



## Honoring Longtime Area Reps

By Joan Heaton

Area Rep Program Coordinator

The PSIA-AASI Eastern Area Representative program started during the 1998-99 season. After helping my director sift through a pile of paperwork from PSIA-AASI, I presented the idea of Area Reps – people to improve communication between the members and the PSIA-AASI Eastern office and help snowsports school directors have more time to spend with instructors – to the Board of Directors. The Area Reps listed below have served in our Area Rep Program for years.

These Area Reps disseminate information from the PSIA-AASI Eastern office to colleagues at their home resorts. Their presence at their areas has enabled them to field questions and concerns from colleagues and members in a timely and accessible manner. Their long-time service is greatly appreciated. During and at the end of each season, Area Reps submit questions, ideas, and suggestions that they receive from fellow instructors to me. I, in turn, forward that information to region leaders.

The Area Rep Program 10-year Service Award will be presented to the following Area Reps at the Snowsports Management Seminar at Mount Snow, VT on November 27, 2023, and at Pro Jam at Killington, VT on December 14, 2023, for loyal and dedicated service in our program:

- Laura L. Bourne, Nashoba Valley, MA
- Denis G. Donnelly, Kissing Bridge, NY
- Madelene Knaggs, Victor Constant Ski Slope at West Point, NY
- Scott R. Snyder, Liberty Mountain, PA

The following Area Reps will be recognized for 25 years of service:

- Marcel Gisquet, Stratton Mountain, VT
- Gina Lancaster, Saskadena Six, VT
- Keith 'Odie' Miller, Elk Mountain, PA
- Mike Murdock, Beech Mountain, NC
- R.B. Powell, Tussey Mountain, PA
- Kim Shulver, King Pine, NH
- Sherman White, Smugglers Notch, VT
- Roger Zilliox, Greek Peak, NY

One hundred twenty-seven Area Reps currently serve our Eastern Region. Check with your Snowsports School director to be sure your school is represented in the Area Rep Program. If your school does not have an Area Rep, please speak with your Director. Your Snowsports School Area Rep could be YOU! <<

## kb's corner



## Profession or Calling?

By Kathy Brennan

Eastern Region CEO

This week my paperwork packet arrived from my home resort, Waterville Valley, where I continue to work as a part-time instructor and trainer. I'm excited to reconnect with my winter "family." Like many of you, I'm a weekend warrior now. Since taking the job as CEO, I've transitioned from skiing 120 or more days a year, to less than 60. It's just like in my early career: I worked in finance and consulting, and being a part-time snowsports instructor meant few days off from December to March. And the six-to-seven-day work weeks were particularly true during those seasons when I was seeking a new certification or trying out for a PSIA-AASI Team.

As I travel around the region on my Listening Tours, I've met so many of you who selflessly give up your personal time to create positive experiences that help turn your guests into lifelong winter sports enthusiasts. If you're like me, plenty of people think your commitment to this sport is crazy. At times I wonder: why do we do it? Why brave the cold? Why give up our weekends and holidays? Why get so excited for the next beginner lesson? Why ignore chattering teeth and frozen toes for one more lift ride? Why challenge our skillfulness in trainings, assessments, and tryouts?

Is this a profession or is it a calling? Or both?

Some definitions:

*Profession (noun):* a vocation or employment often requiring specialized or advanced education

*Calling (noun):* an inner urge or strong impulse, sometimes believed to be divinely inspired

By that definition, for me, this is a calling. And one of the things I like most about my job as the Eastern Region's CEO is that I am in a position to help all of you who also devote your energies to snowsports.

Check out my articles about this winter's Events and Scholarships in the Around the East section, and all of the other articles in this issue of *SnowPro*. You will find example after example of Eastern Region office staff, working with our Eastern Staff Coordinators, Coaches, and many dedicated, hard-working task-force and committee volunteers, spending countless hours to ensure high-value education and

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## General Information

Submission of articles, photos, or other items for publication is invited. Articles are not to exceed about 1000 words. Receipt of submissions will be confirmed to the writer. Upcoming deadlines are published in each issue of *SnowPro*. Material should be sent to "SnowPro Editor" at: [psia-e@psia-e.org](mailto:psia-e@psia-e.org) as an MS Word document attachment.

All submitted material is subject to editing and, possibly, a writing process. Its use, whether solicited or not, is at the discretion of the editorial staff. All published material becomes the property of PSIA-E/EF. Articles are accepted on the condition that they may be released for publication in all National and Regional publications.

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» *KB's Corner, continued from page 1*

opportunities for professional development, personal growth, and community engagement, as defined in our mission statement.

We are also working with industry partners to create more awareness about the value certified instructors bring to their resorts. For example, during the off-season, I presented on "Snowsports Recruiting and Retention" at the Ski NH Conference, the New England Summit, and the Ski NY/PA Expo. These regional ski industry shows bring area operators and leadership together to discuss risk management, recruiting, resort operations, and more. As many of the participants are not directly involved in snowsports, these are opportunities to share how PSIA-AASI education and certification helps resorts attract and retain guests.

My session covered the effort and sacrifice it takes to become certified. I highlighted the value of Level I and II instructors to a school's success, because they are experts at teaching the majority of the school's students. I also shared how much instructors invest in their own training, certification, and development. While many

resorts pay or reimburse for some event fees or dues, it is still a drop in the bucket compared to the overall costs. The fact of the matter is: professional development and attaining certifications require substantial investments of money, time, and passion.

With that in mind, let me take this opportunity to express to all of you – whether snowsports instructing is your profession, your calling, or your passion: thank you for doing it. Thank you for being a member and investing in your education, for developing your skills, and for putting yourself into assessments to be evaluated on your skillfulness. Thank you for helping to grow our profession and our organization and for supporting our goal to create lifelong adventures through education.

If there is something we can do to help support you, please share your ideas. We're listening. You may submit your suggestions online at: [easternsnowpros.org/about-us/](http://easternsnowpros.org/about-us/).

Best wishes for a wonderful season!

Kathy «



## Teaching Children Snowsports: Alpine Field Guide

A pocket-sized handbook filled with games, drills, and activities arranged by ability level and alpine fundamental. Get the print or digital version. Both access online playlists of videos of kids performing each activity. A great complimentary resource to the *Teaching Children Snowsports* manual.

