or ceramic is approved by the FDA with little or no study on the effect of metal in your body. Cases have now been discovered in humans where cobalt leaked into the bloodstream causing auto immune problems, as well as undiagnosed neurological problems in relationship to the implant. Remember that physicians may receive compensation from medical companies selling their

devices. The bio- medical implant business has become hugely profitable for everyone.

### Do your research!

Would I choose to have my knee replaced again? Absolutely! It was the best decision I have ever made, but that decision was made with a great deal of research prior to the surgery. I recently had x-rays and a sports medicine review of both my knees and found that after 11 years of daily vigorous physical activities such as skiing, snowboarding, biking, jogging, and weight and fitness classes, my implant shows no looseness and little wear and tear. I have been cognizant of protecting it. I stopped tethering sit equipment after surgery, and reduced my running significantly and replaced with walking and biking. I refrain from jumping or pounding activities most of the time. The joint makes a lot of 'noise', which comes from the plastic patella rubbing against the front compartment of the plastic femoral head. There is a little wear and tear on the surface, but it is not affecting performance at all.

### The Bottom Line

Today's procedures are increasingly sophisticated and I advise you to make your decision carefully with research on not only your doctor, but what device and surgical procedure they are using; what material is it made of; who is the manufacturer; and does your doctor receive funding for choosing that device. You have control of the outcomes with your decisions and diligence in rehabilitation. Physicians still tend to endorse that skiing, snowboarding and running are not recommended after this type of surgery, but I am part of the research that proves them wrong! ☞

**More than 4,100 members follow every move we make – do you?! To keep up on the latest news, photos and buzz, follow us on Facebook! [www.facebook.com/PSIA.E.ASI](http://www.facebook.com/PSIA.E.ASI)**

PSIA/AASI-Eastern Division

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## AASI Update Spring 2021

### Reflection on the Rewards of the Season

By Brian Donovan

AASI-E Examiner and National Team Member

AASI Advisor

**G**reetings to all of our members of the AASI East community! As you read this, you've probably made the full transition into spring activities and you're full steam ahead towards summer. But let's take a few moments and reflect back on many of the successes of this season. As we were preparing for the season last September, I will fully admit that I was skeptical about if we were going to be able to successfully pull off a winter full of AASI events. I had my doubts on if resorts would permit us to host events, if members would feel comfortable attending events, if members and the Ed Staff would be permitted to travel across state borders, and if we'd be able to follow all of the differing resort rules regarding physical distancing and facial coverings.

But I'm extremely proud to report back that **WE DID IT! YOU DID IT! SO, THANK YOU!**

In typical snowboarder fashion, you all banded together, you all booted up and ate lunches in your cars in the resort parking lots, you rode the lifts spread out and socially distanced, you met for our morning meetings and Exam award presentations out on snow, and you persevered! All of you are the reason that we had a season! So, let's talk about some of the highlights:

**Certification Exams:** After last winter season was cut short by COVID, we had a bunch of AASI members that missed out on our end of season Level 2 and Level 3 Exams. Because of that, we decided to offer multiple Exam opportunities this winter spread out across multiple regions of our Division in order to give members the best opportunity to participate in a certification Exam this season. We hosted four different AASI Level 2 Exams at Mount Snow in December, Whitetail in February, Holiday Valley in March, and Sugarbush in March. And it seems like all of the candidates spent the extra time to come fully prepared. We had some of the most prepared, most talented, and most successful Exam candidates that we've ever had showing up to Exams this season. It truly showed that you spent the extra time riding, teaching, and preparing to meet the National Standards! Kudos to everyone who earned new certifications this season. Wear those pins proudly – you earned them! The best thing that can happen is if a resort guest or a student sees you wearing it and asks you about your pin. It will open the door to a conversation about AASI and all of the steps you have taken to improve your skills in order to provide them with a better lesson experience. Be proud of your accomplishment!

**Give these folks a high five!** Level 3 certification is the highest level of certification that you can attain in our organization. At the completion of the AASI Level 3 Exams this spring, here are our new AASI Level 3 members: Gina Basiliere (Jay Peak), Riley Childs (Mount Snow), Tobin Twelves (Mount Snow), Brenden Neill (Holiday Valley), and Kevin "Kee" Gillen (Stowe).

**Current AND Future Rock Stars:** We also hosted an AASI-E Education Staff Development Team tryout in April. The AASI-E Development Team is the first step someone can take towards becoming an AASI Examiner one day. We had 16 extremely talented Level 3 candidates trying out for positions on our AASI-E Education Staff. Over the course of three days, these folks were assessed on their riding, clinicing, presentation, people skills, and much more. We saw an incredibly high level of talent that showed us that the future of our Education Staff, the current resort trainers, and the clinics being run in the Eastern Divi-

sion are going to be in great hands for many years to come! At the conclusion of the three days, six new AASI East members were selected to join the AASI-E Development Team.

The newest members of our AASI-E Education Staff Development Team are (from left to right):

Steve Franklin (Stowe), Tim Shannon (The Hermitage Club), Joe Forte (Blue Mountain), Danielle Needle (Liberty Mountain), Nick Block (Stratton), and J Mark Graham (Mount Snow).



New Members of the AASI-E Development Team

**More talent showing off in Colorado this spring:** There was a tryout for the PSIA-AASI National Team held at Breckenridge Resort in Colorado in late April, and the members of the Eastern Division snowboard team brought their A-games! Todd Ainsworth, Loren Dailey, Brian Donovan, Greg Fatigate, Amy Gan Bailey, Tom Mulligan, and Tom Vickery were all candidates trying out with a dozen other candidates from around the country who had been invited to the National Team tryouts. All of these folks represented themselves, their resorts, our Division, and the AASI East community very well! The tryout was held over the course of 5 days and nights, and at the end of the week, 2 members from our Eastern Division Snowboard Team were selected to join five other team members on the new PSIA-AASI Snowboard National Team to represent AASI to the world for the next three years.

Our new PSIA-AASI Snowboard National Team for the 2021-2024 term is comprised of (from left to right): Chuck Hewitt (Vail, CO), Coach Tony Macri (Copper, CO), Brian Donovan (Mount Snow, VT), Lyndsey Stevens (Vail, CO), Chris Rogers (Vail, CO), Matt Larson (Big Sky, MT), Coach Eric Rolls (Park City, UT), Stephanie Wilkerson (Mammoth Mountain, CA), and Amy Gan Bailey (Mount Snow, VT).



PSIA-AASI Snowboard National Team

Here are my suggestions for you to carry all of your successes from this winter forward into future winters:

Write down your highlights from this winter (a cool lesson you taught, a breakthrough you had in your riding, or some other highlight that might be lost forever if you don't jot down the proper notes about it). Next fall, re-visit these notes so that you can knock the rust out of your brain and hit the winter in stride by carrying over your personal highlights and focuses from this winter.

Think back on all of the people that you were able to influence this winter and share your love of snowboarding with. Think about all of the amazing experiences that you provided for your students! Sharing our love of snowboarding with others is one of the many reasons that we all do this. It's important to reflect back on your winter, think of all of the folks that you were able to share the stoke with, and be proud of helping to grow our sport and sharing your passion.

Get to know the new PSIA-AASI Learning Connection Model. The beauty of this model is that "The Student" is always at the center of the model. All of our technical, teaching, and people skills help us to create a lesson that is tailored to every individual student. Each lesson should be unique and different, because each student is unique and different! Use this model to make sure that you're always keeping the needs and wants of our students as the number 1 priority during lessons.

Lastly, as I think about what all of us overcame this winter, it gets me even more excited for next winter. Here are some things that I'm looking forward to for next winter:

I'm excited about riding fully filled chairlifts and the chairlift conversations

during our AASI events! I love spending time getting to know all of the members of our community better during chairlift rides.

I'm excited to see people's faces again on the mountain. Even though we all got really good at identifying everyone based solely on their outerwear this winter, I'm excited to see faces again!

I'm excited about not having to struggle with the daily fight to keep my goggles from fogging due to my mask situation.

I'm excited to see the smiles on people's faces as they snowboard, take snowboard lessons, and have awesome experiences on their snowboards. Smiles are contagious, and I'm excited to see a bunch more smiles set free next winter!

I'm excited to eat lunch at events together in some capacity (although I would be a fan of continuing the parking lot grilling and lunch scene in the future). I am definitely looking forward to eating together, chatting, and getting to know everyone more during lunch breaks!

I'm excited to see our AASI East community charge full steam into another season of teaching resort guests how to snowboard and how to fall in love with snowboarding.

I'm excited to see the engagement and interactions on the AASI East Facebook page this summer to keep the stoke and the learning alive! We have such a robust community that stays engaged 365 days a year on that Facebook page, and I cannot wait to see what all of you are up to over the summer!

**Thank you to all of you! Thank you for being part of the AASI community! Thank you for teaching snowboarding! Thank you for sharing your passion with all of your students! Have a great summer and we'll see you soon! ☞**



Explore new roads using 4MOTION® All-Wheel Drive with a special offer for PSIA-AASI members. Log in at [TheSnowPros.org](https://www.TheSnowPros.org) and click the Pro Offers link for more information.





## xx-ploring

### Season Review

By Mickey Stone

Nordic Coordinator

PSIA-E Nordic Examiner

**W**E MADE IT!!! WHAT A YEAR RIGHT? The Nordic discipline, as well as the others were ready to adapt, change and do whatever was necessary on any given day. The office communications pre-season and during the time the event schedule was being built as well as the rest of the season were very different and dynamic. Big Kudos to the office staff for being flexible, communicative (on-going every day) and doing whatever could be done to get events going safely and professionally. The membership should realize that the office staff went above and beyond this season. They made changes and kept a calm level of communication throughout the whole season. Thank You to All.