*Note: At press time for this newsletter, the PSIA-AASI Warehouse in Lakewood, Colorado, anticipated delivery of the print version of the field guides on October 24, 2023, although unexpected delays may occur. Check the PSIA-AASI Shop for the latest availability of the print and digital version of this important new resource. «*



## Looking for an event?

Check out the schedule at:

<https://easternsnowpros.org/calendar/>

Check in periodically for changes and additions.

PSIA-E  
Education Foundation &  
PSIA-AASI Eastern

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## view from the chair

PETER HOWARD

### Board Chair Report

By Peter Howard  
PSIA-E Examiner  
Eastern Board Chair



As I write this article the Eastern Board of Directors meeting is about to take place, which is fortunate because I am focused on what has, is, and should be happening for our membership and the Eastern Region.

Continuing a practice we initiated two years ago, the Board meeting is being held at one of our host resorts, Okemo, VT. Meeting at our resorts allows the Board to connect with local leadership to discuss issues and concerns important to our organization, snowsports, and the industry. This time we will be meeting with Chris Saylor, Okemo's ski and ride school director, Steve Clark, skier services director, and VP & GM Bruce Schmidt to discuss trends in snowsports education and how PSIA-AASI fits in that relationship. Also of interest is the future, or lack thereof, of the "beyond beginner" adult lesson product.

Also, during this meeting, representatives from the adaptive and snowboard disciplines will present and answer questions from Board members. This helps Board members to gain an understanding of the concerns, issues, and trends affecting members in these disciplines. It is generous for people working in our member schools and industry partners to speak with us at this busy time of year. Their insights and opinions are immensely valuable – and most appreciated.

People sometimes ask me what I do in the winter? I could go into a long explanation about PSIA-AASI and snowsports education, but often it's easier to say, "I drive in the dark." I'm sure many reading this do the same. For example, our CEO, Kathy Brennan, logs many miles every year visiting resorts throughout our region. With the end of the Volkswagen sponsorship, our Region needed a safe, reliable winter vehicle. As such, the Board of Directors approved the purchase of a nearly new all-wheel-drive vehicle.

Speaking of nearly new and people who have put a lot of miles in, Keri Reid is our newly appointed Co-director of Education and Programs, as Don Haringa continues in this

position until retirement in the spring. If you have been an intermediary manager you know the challenges keeping the customers, co-workers, the boss, and industry partners happy. So wish Keri well and give Don a great big thank you.

There are a variety of Board governance plans and housekeeping tasks in the works. This year we will be appointing two Board Members based on skill sets and Board needs. There will also be an election for a Zone 3 Board representative. More details about these volunteer opportunities will follow in the next SnowPro newsletter. Also, our Board Policy manual is due for an update, which when done will be on the Eastern web site. Among other things, the Board Policy manual may include some changes to our Ends (statements of purpose and monitoring). A new set of Ends were recently adopted by the National Board of Directors. Since regions do the same things for their members, in the spirit of consistency across the country and providing premier service to members, it is likely most regions will adopt part, or all, of the new national Ends. As defined by the Board policy Ends and Limitations, your Board of Directors continues to monitor the performance of the CEO and pays attention to budgets and projections.

As this is a National Team Selection year, the Eastern Board has allocated funds to support members who are trying out for the National Teams. We believe the trickle down in education and talent is well worth the investment in these motivated members.

One of the nicest parts of our job as Board members is to hear about snowsports educators who have really made a difference for their peers and contributed to PSIA-AASI and the industry at the regional or national level. Recognizing and rewarding these dedicated members is the purpose of the Board's new Nomination Committee. This committee will assess the "body of work" of nominees for either Eastern Lifetime Membership and/or prepare nominations for National Lifetime Membership. The committee is currently working on ways to clarify and streamline the nomination process. If you know a worthy nominee, stay tuned for more information or check our website for updates.

Lastly I wish you all soft snow, stress-free learning environments, and good health. Let the season begin. <<

## around the east

### Exciting Event Opportunities

By Kathy Brennan  
Eastern Region CEO

The historic rainfall of the past summer created hardships for members and resorts in our Region. In the face of difficult times, we search for silver linings. For me, the rainy weather gave the Eastern Region office staff plenty of opportunities to brainstorm and plan an awesome winter season. Also, I'm convinced the precipitation-filled weather pattern will continue into the winter in the form of snow – and lots of it!

Read below for exciting event information you should know as you start planning for the season ahead. All of these events are on our [Eastern Region event calendar](https://easternsnowpros.org/calendar/) at [easternsnowpros.org/calendar/](https://easternsnowpros.org/calendar/).

#### Preparing for Your Level I

In the past there was a perception ‘everyone passes’ the Level I, so members should “just sign-up.” However, showing up unprepared for an assessment diminishes the experience for the candidates who spent time and energy studying, training, and preparing. Also, our statistics indicate candidates who are not actively teaching and training are less likely to be successful at an assessment. In addition, with the new Unified Assessment Forms, the assessment process is becoming more aligned with plenty of criteria to be evaluated. In fact, if you are unsure of all the criteria, check out the assessment forms and other resources at [thesnowpros.org/certification/national-certification-standards/](https://thesnowpros.org/certification/national-certification-standards/). It is a lot to take on when you are new to the profession, and we want to help you to be successful. To that end, we are expanding our Level I webinars, and we are also offering a new on-snow prep event. Read on for more information.

#### Webinars

Last year we introduced an alpine Level I webinar designed to provide information about the format of the assessment, guidance on the skills you should own to earn your Level I, share information about our organization, a review of the Learning Connection Model, and provide ample opportunities for questions. These sessions were so successful we are adding a snowboard version this year.

The webinars run on the third Wednesday of every month. The cost is \$20 and you earn 1 CEU.

#### Two-Day On-Snow Prep Events

Are you concerned about your preparedness for the Level I assessment? Are you unable and/or you do not have the opportunity to get the recommended minimum of 50 hours of combined in-house training and actual on-hill teaching? Then the Level I on-snow prep event is for you. For this season, we will be offering this event in the alpine and snowboard disciplines, and we may expand to offer in the other disciplines, based upon demand, in the future.

This on-snow prep event is required for anyone who is not affiliated with, and working for, a snowsports school and therefore, unable to get the training and experience necessary to be successful.