Shout out to the Nordic Staff. I am so lucky to have a dedicated, motivated and flexible staff. Thank you to all for your dedication this year and for your input. Shout out to Matt Charles and Keith Rodney who conducted more events than in their normal season. This gave them time to be in front of the membership to performance ski/teach in order to prepare for the National Team Tryouts. Good luck to Matt and Keith.

In the north we were fortunate this season, though we had a slow or late natural snow start, the continual small snow storms every 3-7 days pelleted us with good conditions from mid January to early

March. That allowed us to make all of our events run this year. Although the number of scheduled events was only 65% of the number of Nordic events we have scheduled in the past, we had at least one full group (6-8) in each xc and tele event. Overall, the number of participants will be just below our yearly average (225) and we ran both xc and telemark exams.

We would like to recognize Jay Nation for his role in delivering the eulogy of a very good long-time friend and supporter of PSIA-E and the Telemark discipline. Jim Kapp (Kapper) helped start the Appalachian Telemark Association (ATA) in southwestern PA 20 plus years ago. Right off the bat, Kapper got PSIA involved and we had certified people in western PA in Tele in the early 2000s. Actually, Jay Nation would not be on tele skis if it were not for Kapper hounding him to get off those alpine skis and get a challenge skiing at Seven Springs on Tele gear. I have had the pleasure to work, certify and know Jim Kapp for 20 plus years. Jim was among a contingent of leaders in the Eastern Division who were part of the stronghold areas of die-hard Telemark skiing, instruction and certification at least 20 years ago. These leaders included Kare Anderson, The Snyder's, Chip Chase, Paul Smith, Larry Wilke, John Tidd and myself. Jim started a festival, scholarships for PSIA events and a rental program for Seven Springs and ATA. He was persistent, motivated, friendly, articulate, fun and a great father and husband. He will be missed, loved and remembered. Please read his Memorial and please read about the future Scholarship Award set up by him and his family in this SnowPro. Thank you Kapp for all you did!!!! You will live through us all.

Nate Gardner (Stowe Supervisor and National Team Alpine Tryout Member) seems to have lost a

shoe. His sole separated from his Nordic boot in the middle of a tour. A little repair, some walking and sliding on one leg – yeah that is the Nordic way. Hope this helped your training. Good luck Nate at Breck.



Nate Gardner improvises a fix for his broken boot in the middle of a backcountry tour

With the late breaking news from National last night at 8 pm (4.22/2021), we found out **Keith Rodney from Mount Snow made the Telemark National Team** with our good friend Rocky Mountain Examiner (and former Greek Peak instructor and Tele National Team Member) Jim Shaw of Winterpark CO. Way to go guys we are proud of you!!!

Shout outs to all who made it on the team, specifically Zeke Fashingbauer from Wisconsin XC Team, Troy Walsh of Sunday River on the Alpine Team and Brian Donovan from Mount Snow on the Snowboard Team. Awesome everyone and congratulations.

Finally, to all in PSIA who masked up, social distanced, vaccinated, tried to have a normal life and ski and participate in xc and tele events. Here is a **Thank You** to all of you. The picture below of Adele Wellman leading a pack down the hill just reminds me of the sequestering, spacing and distancing we all had to do this season. Here is to a season of camaraderie, hugs and festival. Enjoy the off-season and get that vaccine! ☄



Adele Wellman leading the pack with everyone masked and social distancing



Our masked participants at Stowe BC Lite Tour (You Look Great Gang)



Stowe XC Lite BC Trip with Leader Mike Beagan

## The Nordic Tour of Canaan Valley

By Adele Wellman

Telemark Dev Team, TM3, A3, S2, CC1  
Holimont, NY

**W**hat is your idea of a great event? Fresh snow? Sunshine? Talented people to ski with? Lots of smiles and laughter? Picking up some new tricks? Trees? Bumps? Adventure? If you said yes to any of those, then you are similar to the 16 people who attended the telemark event in Canaan Valley, WV on February 1-3, 2021. Tele skiers from WA, WI, NY, PA, VA, and WV enjoyed many of Canaan's hidden treasures. The three-day event even brought together seven current or former educational staff members. During the event, participants skied three different resorts over three-days: Timberline Mountain, White Grass Ski Touring Center, and Canaan Valley Ski Resort.

On day one, Timberline set the stage with several inches of fresh powder and laps on their new 6-pack. To manage the powder, we went back to the basics, an athletic stance and fore and aft pressure control. Smooth shuffle turns, mono marks, and even some one footed skiing helped skiers pressure the front boot cuff while the ball of the back foot actively guided the trailing ski. In the afternoon, we used pressure management through retraction and extension as the soft snow formed into mini moguls. We also focused on keeping our feet under us by pulling the front foot back, which allowed us to stay in balance on the varied terrain. Moving into the turn and keeping a continuous forward motion, instead of sitting back or shopping for turns, helped us navigate the ever-changing conditions. These tasks created a rock-solid foundation that was helpful for the following day on skinny skis.

On day two, participants switched from sturdy telemark equipment to lightweight gear. Now our platform had become much smaller and we knew the backcountry would require us to fine tune our balance if we were going to enjoy the trails at White Grass. The continuous forward motion emphasized the day before became the source of our propulsion. With a smooth transfer of weight from ski to ski, staying centered over our itty, bitty boots (some with duct tape), the proper pole push-off, and a graceful glide, we earned our way to the top of Bald Knob. Along the way we stopped at small huts where chickadees warmly welcomed us. In the afternoon, some of the more adventurous souls skied short lines in the woods, using the retraction and extension skills highlighted at Timberline. Others just enjoyed the Yurt and the warm company of Chip Chase (owner of White Grass) and his staff.



Above: White Grass Ski Touring Center near Bald Knob on a snowy day

On day three, the snow clouds moved on, but not before blessing us with several more inches of fresh snow and untouched glades at Canaan Valley. At Canaan we were back on our telemark gear where we found new power and balance in our skiing. The light skis from day two had honed our skills

and improved our balance. Instead of moving our upper body along the path of the ski, we initiated our turns by tipping our feet and skis to start the turn in the trees. Similar to skating, we moved to a new edge and the body happily followed. Add some retraction and extension and twisty rotation of the legs and the group had all the skills needed to ski until the lifts closed.

Over the three-days, participants were able to find a stronger connection to the ski, became more centered in their boots, and found confidence to ski any terrain. Downhill on skinny skis can be terrifying, and anything after that seems easy! Personally, by the end of the event I felt like a superhero! Plus, the beauty of the valley with the sun and snow-covered trees was a perfect ending to a wonderful event. Thankfully everyone got the opportunity to enjoy what makes Canaan Valley so special - the people, the terrain, and the fresh snow! I'm not sure how we will improve on this event next year; however, we do intend to make this an annual event centered around Groundhog Day. So, mark your calendars for the first week in February 2022. It's gonna be great!



The West Virginia Crew

Thanks to all who attended the first annual Nordic Tour of Canaan Valley and to Jay Nation, Adam Kline and Shawn Riggie for their help in crafting the event. It was a team effort. <<

## Longtime Member Bequests \$20,000 to Create New Tele Scholarship

### James K. Kapp Telemark Scholarship Fund Available in 2021-22 Season

**W**e are sad to report the passing of longtime member James Kapp after a battle with ALS at the age of 59. Jim was a fixture at Seven Springs, PA for more than 30 years and was an accomplished PSIA-AASI member who earned an Alpine Level 3, Tele Level 3 and AASI Level 1 certification as well as a Master Teacher accreditation.

In March, the Eastern Board officially recognized and affirmed the request by the estate of James Kapp to set up the James K. Kapp Telemark Scholarship Fund. The fund will begin with \$21,270 (\$20,000 bequest from the estate plus individual member donations) and will begin awarding money to members for Telemark educational events and exams next season (and by doing so, keep the name and legacy of James Kapp alive for years to come!

Members interested in donating to this new scholarship fund may do so by sending a check in the name of James Kapp to PSIA-Eastern Education Foundation, 5 Columbia Circle, Albany, NY 12203.

#### Thank you to the following contributors to date!

The estate of James Kapp — \$20,000

Lynn Shrump  
Patricia Ruefle  
Andre & Priscilla Gagnon  
Leslie & Scott Gray  
Robert Stirone  
Annette Kamzik  
Western PA Ski Council  
Gail Landis

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Ryan Joyce  
No Sweat Services LLC  
Madeline Heckman  
Nikki Washington  
James and Rochelle Wagner  
Rick & Lynda MacMurchy <<



## Thank You Mickey Stone!

### Stepping down as long-time Nordic Coordinator

Longtime (since 1992, in fact!) Eastern Nordic Coordinator Mickey Stone announced earlier this season that it would be his last in that important role after nearly 30 years of service.

Mickey has been “all things Nordic” to the Eastern Division for decades and we can’t thank him enough for his countless contributions and tireless energy and promotion for Nordic snowsports over the years. His enthusiasm, energy and dedication to his discipline, our organization and our members has been unwavering and unrivaled. He has made tremendous contributions to snowsports education at both the divisional and national level for decades and was awarded National Life Membership in 2016 in recognition of those contributions.

### Here is a brief summary of his Mickey’s involvement, accomplishments and contributions over the years:

- Joined PSIA in 1982.
- Achieved Tele Level 2 in 1984, Level 3 in 1986 and Level 3 in 1989
- Telemark Eastern Examiner since 1991, Track Skate Examiner since 1996
- Nordic Coordinator since 1992.
- National Nordic Team 1992-96, 1996-2000, National Nordic Team Selector 2008
- Added to Advanced Children’s Educator (ACE) team at its inception (1999)

### In addition, Mickey has made numerous contributions to the organization:

- National Manuals: Contributor and Editor for three National Nordic manuals; Contributor to Children’s and Adaptive Manuals
- Multi-time presenter at the Eastern Snowsports Management Seminar
- Backcountry Accreditation: PSIA-AMGA conference in Leadville in 1998, lead to the development of backcountry certification and Eastern 3-day backcountry event.
- Introduced the avalanche training, the route planning, and backcountry safety skills necessary for back-country and sidecountry skiing, anticipating the popularity of backcountry skiing and need for qualified instructors.
- Interski representative in 1998
- Freestyle: Developed the “On Any Gear” jumping event at Lake Placid 2003, seeing the need for basic course as pre-req. for FS1 and FS2. This helped keep members engaged with a summer event.
- InterTele – national planning committee for biennial Intertele; also a presenter
- Ambassador for PSIA, bridging gaps between PSIA and other organizations (National Ski Patrol, Navy Seals, consultant to CCSIA east and national, IFSA certification template, NENSA adaptive, Eastern Telemark Series/Kore Anderson, USTSA).