#### 14 & 15 Year-old Instructors Eligible for Level I

As a reminder, last year we changed our Level I eligibility to include 14 and 15 year-old instructors. In the past, you had to be at least 16 years old to register for the assessment. Many resorts in our region rely on younger

instructors to provide instruction to their guests; further, many resorts offer pay increases for certification. We believe if you are able to teach snowsports, then you should also be able to seek the education and certification that will help you to advance in the profession.

#### Alpine Level III Orientation

Are you planning to attend an alpine Level III Skiing and/or Teaching assessment this year? Would you like some guidance exploring terrain and tactics the day before your event? New this year, we are offering an alpine Level III Orientation. During this one-day event you can exercise your people, teaching and technical skills, get to know the likely terrain employed for the assessment, and prepare to enter a performance mindset. Through resort exploration, Q&A, and sample scenarios, this event is intended to help you put the finishing touches on your assessment readiness.



Sixty-year member  
Freddie Anderson

#### Freddie's Fridays

Sixty-year member Freddie Anderson inspired countless instructors throughout her career, particularly women. She passed away last year, so in honor of her legacy and love of snowsports instruction, we are introducing Freddie's Fridays for the 23-24 season. Freddie's Fridays are one-day clinics across our region, in every discipline, open to anyone, and conducted by the women on the Eastern Region's education staff. A portion of the proceeds will go to support scholarships for women.

Among Freddie's many accomplishments, she established the Schenectady Ski School in 1950 and taught for 25 years at Gore Mountain. She was one of the first women to be certified by a professional organization that eventually became the Professional Ski Instructors of America. And she helped form the first Board of Directors for the Eastern Region. Most importantly, she helped pave the way for other women to be able to teach skiing, get certified, and obtain leadership roles in the snowsports industry. We believe Freddie's Fridays are a fitting tribute to an Eastern Region icon, continuing her legacy and support for women in snowsports.

Check out the calendar to find a Freddie's Friday event near you.

#### January Discounts

If you are looking to save a little money on your event fees, consider participating in a January event. We want to help you get a head start on earning your education credits for the season. Consider attending a great event like the Women's Snowboard Camp at Stratton, a new alpine Level III prep, Dynamic Diamonds at Sunday River, Telemark Intro to Trees/Bumps at Bretton Woods, Children's Specialist Prep at Whitetail, FUNdamentals of Teaching People with Intellectual Disabilities at Black Mountain in ME, and almost all Nordic events (excluding the Southern Hoedown). Check the online calendar to find an exciting event that works for you.



Attend Beach Bonanza at Sugarloaf  
on April 20-21, 2024

#### Spring Bonanza at "The Loaf"

For many, skiing or riding Sugarloaf Mountain in Maine has been on your bucket list. Well, this may be the year to scratch that one off the list. Our last event of the season, April 20-21, the Sugarloaf Beach Bonanza, is sure to be a blast! Content will be based on the participants' goals. In addition, depending upon the number of attendees, skiers and riders may be mixed into likeminded groups who are ready to check out everything Sugarloaf has to offer.

If the long drive to Sugarloaf isn't for you, our popular Last Laps events are alive and well at Killington on April 13-14. Or the Spring Rally at Sugarbush April 6-7.



#### Don't miss the total solar eclipse!

us for our Total Eclipse of the Arc event. This one-day event will include lots of skiing and riding, possibly in mixed discipline groups. The agenda will be set by the participants. The lifts will be shutting down during the eclipse. Please remember to view the eclipse safely, for more information visit: [National Park Service: How to View a Solar Eclipse Safely \(nps.gov/articles/eclipsesafety.htm\)](https://www.nps.gov/articles/eclipsesafety.htm).

#### Other Good News



Everyone loved the return of the Event Poster and it is currently being prepped for the 23-24 season. As a reminder, even though the poster is printed, the schedule continues to evolve throughout the year. Please use the QR code on the poster to search for events online and encourage colleagues, friends, staff and peers to do the same.

There are more than 500 educational and assessment events on our calendar for the 23-24 season. There is bound to be something that will inspire you. Grab a friend and register for your favorite event, or attend something outside your comfort zone and make a whole new group of friends. It is going to be a fantastic winter and we look forward to seeing you at whatever event you choose. <<

#### Total Eclipse of the Arc

Speaking of Sugarbush. Are you aware on April 8th, 2024, approximately 3:30pm, there will be a total solar eclipse passing over Northern Vermont? Can you think of a better way to share this amazing experience than with your skiing and riding family? Come join

## A New Beginning

By Keri Reid

Eastern Director of Education and Programs



Keri Reid, photo by Linda Guerrette

It's only been a few months since I accepted the position of Director of Education and Programs for the Eastern Region, and I'm still pinching myself. This is the kind of role I hoped would be within reach in my future, and the future is now.

A quick snapshot of my background: I was brought up in the Montreal area, learned to ski with my family, and became an instructor in my teens. I gained my Canadian Ski Instructor's Alliance (CSIA) Alpine Level III and took my skills abroad to Queenstown, New Zealand. This launched 5 years of back-to-back winters that took me from Canada to New Zealand, the US, Japan and back again. I landed on the leadership team at Okemo, VT, and it didn't take long for me to become a PSIA-AASI member. I felt passionate that the life I created for myself was something I wanted to share with others, so I tried out for the Eastern Education staff. It is among my proudest achievements to have become an examiner, and I am thrilled to get to support the Eastern Region membership in a whole new way.

I've certainly been drinking from the proverbial firehose, yet the experience has been invigorating. Chalk it up to being in the honeymoon phase, but I think it's due to the warm welcome I have received from the whole Eastern Region office team, the Education Staff, and you, the members. As I learn about the organization's past and present, I am immensely grateful to Don Haringa. If you don't already know, Don and I are collaborating for the season, until Don's retirement. He has graciously allowed me to pepper him with questions and jump into current projects that are already full steam ahead. I view this transition as a gift, one where I am privileged to learn about what makes our educational offerings great before continuing to develop the programs that help keep instructors at the cutting edge of the profession.

Through my first experiences in this role, I am sharpening my vision for our future. I see opportunities for topics that speak to the everyday challenges instructors face on the hill. I aspire to providing greater diversity in our participation by offering events that speak to a variety of people. Finally, I imagine creating additional pathways that allow members to grow within their current level of certification. I am always concerned when someone tells me they are "just" a level I (or II) instructor. "Just" does not do justice to all your experience knowledge; you are the heartbeat of our organization.