As you can see, it’s been an incredible career and we are glad to know that Mickey will remain involved in Nordic training for the Eastern Division – just with a lot more time available to enjoy his son Kare and his time on the hill.

All best to you, Mickey! <<



No photo better portrays what Mickey Stone is all about than this one!

we got next!

NextCore News

NextCore is a dedicated group of young members age 16-39 that are working together to promote the change and develop the programs and benefits vital to long-term engagement of the “next core” of PSIA-AASI membership.

## Time is a Funny Thing

By Katherine MacLauchlan,  
NextCore Liaison to the Board

The 20-year pin you’re too young to have. The 137 minutes it takes for the scores to go up. The epic lesson where the whole group is in flow. The 3:00 Christmas week private who won’t talk to you and only makes one turn over and over and over until you freeze in the dark.

### Funny indeed.

As an aging young leader, I look around the table and see more of the same. In reading the 100+ pages of the Eastern membership survey results, I’m reading more of the same. Time is standing still for our organization.

So this is a call to all of you readers younger than me (a feat getting easier with each grey hair and deepening laugh line):

### This is your time.

The organization needs you. The industry needs you. Your students and peers need you.

You might think the barrier to entry for a leadership role is too high. You’re wrong. Shannon Rucker just beat out some well-known examiners to win her seat on the board. My term is up the next time around. Start planning now to replace me. I’ll help.

You might feel like a kid still. I do. At my first board meeting, I was the only one carded at dinner. They tease me about it at almost every dinner. But you know what happened at my second? I played a major role in crafting a joint resolution between four of the nine Divisions which ultimately led to a favorable affiliation agreement and a vastly improved relationship with National.

### So let’s go.

Time passes and we forget why we got started on this journey. We miss how much we’ve grown. We wanted to teach. To help people. You’re ready. We need you.

[www.facebook.com/groups/nextcoreEast](http://www.facebook.com/groups/nextcoreEast) to get started. <<





# PROJAM & MASTER'S ACADEMY RETURNING TO KILLINGTON, VT DECEMBER 13-17, 2021





## snowsports school management

### A Year of COVID – What Have We Learned?

By Gail Setlock

Snowsports School Management Committee Chair

PSIA-E Examiner

Gore Mountain Snow Sports School Director

**A** year ago, we were all on lock down. Like so many, I was cautious and concerned about running out of food and other essentials as the store shelves were bare. I was concerned about going to the store or gas station, let alone go to the dentist or on a routine doctor appointment. I was afraid of contracting COVID - like most of us were. And as the summer changed to fall, I was concerned about how my home ski area, Gore Mountain, would open and operate, as well as how we would operate the Snow Sports School, all while keeping everyone safe from a mass COVID outbreak.

I was thankful for the many webinar/zoom calls that several ski industry organizations were hosting over the summer. I watched what was happening in Chile, Australia, and New Zealand ski areas – some were open for business, some were not. People were booting up in parking lots, skiing/riding with masks, skier/rider visits were restricted, and lessons were also restricted to Private lessons only. Ski areas were busy, and I heard that many areas were having trouble getting enough staff to handle the demands of the business. Many employees did not return to work due to their fear of contracting COVID. And

as that was all going on in July, I wondered, will this be happening to us in the Northeast come December? Yup, it did indeed happen to us, too.

As the summer turned to fall, we all became more and more accustomed to Webinars and Zoom meetings. And so it would be that our annual Snowsports School Directors Seminar too, would be virtual. Overall, the virtual seminar went well; we heard from other directors how they were going to run their snowsports schools, learned about common movements in skiing, snowboarding, and telemark. We shared information about Women in Snowsports, we learned about keeping ‘play’ in lessons while social distancing, how to set up **Family** private lessons, how to integrate folks with special needs, how to keep safety in our lessons, and more. But it was not the same – as we were not able to see each other in person, nor were we out on snow.

Many of the snowsports schools did run their seasonal/multi-week programs with success this year, albeit with changes. Many of us did not serve lunches. We met our students outside rather than indoors in our Children’s Learning Centers. And our class sizes were smaller.

Many Schools only offered private lessons, rather than group lessons for adults and/or children. And many ski areas offered the ‘Family Private’ lesson. Most mountains restricted their skier/rider visits in some manner, whether by reservation for season pass holders or by limiting daily lift ticket sales. We also limited the number of folks riding together on lifts, and spaced people to far ends of the chair.