Winter isn't far now, and I can't wait to see many of you out there. Until then, think snow! <<

## T-Shirt Design Winner

And the winner is... *Kirsten Ford!*

Congratulations to our 23-24 T-shirt Design Winner - Kirsten Ford from Maple Ski Ridge, NY! Kirsten's One Snow design was selected as winner by member votes. Thank you to all of our talented members for their contributions!



Shirts will be available for sale at the Snowsports Management Seminar and Pro Jam events in early December. A portion of the proceeds will support our eastern team candidates at the PSIA-AASI National Team selection this spring.

As the winner, Kirsten will receive a free registration to a two-day event this season and two shirts. Please join me in congratulating Kirsten on her great design!

## Support Your Staff

### Nominate your school or pros for scholarship opportunities

Although the general scholarship period for members has ended, there are four more scholarship opportunities for member schools and individuals. Directors and managers, take note: for each of the following scholarship opportunities, a snowsports school director or manager must apply or nominate an applicant.

#### Member School Scholarship

The Eastern Region recognizes the important role our resorts serve in introducing people to our beloved sport. The purpose of this scholarship is to support snowsports schools who may not have trainers or easy access to PSIA-AASI Education Staff.

By sending staff members to PSIA-AASI Eastern Region events or bringing Eastern Region Education staff to their resort to provide additional Member School Training Days, scholarship winners can use funds to help develop their staff, inspire future leaders, and create more exceptional experiences for their guests.

- Requirements: school must be a 2023-2024 Eastern Region Member School and must have no Ed Staff members in their employ. They must not have received a 2023-2024 National Small Snowsports School Scholarship. The application must include two letters of recommendation: 1) From someone on your team to explain how they will benefit from the additional training that will result from a scholarship. 2) From a member of the resort's executive team which identifies the role that PSIA-AASI may play in educating your team.
- Application deadline: Sunday January 7, 2024 at 11pm
- Member School Scholarship application:  
[fs9.formsite.com/PSIA-AASI-E/MemberSchoolScholarship/index](https://fs9.formsite.com/PSIA-AASI-E/MemberSchoolScholarship/index)

#### Member Reinstatement Scholarship

The purpose of this reinstatement scholarship is for snowsports school directors or managers to identify valuable members of their staff who have let their PSIA-AASI certifications lapse. Successful nominees will be employees who can serve a vital role in a school as a trainer or supervisor, or who have potential to obtain higher levels of certification or earn a position on our education staff. The reinstatement scholarship will be awarded to one or two pros and may include money to pay for reinstatement fees, make-up events, and other costs.

- Requirements: Letter of recommendation from snowsports school director or manager, letter of intent from nominee, and a description of the nominee's goals, and a summary of the nominee's snowsports career. Nominee must work at an Eastern region Member School.

- Application deadline: Sunday January 7, 2024 at 11pm
- Member Reinstatement Scholarship nomination form:  
[fs9.formsite.com/PSIA-AASI-E/ReinstateScholarship/index](https://fs9.formsite.com/PSIA-AASI-E/ReinstateScholarship/index)

#### Alpine Futures Camp Scholarships

Made possible by contributions to the Education Foundation in memory of Rick Metcalf, an Eastern Region education staff member and long-time DCL coach, the alpine Futures Camp trains and inspires alpine Level II or III members who aspire to become part of our education staff. Led by Development Team Coach Dave Capron, participants receive feedback and development plans to help them achieve their goals. Selected nominees participate for free and are only required to cover their own expenses.

- Requirements: Eligible nominees must be Eastern Region members in good standing and actively working (full or part-time – that is, an average of six days per month) at an Eastern region member school. Schools may nominate one applicant.
- Application deadline: Sunday January 7, 2024 at 11pm
- Alpine Futures Camp Scholarship nomination form:  
[fs9.formsite.com/PSIA-AASI-E/futurescamp/index](https://fs9.formsite.com/PSIA-AASI-E/futurescamp/index)
- Selection & Registration: On January 17, twelve (12) eligible nominees will be selected in a random drawing. They will be sent a link to register for the Camp. If any of the selected nominees are unable to attend, additional names will be drawn.

#### Level I Promising SnowPro Scholarships

The intent of the Promising SnowPro scholarships is to help Member Schools get their valued instructors, who have an interest in a long-term commitment to the snowsports industry, involved in PSIA-AASI. The scholarship awards ten selected nominees a free registration to attend a Level I Assessment.

- Requirements: Nominations from the director or manager must also include a letter from the nominee indicating why they want to obtain their Level I certification. Eligible nominees must be Eastern Region members in good standing and be actively working (full or part-time – that is, an average of six days per month) at an Eastern region Member School. Each Member School may nominate one person this year.
- Application deadline: Sunday January 7, 2024, at 11pm.
- Level I Promising SnowPro Scholarship nomination form:  
[easternsnowpros.org/promising](https://easternsnowpros.org/promising)

# OFFICIAL NOTICE

## PSIA-AASI Eastern Region

### Annual Membership Meeting

Tuesday, December 12, 2023 at 4:30PM

#### Grand Summit Hotel | Northstar Room | Killington, Vermont

During this meeting, hear about the state of our organization and future plans from CEO Kathy Brennan and representatives from the Board of Directors. Also, take this opportunity to ask a question or make a suggestion.

## Support Our Team!

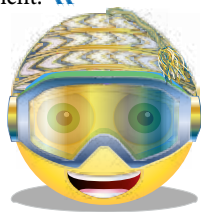
Our Eastern Team has been hard at work preparing for the 2024 PSIA-AASI National Team selection. In addition to their passionate, full commitment to our industry, they are dedicated to honing their skills for the upcoming challenge. This looks like evening meetings practicing their presentation abilities, developing new content for webinars, and spending countless hours on the hill honing their craft. In addition to their skills development, they are also mapping their travel and accommodation to reach the tryout destination: Big Sky, Montana.

It takes a village, and while we have some funds earmarked for this purpose, we are seeking additional resources for the eastern team. If you are able to assist, here are a few ways you can get involved:

- **Purchase a T-shirt** from our T-Shirt Design Contest that just recently concluded (congratulations contest winner Kirsten Ford!). These will be available at the Snowsports Management Seminar and Pro Jam events in December. A portion of the proceeds will be added to the Eastern Team fund.
- **Donate travel points** to cover a team member's airfare. To make this type of gift, please reach out to our office at [psia-e@psia-e.org](mailto:psia-e@psia-e.org) or (518) 452-6095.

What's in it for you, our valued members? Our education staff is augmented by the knowledge shared at a national level. As the Eastern Region gains more national team members, our Education Staff are strengthened by new resources. This translates to a robust educational offering, with passionate, informed educators adding value to the already wide array of opportunities you see on our calendar of events. When our eastern team members are selected for the national team, we all win.

I hope you'll join us in supporting the eastern team in their endeavors for our shared benefit. ☺



## adaptive airtime

### How To Improve Your Value

By Ed Meltzer

Eastern Adaptive Coordinator,

PSIA-E Adaptive Examiner

Alpine Level III, Children's Specialist 2



**C**hildren's Specialist 1 and 2 are arguably the best educational enhancements beyond traditional certification. People who attend these events return with rave reviews about their experiences. Additionally, snowsports directors see

them as more valuable members of their snowsports schools.

Why not adaptive Level I for people with visual impairment or a cognitive disability? You may not know it, but you have most likely taught people with a cognitive disability such as Autism. What did you do to have a successful lesson? You must have used your well-developed teaching and people skills to prioritize and adapt. So, let's make it official!

The Eastern Region ([easternsnowpros.org/education/adaptive/](http://easternsnowpros.org/education/adaptive/)) and National ([lms.thesnowpros.org/lms-courses](http://lms.thesnowpros.org/lms-courses)) websites list awesome resources that help you prepare for an adaptive certification.

Here you will find (among others) these awesome free general resources:

- *Course for New Instructors*
- *Delivering the Beginner Experience – Alpine*
- *Introduction to Working with Children*

You'll also find these courses that are adaptive-specific:

- *Beginner Three-Track course*
- *Beginner Four-Track course*
- *Beginner Bi-Ski course*
- *Beginner Mono-Ski course*

This is a great time to start learning even more about your craft. Members who have chosen adaptive as their primary discipline enjoy free *digital access* to a library of manuals or they can purchase *printed manuals*.

- *Adaptive Alpine Technical Manual*
- *Adaptive Instruction: Diagnoses & Medication Classifications*
- *Fundamental Mechanics of Alpine Skiing Across Adaptive Disciplines*

In addition, our Adaptive education staff are putting the final touches on our "Adaptive Alpine Assessment Guide", which should be available well before winter.

The National Adaptive Performance Guides are now available on the Snow Pro national website: [thesnowpros.org/certification/national-certification-standards/](http://thesnowpros.org/certification/national-certification-standards/).

Spend some time volunteering at your local Adaptive snowsports program. Not only will you get valuable insight, your interest and involvement will be very valuable to their program.

Like Children's Specialist 1 and 2, you will need to have an alpine or snowboard Level I certification prior to attending an adaptive exam.

This season, we offer many adaptive-focused workshops to help you improve your understanding of the subject matter.

We have an adaptive Mini-Academy at Killington, VT on December 9-10 and an adaptive week during Pro Jam on December 11-15. Two workshops designed to attract broad based interest – "FUNdamentals in Teaching People With an Intellectual Diagnosis" and "All Lessons are Adaptive" – will be offered throughout the season. Our new Freddy's Fridays events will include an adaptive component as well. Peruse all events on the Eastern Region event calendar: [easternsnowpros.org/calendar/](http://easternsnowpros.org/calendar/).

If your personal goal is to add value to your local snow sports organization, consider this advice from our Eastern Region CEO PSIA-AASI Kathy Brennan: "In my opinion, an instructor on your roster with their discipline specific Level I or II, Children's Specialist 1, and the adaptive LI VI/Cog is absolute gold! The quality, depth and breadth of this instructor's ability to engage and educate the vast majority of your guests will be outstanding."

Having an adaptive certification in your resume will expand your ability to connect with a wider variety of guests. Therefore, I hope you consider exploring adaptive programs this winter. ☺

## In Memoriam



### Robert W. Dunn

Robert William Dunn (Bob), ski industry veteran, passed away peacefully at home in Rye Beach, NH, surrounded by his family on April 18, 2023 at the age of 95.

“The sweetheart of 1928,” Bob was a Valentine’s baby born in Malden, MA on February 14, 1928. He served in the Army Air Corps during World War II and the Korean conflict. Following his service, he earned a Master’s degree in Education and Counseling from Boston University, putting himself through school owning and operating the Dairy Whiz ice cream stand in Malden serving what he called “the best soft-serve there is.”

His ski career started in childhood when he and friends walked miles to “learn to turn” on hickory skis at Mount Hood in Medford. Later, he would take the North Station Snow Train to Mount Cranmore, NH. He alpine raced in college, taught school briefly after college, but ultimately pursued a career in snowsports, his passion.

He served as manager of Boston Hill Ski Area in North Andover, MA, which he eventually owned, expanded, and operated for over 40 years. He was an early PSIA-certified instructor, and maintained that certification for over 50 years as Boston Hill hosted busloads of area schoolchildren and

adults during the 1960s and 1970s to take learn-to-ski lessons with the Bob Dunn Ski School. In addition, Bob wrote seasonal articles and a regular ‘Ask the Expert’ ski column for the *Boston Globe*.

Bob looked for new innovations to make ski areas a year-round outdoor recreation site with warm weather activities like Frisbee golf, brush (Dendix) skiing all year-round, and the Alpine Slide. The success of the Alpine Slide in North Andover led him to install one on Snow King Mountain in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, which still remains a popular summer attraction. He also served as director of skiing at Bretton Woods, NH and continued to work with the *Globe* conducting ski clinics and amateur fun ski races throughout New England. He truly and actively spread his love of skiing to thousands.

Bob approached life with an attitude of ‘I can do that’ and shared his humor, experience and tales with many.

He is survived by his wife Marion and his daughters Carol Dunn of Bristol, NH, and her husband Ken Chorney, Marianne Dunn of York, ME, and Elisabeth (Lisa) Dunn of Waltham, MA; and by his grandsons David Chorney of Concord, NH, and Matthew Chorney of Jackson, WY.