For some, mid-week days were just as busy as weekend days, both for skier/rider visits and for lessons. For others, their mountains saw a decline in overall business. We welcomed many ‘new to the sport’ guests who just wanted to get out of the house and be outdoors. We all wonder if these ‘new to the sport’ folks enjoyed skiing and riding enough that they’ll come back again next season? We hope so. And we taught lessons and PSIA-AASI events with our masks on and our students unable to see our faces.

We did all of this, while maintaining social distance and wearing masks, working hard to reduce the risk of spreading COVID. So now the question we face is, “what will next season look like?” Will COVID precautions still be in effect? Or can we relax and ride on chairlifts and in gondolas with guests and students?

We don’t yet know what next season will be like, relative to COVID. Let’s all take this opportunity to find the good from this 20-21 season and blend it with the good from seasons past. By doing so we can come up with a hybrid of lessons and programs for the good of our guests and our staff. It’s too early to tell if we will be able to ski or ride mask free next winter. So, we’d best be prepared to be flexible and adjust our programs and schedules as needed. During one of my last lift rides for this season, I smiled as I passed the “bra tree” along our Straightbrook Chair at Gore Mountain, and thought, I hope that next season we can take our worn-out masks and toss them from the lift onto a tree and create a new “mask tree” in celebration of no longer needing to wear masks when we go skiing/riding! Let’s hope we can. ☺

**SNOW**  
*Pro*

## Upcoming *SnowPro* Copy Deadlines

If you are submitting articles, information or ads for the *SnowPro* please note the following deadline for the upcoming issue:

**October 1, 2021 for the fall issue.**

## Writing Guidelines

General member submissions should not exceed 1,000 words and should be e-mailed to psia-e@psia-e.org as a MS Word document. Please see additional guidelines on page 2 of this issue under General Information. Thank you! ☺

# Education Foundation News

## Education Foundation Donors

The PSIA-E Education Foundation expresses its sincere appreciation to the following members who have contributed at least \$50.00 to the Foundation through the annual dues “add-on” program and standalone donations during the 2020-2021 season. Since no dues or program fees go to the EF, contributions are the primary source of support for the Foundation and its scholarships. **Thank you!**

Richard A. Adams  
William B. Allen  
Terrence Barbour  
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Andrew VonDeak  
Teryn Wernick  
Sherman White (\$1000)  
Larry Wilberton  
Robert Wisser  
Frederick A. Yost  
Roger Zilliox

There were 44 members from the Eastern Division who purchased business cards during the 2019-20 season. A donation of \$88.00 was sent to the PSIA-E Education Foundation from Tyler Barnes of Snow-Pro Portal. <<



## your turn

### Off-Duty Dilemma

By Sheri Miltenberger  
Alpine Level II, CS2, Adaptive Level I  
Blue Mountain Resort

**T**o ski or not to ski? A choice.  
“A quandary!” cries her inner voice.  
When lessons finish, guests are done  
And she looks out to take a run  
Should she switch boots? Unbuckle? Lace?  
Now indecision clouds her face.  
She learned to ski a child of two.  
But snowboarding? That’s something new.  
One plank or two, there’s much they share  
The gorgeous views, the mountain air.  
To edge and flex – she knows the gist  
Same basic movements, just add twist.  
Remain on skis, the path is clear.  
She’ll blast the moguls without fear.  
And yet! A snowboard’s siren call  
To ride! To ride, perchance to fall.  
But in each fall a chance to learn,  
To practice toeside, heelside turns.  
Her wrist guards on, she finds a friend.  
On snowy ground this day may end.  
And with her hands and spirit free  
She strives to ride as well as ski.  
Start a skier, end a shredder,  
Every day she’s getting better. «

### Pandemic Pivot: Keep Calm and Ski/Ride On

By Penni Stuart, Alpine Level II and  
PSIA-E Master Teacher

Edited by Patty Tompkins, Alpine  
Level II and Adaptive Level I  
Women’s Only Wednesday Program  
at Pats Peak, NH

**T**he 2020-2021 season like no other season, created change in ski area management and snow sports programs.

The Women’s Only Wednesday (WOW) Program at Pats Peak had to conform.

“Our mission is to encourage women to play, learn, and grow with professional instruction and fellow camaraderie, resulting in confident, empowered women to enjoy snow sports and believe in their abilities.” – WOW Mission Statement

Over the past 15 seasons the 7-week WOW program has grown to approximately 80 women. A typical WOW day (8:45 am – 1:00 pm) would include:

A pre-ski yoga warm-up, continental breakfast, and a short technical focus while booting up.

On snow: 2 ½ hours of skiing with the same coach for the length of the program.

A fabulous buffet lunch and a featured speaker who would talk about women-specific interests and equipment.

Each fall, the WOW coaches meet, pick a theme, and plan the program for the upcoming season. This year’s theme was: “Keep Calm and Ski/Ride On.”

We knew we needed to make drastic changes to the program if we were going to continue offering it. We moved to an on-snow only program.

Four pivots to our program were implemented with positive results:

1. More skiing/riding time: All were encouraged to boot up and get out to do warm-up runs. The lifts opened at 8:30 (new this season) and all who were ready early took a few runs. At noon, some groups took a few extra runs to limit the number of people going to lunch at the same time.
2. Flexible breakfast and lunch: The Pats Peak Chef and serving team made delicious Grab-n-Go meals available in a 45 minute to 1 hour time frame. The women could enjoy their meal outside on the deck, which was expanded to include heaters and greenhouses, or inside at one of the few physically distanced tables.
3. Unified coaching across all zones (green, blue, black): Each week, our head coach prepared a WOW Clinic plan based on one of the five (5) Skiing Fundamentals. With no morning indoor program, it allowed the coaches to have a mini-clinic and try the drills on that day’s snow conditions. In the afternoon, we got together again on snow, to flush out our lateral learning drills and share the day’s experiences.  
Our exchanges built a strong, unified coaching team. We shared our knowledge and ideas with the women, so that they could play with confidence and feel empowered to enjoy the sport even more.
4. Featured Speakers presented on snow: We had 3 featured guests who skied with each of our twelve groups. They presented their topics slope-side and could take a chairlift ride with someone who needed more information. What we found was a more personal, individualized way for them to talk with the women. Our speakers loved this approach as they also got to ski, enjoy the outside and talk about what they love to do.

The biggest disadvantage in this season of change was socialization. Socializing, comradery and support are strong components of WOW. We missed the social gathering with all of WOW where women could freely talk and mingle with old friends in different groups or make new friends. There is something special about the buzz and laughter of a large group of women talking excitedly about their day.

We had to make a change and I am proud to say we thought outside of the box, adapted, and came out the other side of this season with positive results. We have been pleasantly surprised at everyone’s flexibility

with the changes. Many said: “We are just so happy to be outside and skiing.” The women were very thankful to Pats Peak for having the program this season. We are all proud of Pats Peak, WOW coaches, and the women for adapting with the program in the present circumstances. The commitment to making this program special has been achieved.

As Gina Carey said: “A strong woman looks a challenge dead in the eye and gives it a wink.” «

### Psychological Perspectives on Motivation: Insights and Strategies for the Mountain Class

By Tony Crespi  
Professor of Psychology, School  
Psychology Program, The University  
of Hartford, CT

**W**hile many gifted ski instructors and coaches are able to elicit tremendous interest from students, there are other pros who seem less than captivating. One secret ingredient to enhancing teaching involves motivational strategies. When students are motivated, learning is improved. This article reviews four researched ingredients to motivation. For those who meld these ingredients into their work the results can be inspirational.

#### Understanding Motivation

Each year children and adults walk away from classes and workshops bored and unhappy. It happens and it happens in all types of settings including mountain classes. Fortunately, most people can also recall one or two teachers who evoked passionate learning. These individuals knew about motivation.

Like many issues, motivation is a complex topic. While many people talk about motivation it is actually challenging to define. Motivation is like that because it isn’t physical, so you can’t see it, it makes no sound and, therefore, can’t be heard, and you cannot actually taste, touch or smell motivation. Nonetheless, most people know something of its potential.

Psychologists often define motivation as those actions which give meaning to our behavior and which drive us to perform. In a practical sense, some call it drive, and still others call it ambition. In this article we will call this motivation. If we accept the idea that motivation is a desirable entity for learning, then ski pros able to elicit motivation are better prepared to enhance learning and development.

Dr. Raymond J. Wlodkowski, Professor Emeritus at Regis University, Denver, identified four ingredients to motivation: 1) Expertise, 2) Empathy, 3) Enthusiasm, and 4), Clarity. In a basic way, these four characteristics can serve as a foundation for teaching and coaching. Consider each in turn.

## Expertise

A teacher and coach must know their subject. Understandably, breadth and depth of knowledge is one cornerstone to expertise. Limited knowledge, on the other hand, breeds monotony. Ask yourself, can I draw on a reservoir of examples in my teaching to better explain concepts? The pro who possesses breadth can meld ideas and is better able to enhance interest.

Evaluate your expertise. Choosing snow conditions, trails, pitch, as well as appropriate and interesting learning activities reflects expertise. Does the sequence of learning activities you select reflect solid expertise? What do we expect the student to feel and experience? Strengthening depth and breadth of knowledge helps develop greater expertise.

How can you develop your expertise? Watch others? Read professional journals and articles. Attend PSIA and USSA clinics and workshops. Ask for feedback from students and peers. To develop expertise, the development of knowledge is one foundation to effective coaching. Add depth and breadth to your expertise.

## Empathy

While there is no substitute for knowledge, knowledgeable teachers must also be empathic. By anticipating and exploring expectations, wishes, interests, anxieties, as well as student fears and apprehensions, teachers can maximize empathy. Does the student change their stance because they are tense? Is it the pitch, snow, or sounds that create tension? What can you do to maximize student learning and promote a successful, positive, lesson? Can you change fear into joy?