Donations may be made to Y.E.S (Youth Enrichment Services) Operation SnowSports at [yeskids.org/](http://yeskids.org/) or to the Amedisys Foundation at [amedisys.com/about/foundation](http://amedisys.com/about/foundation). ☀☀



### Howard Foltz

Howard Brainerd Foltz, 68, of Bethlehem, PA, passed away on August 18, 2023 after a well-fought battle with cancer.

Born March 26, 1955 in Easton, he was the son of the late William A. and Nancy (Brainerd) Foltz. He and his wife, Pam (Ridge) Foltz were married 43 years. Howard was a graduate of The Lawrenceville School, Lehigh University (BS and MBA) and he was a CPA. He was currently managing the family real estate investment business. He was a former member of the Big Boulder Ski Patrol, an active Blue Mountain Ski Instructor, an avid golfer, and a big Lehigh football fan.

Surviving with his wife, Pam, are daughter Kate Anglin and her husband Ben, son Ben Foltz and his wife Erin, three brothers, Bob Foltz, David Foltz, and Jonathan Foltz, and grandchildren Maddie, Jack, Rowan, and Hannah.

A Celebration of Life reception was held in August. In the spirit of Howard’s philanthropy to education, memorial contributions can be made to the Nancy B. and William A. Foltz Scholarship Fund c/o Northampton Community College Foundation, 3835 Green Pond Road, Bethlehem, PA 18020, or [www.northampton.edu/online-giving](http://www.northampton.edu/online-giving). Offer online condolences at [www.AshtonFuneralHome.com](http://www.AshtonFuneralHome.com).

*Note from Kathy Brennan, Eastern CEO: Howard was a dedicated snowsports professional who was committed to our organization and helping us to grow our membership, particularly in the NextCore 14 – 39 age group. When I formed our Philanthropy Committee, he was the first to apply for a seat. He actively contributed and was instrumental in formulating plans to grow our Education Foundation. He will be missed. Our condolences go out to his friends, family, and everyone whose lives he enriched through snowsports. ☀☀*



### Geoffrey H. Smith

Geoffrey H. Smith, 74, of Barkhamsted, CT passed away on Thursday, October 12, 2023, due to the sudden onset of Acute Leukemia. He was the beloved husband of Linda Drobner. He was raised in West Hartford, CT and attended high school at both the Kingswood-Oxford School and the Storm King School in NY State. He entered New England College and enlisted in the US Coast Guard during the Vietnam War. Upon his return, he completed his education at New England College, receiving a Bachelor of Arts in English.

Geoff was an avid skier throughout his life. He taught skiing at Copper Mountain, CO for five years after college. Returning to Connecticut, he joined the Ski Sundown Ski School as an instructor and coached the ski team for many years. Coach Geoff’s passion was skiing – from the smallest hill to the FIS World Cup. His greatest pleasure was to see the growth and development of his racers. He kept in touch with many of them over the years.

He was a member of the Professional Ski Instructors Association for over 40 years and had hoped to receive his 50-year pin. He looked forward to the Master’s Academy every year and had many fond memories of the group and coaches he skied with there. It was the highlight of his year, even surpassing the many memorable ski trips to Europe with the GilaMons Group. He was pleased and proud that he skied the Lauberhorn, but much slower than the pros!

During the summer season, he was employed by the Farmington Woods Golf Course for many years. He loved the outdoors and enjoyed biking. In addition to his wife, he is survived by brothers, Larry and Brian, and sisters, Jennifer and Lynda.

Memorial donations may be made to the American Cancer Society at PO Box 6704, Hagerstown, MD 21741. For condolences, please visit [carmonfuneralhome.com](http://carmonfuneralhome.com). ☀☀



## In Memoriam



### Stanley James Jennings

Stanley James Jennings passed away this year following a battle with Parkinson's Disease. He was born on April 26, 1942, in Newport, Rhode Island. His parents, George B. and Ruby V. (Hatcher) Jennings were natives of Nova Scotia. During his boyhood, the family made many trips

to visit their Canadian families.

A part-time ski instructor after retiring from the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, Stan lived a life filled with outdoor interests, family, friends, and adventures. He graduated from Rogers High School in 1959 and the University of Rhode Island in 1964 with a degree in Mechanical Engineering. He served in the Army Corps of Engineers in Alaska where he moved with his wife Genie. They had many adventures in Alaska (including driving the Alcan Highway to get there – a trip which on several occasions required Stan's mechanical engineering skills). They lived in a trailer on 160 acres near Fort Greeley, AK and were regularly visited by a herd of buffalo.

At the end of his military career, Stan and Genie relocated to southern Maine. They spent summers in York where they converted a building into the Candlestick Inn. Stan was an avid hunter, fisherman, outdoorsman, and traveler. These interests brought him caribou hunting in Alaska, backpacking throughout Europe, flyfishing in Belize, lobster fishing in Maine, and more.

He was a devoted father, involving his two daughters, Dawn and Amy, in interesting things. They learned to ski and to fish. They made maple syrup. Every summer he took them to his friends' Camp Waddy on Second Chain Lake, where he went deer hunting. They caught white perch and pickerel, swam, picked gallons of wild high-bush blueberries. They spent a week canoeing down the Allagash River. He took them to see train wrecks and chase hurricanes. Once a year (usually in August, then the sun rose a bit later in the morning) they would get up while it was dark, climb the rocks across the street from the inn, and watch the sunrise. One year, they waited too long and had to move home to Eliot, ME for school, he brought them back to the ocean the first weekend to watch the sunrise. Traditions are important. He taught them how to change a tire, check the oil, and that they could always call him when they had a problem.

Despite the beginning intrusion of Parkinson's Disease, he was an involved grandfather. In addition to teaching them how to cast, the two older grandchildren were able to participate in stocking trout in southern Maine. He took time to float twigs through culverts and hurry to the other side to see them reappear. He let them stand in front of him to steer the boat. On Grandpa's last boat trip with them, each of the three grandchildren hooked a bass at the same time creating a tumultuous memory that always brings a smile.

Stan was a valiant gentleman throughout his struggle with Parkinson's. He will be missed by his friends and family. Besides his companion of 63 years and wife of 55, Genie, he leaves his two daughters, Dawn G. Jennings and Amy L. Pratt, son-in-law Jayme Pratt; granddaughter Georgina Pratt, grandsons Owen Stanley Pratt and Andrew Stanley Jennings; sister Barbara A. Jennings DePaul and brother-in-law Bill DePaul.

All his progeny are fishermen and skiers. Had there been time, one or two would likely have become hunters also, following their grandfather into the woods he loved so much. <<



### William (Bill) T. Starr

William (Bill) Thomas Starr, 65, of Cortland, went to be with our Lord on October 1, 2023, after a 4-year battle with Kidney Cancer. Born January 10, 1958, in Cortland, Bill was the son of Floyd W. Starr Jr. and Rosemary Kohlman Starr. Bill attended Cortland Schools, graduating from Cortland High School in 1976. Bill went on to Franklin Pierce College in NH to study business. After two years, Bill transferred to Northern Arizona University at Flagstaff where he graduated with a degree in Mechanical Engineering and a minor in Solar Energy. After college, Bill worked in the petroleum industry for several years while living in Cody, WY and Grand Junction, CO. Bill moved back to the Cortland area in 1984 to be closer to family and to take a job at ETL (Intertek). Bill held several positions in his 29 years at ETL, culminating as the Director of Follow Up Services. In this position, Bill established regional certification centers in Hong Kong and Stockholm to support ETL certification globally. When Bill's division moved to Chicago, he opted to stay in Cortland in order to care for his parents, which he did faithfully. Bill was lucky enough to start working for McNeil and Company as a Data Analytics Specialist and did so for the past ten years. Bill thoroughly enjoyed the challenge of a new career and considered himself blessed to have had the opportunity to work with such a dedicated, supportive, and caring group of people.

Bill always had a love for the outdoors and was an avid skier, hiker, and golfer. It was through skiing where Bill met his wife, Liz, where they both taught skiing at Greek Peak. A few years later, Bill proposed to Liz while on a gondola boat in Venice, Italy, and they were married for almost 31 years. Bill and Liz raised two beautiful girls, Kathleen and Margaret, with Bill attending almost every one of their concerts, dance recitals, hooleys, sporting events and activities. Bill's children were his greatest pride and joy.

Bill was a humble man with a great sense of humor, and an easy-going demeanor. Bill was caring, kind and a trusted friend. Bill's friendships were very important to him. Every year, for over 40 years, Bill and his childhood friends would go on a camping trip to the Adirondacks, fondly known as "The Man Trip." This unique experience held a very special place in Bill's heart and kept a strong bond among his friends.

Bill volunteered his time as a current longtime Commissioner with the City Wastewater Treatment Board and as a current City of Cortland Fire Commissioner, roles he was honored to serve in. Bill was a Level II certified ski instructor and member of the Professional Ski Instructors of America, having taught skiing for almost 30 years. Bill was a past member of the Ancient Order of Hibernians and was a communicant of St. Mary's Church. Bill was dedicated to his faith, which strengthened all aspects of his life.

Bill was predeceased by his parents, Floyd (2022) and Rosemary (2015). Bill is survived by his wife, Liz, daughters, Kathleen of Denver, CO and Margaret of Cortland. Siblings, Richard (Suzanna) Starr of Williamsburg, VA, Janet Starr of Cortland, and Karen Starr of Richmond, VA. Mother-in-law, Barbara Eberst, brother-in-law, James Eberst, both of Freeport, NY, sister and brother-in-law, Kathleen and Michael Galano, of Asbury Park, NJ, several nieces, nephews, and close friends.

In lieu of flowers, those who wish to honor Bill's memory are asked to please consider St. Mary's Parochial School, 61 N. Main Street, Cortland, NY. <<



## Congratulations on New Arrival

Vice Chair of the Eastern Region Board of Directors, **Katie Brinton**, and **Eric Kelley**, both alpine education staff members, welcomed the birth of their first child, son Finn, in September 2023. Congratulations, Katie and Eric!

## Education Foundation News

### Education Foundation Donors

The Eastern 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 since May. 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!

Russell Achzet	Dennis Fahey	Bernard McCabe
William Allen	Gault Farrell	Michael McCabe
F Michael Bannon	Dale Fox	Stephen McGrath
Terrence Barbour	Craig Frey	James McHale
Terence Barrett	William Fusco	Stephen Moore
Craig Baum	Nicole Gakidis	Robert Morse
Bruce Bennett	Mark Gemmiti	Leslie Nitkiewicz
David Berger	Katherine Giannini	Dolores Nolder
Wayne Berthiaume	Eric Girardi	Thomas O'Dowd
Cathy and David Blinken	Cody Gossard	George Paras
Ross Boisvert	William Graham	Nicholas Pera
Andrew Borbas	David Greenleaf	George Phalen
Kenneth Breen	Thomas Haas	Kimberly Phillips
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Charles Brown	Karen Haringa	Stephen Robertshaw
Barbara Burbridge	Karen Hauda	Don Rock
Herbert Burnham	Joseph Hill	Rebecca Shiffman
Deborah Butts	Hudson Valley Ski Club, Inc	Thor Simon
Roland Cagnon	Peter Isaia	John Sniezyk
Linda Carabis	Mac Jackson	Emily Spiker
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Chris Dayton	Susan Lehnes	James Wagner
Robert Delboca	Roger Lichtman	Karl Waizecker
William Deriscavage	Eric Lipton	Cynthia Wallace
Robert Deutsch	Bruce Livingston	Shawn Watkins
Richard Downing	Horst Locher	Sherman White
Dan Earley	Karl Loh	Larry Wilberton
Karen Earley	Robert Malecki	Robert Wisser
John Eason	Stacy Malecki	Roger Zilliox
David England	Richard Marron	

## SNOW Pro

### Upcoming *SnowPro* Copy Deadlines

If you are submitting articles, information or ads for the *SnowPro*

**January 5, 2024 is the deadline  
for the winter issue.**

### Writing Guidelines

General member submissions should not exceed 1,000 words and should be e-mailed to [psia-e@psia-e.org](mailto: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 Committee Report Education Committee Leadership Change

By Keri Reid

Eastern Director of Education and Programs

By Angelo Ross

PSIA-AASI Education Development Manager

*From Angelo Ross:* It has been my honor to serve as chair of the Eastern Webinar Task Force and Eastern Education Committee over the last three-and-a-half years.