Empathy involves an understanding of student strengths and weaknesses, knowledge of personal drives, and a knowledge of those facets which promote tension, apprehension, anxiety, fear, as well as excitement and joy. Armed with this knowledge, you can build on strengths which reinforce positive learning. Analyze learning from the skier's vantage point - maximizing empathy - and you can better maintain and foster interest.

How can you maximize empathy? Ask students how they felt about the lesson. Ask if they felt you understood their experience? Would changing the trail have decreased anxiety and increased positive feelings? Evaluate your empathy and compare your evaluation with student feedback? Ask others to observe your teaching. Engage in honest self-evaluation.

## Enthusiasm

Enthusiasm is contagious. The truly enthusiastic teacher is one who can emit a sense of energy, animation, and excitement about their subject. In addition, while teachers can enhance enthusiasm, the situation itself – the mountain – can also promote excitement. Are you taking students to those trails which promote enthusiasm? Does the ride on the chairlift or gondola create excitement? Would a run through the park or bumps enhance positive en-

ergy? Do you ask students what they find most generates their enthusiasm? What's their favorite activity? What's their favorite run?

While enthusiasm may be more easily generated by some teachers and students, it is important to recognize that enthusiasm is related to motivation. When was the last time that you heard someone speaking in a monotone? While ski pros need not jump up and down to display enthusiasm, it is important to convey interest.

How do you enhance your enthusiasm? Be proactive. Do you display good eye contact? Does your face reveal interest? Are you enthusiastic? Do you ask if a particular trail or lift would be pleasurable? What enhances or decreases your enthusiasm? Does cold or wind decrease your energy? How does ice impact your excitement? Do you consider how you can use your personality in conjunction with the mountain to build enthusiasm? Be proactive. Be enthusiastic.

## Clarity

While some explanations and skiing demonstrations may seem clear to a teacher, sometimes the simplest of explanations may sound foreign to a learner. Sometimes, to a student, our demonstrations don't clearly match our words and explanations. Clarity is critical to teaching. So often skiers acknowledge that some pro has great knowledge but lacks the ability to communicate clearly.

How clear is your teaching? People learn best what they understand. Are you asking students for feedback on your clarity? Ask: Am I being clear? Is my demonstration clear? Do you understand how this might feel? Do you feel more accurate and precise skiing in this fashion? Do you adjust your explanations based on feedback?

By design, effective teachers must communicate clearly. Do your students understand your explanations? Is your vocabulary suitable? Is the detail sufficient? Do you ask students if you are clear? These questions can serve as a checklist for assessing clarity.

Taken globally, motivation is a powerful concept. From a psychological perspective, motivation encompasses attitudes, and needs, as well as strengths and weaknesses. Most often, teachers attribute motivation to the student. This is unfortunate, though, because of the influence teachers can have on learning and development.

## Concluding Thoughts

Ski teaching and coaching can be challenging. Ski pros either teach well or risk losing interest. Clearly, the pro able to provide a class atmosphere which enhances motivation will have the edge in maximizing learning. The four ingredients of motivation discussed in this article can serve to uncover the secrets of effective teaching. Each of the variables is clear but, still, many pros can benefit from analyzing each carefully and determining whether they are present in their own work. Truly, the task is not easy. But the benefits are tremendous.

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## Skiing 2020 – Pandemic Style

By Lorraine Briand  
Area Rep, Alpine Level I, CS1  
McIntyre Ski Area



**T**hough I've been in the ski industry for 27 years, the winter of 2020-2021 was full of surprises. For example, skiers weren't afraid of COVID 19 nor were they intimidated by the compliance measures necessary for safety/protection. On March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2020, I could not have predicted that during the next year, all skiers, riders and all ski area employees would be required to wear masks at all times, boot up in their car/parking lot (including their children), eat lunch in their car or outdoors, leave extra belongings in their car, ride the chair singly and stay 6' away from others; I would have said "no way, we will not survive." But wait, people came, the snow was there, the lifts were spinning, instructors were available, and our patrons came with family and friends. We were amazingly resilient. I didn't think I could comply, but I pulled up those proverbial bootstraps, tugged on the helmet and said "YES, YOU'RE GOING TO DO IT!" And I'm very proud and happy that I did. That first day out was rather odd, but it was odd for everyone else too. We were in it together; we were the glue that kept everything together. In this unusual turn of events, I even fulfilled my desire to achieve my CS1. This was one of my best years as an instructor/supervisor and one that has, surprisingly, increased my love for skiing/instructing. I should not have underestimated the power of POW!

And today I'm looking back at the end of our season at McIntyre and looking forward to seeing what next season's challenges will be at 75 years. «





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## Time Valued Material

# Looking to stay connected with your fellow members throughout the year?

Check out our “member-to-member” Facebook groups and join in on the conversations with more than 2,500 of your friends and snowsports colleagues at

[www.facebook.com/groups/PSIAEast/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/PSIAEast/) and [www.facebook.com/groups/AASIEast/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/AASIEast/)