We formed the Webinar Task Force during Spring 2022 to provide educational content and CEU opportunities for members as nearly 100 Eastern events were canceled due to Covid-19 shutdowns. The multidiscipline Education Committee evolved from the Webinar Task Force and, in addition to continuing web-based offerings, has focused for the last year on evaluating our course offerings and updating course descriptions. Members will begin to see the results of those efforts this season as course descriptions are posted. I am proud to have been a part of this process and of the dedicated people who were, and continue to be, part of it.

I would like to thank our CEO, Kathy Brennan, for having the vision to re-establish the Education Committee. No education organization should be without one. I would also like to thank all who labored – *volunteering* their time and energy – to produce quality content we all benefit from. That

includes members of the task force and committee, content developers, presenters, and panelists. It has been a pleasure to work with and develop friendships with Karen and Don Haringa and many others through the process. I would like to thank everyone who attended our offerings.

In July, I accepted the position of Education Development Manager with the PSIA-AASI national office and, as a result, must reduce some of my participation in the Eastern Region. I will continue to participate as a member of the Education Committee and alpine Steering Committee, and as an alpine and children's examiner.

I am very pleased to hand over the reins of the Education Committee to our new Director of Education and Programs, Keri Reid. I've had the pleasure of working with Keri on the education staff. She is an exceptional person and a consummate professional. I look forward to seeing where she leads us.

Lastly, I would like to thank the current members of the Education Committee. They are enthusiastic and tireless volunteers who are dedicated to the betterment of the experience of

all Eastern Region members. They are: Ali Spaulding, Brian McVicker, Chris Dayton, Danielle Needle, Dick Fox, Jay Nation, Mickey Sullivan, Tina Buckley, and Tom Mulligan.

*From Keri Reid:* It is with great pleasure that I step in to chair the Education Committee. I am grateful to Angelo Ross for his leadership, and look forward to continuing to partner with him and the rest of the committee for our bright future. We will certainly benefit from his working knowledge of the committee, the National perspective he has gained, and his tireless commitment to the betterment of our organization.

The Education Committee's recent meetings have clearly illustrated the breadth of knowledge and dedication of its members, and I am honored to help shape the mission and vision of their work. This team has shown itself to be a well-oiled machine. It has produced tangible results, namely course descriptions that I am thrilled to see come to life in our calendar of events this season. They are lively, user friendly, and sure to be of great value to those registering. ❄️

## Generations Helping Generations

By Sherman White

Philanthropy Committee Member,

National Lifetime Member, Alpine Level III

Smugglers Notch, VT

**A**fter reading National Chair Eliza Kuntz's Chair's Message in the Spring issue of *32 Degrees*, I started thinking about the generational aspect of the organization, and as a member of the newly formed PSIA-AASI E Philanthropy Committee, how can my (Baby Boomer) generation help and support younger generations in their quest to become better instructors.

I became a "certified professional ski teacher of the USEASA" at Stowe in March of 1973 and got a white badge and the ability to join PSIA. (This all pre-dated the Eastern Division.) It was a three-day pre-course and two-day exam that cost me \$100, which I was able to pay for out of my earnings as a part-time instructor at Sugarbush (I was still a full time student). I lived with my in-laws in Montpelier for nothing.

Fast forward to 2022, and that certification is now three levels of events and exams that cost way more than I paid. What we get for that certification

is much more valuable than 1973. If my 1973-self went through the exam process now, I could probably still make the skiing standards, but I would be hopelessly lost even at the Level II teaching portions.

So how can experienced generations help our newer members in their quest to become better teachers? One way is supporting the various scholarship endowments in the PSIA-AASI Eastern Region Educational Foundation. Many people do this, and we used to get the benefit of a potential tax deduction for it. This all changed in recent tax law changes, but if you are at least 70.5 years old and are discovering the joys and hassles of taking minimum required distributions (MRDs) from your traditional IRA (and paying taxes on them), there is a way to still have your cake and eat it too: You can make a Qualified Charity Distribution (QCD), directly from your traditional IRA (not a Roth or other retirement fund) to a charity, and have it count as part of your MRD and not pay taxes on it. The key is that the funds must go directly from your IRA to the charity. You can't take a distribution and then write a check. Most IRA sponsors/administrators are set up to do this and will help you through the process. I've done it, and it's simple.

Our snowsports instructor organizations have come a long way since 1973, but to continue that growth and recognition, we all need to help set the next generation up for success. ❄️

## Park-Riding in the Face of Fear

By Steven Franklin

AASI-E Examiner, Freestyle Specialist 2  
Green Mountain Academy

**F**ear may be the path to the Dark Side, but the FEAR model is the path to the terrain park. Even Yoda would agree, there are inherent risks associated with riding the terrain park. Have you ever done anything completely safe with a helmet on? Fear is the brain's natural response to risk; it is a self-preservation tactic to avoid both physical and emotional harm. So how do we help our students overcome fear and enjoy the thrill of the terrain park?

The PSIA-AASI Freestyle Technical Manual outlines a practical way to help your students move beyond their fears: the **FEAR model**. In this model, students **identify**, **acknowledge**, **manage**, and eventually **create a new associated emotion**.

**Identify.** We can identify our students' fears through keen observation and an open line of communication. Plenty of things may make students anxious: fear of injury, failure, and/or embarrassment, for example. Frequently check with students and ask how comfortable or confident they feel throughout the session.

Some students may not be comfortable articulating their fears. Is one of your students always dropping last? Are they keeping a little extra space from the rest of the group? Or maybe they are staring wide eyed at a feature, motionless? Be on the lookout for nonverbal signs that your students may be afraid.

**Acknowledge.** Acknowledging what makes us scared is critical in moving past that emotion. By validating your students' fear, they will know that emotion is a normal and natural response. Of course one might be nervous about falling, or getting hurt, or looking silly. In fact, those are all appropriate reactions to facing the challenges of freestyle skiing and riding.

When having these conversations with your students, keep in mind these emotions can be very personal, so it is paramount to show the utmost respect and compassion. All fears are valid, no matter how seemingly trivial or grandiose. Validating students' emotions is a great way to support them.

**Manage.** In order to help your students manage their fear, it is important for you to understand what they are afraid of. Figure out which ATML phase of the trick they feel least confident about. Do they feel good about the maneuver but not the landing? Get even more specific. Are they afraid of catching their edge or not being able to absorb the impact upon landing? This information will help you key into the specific needs of your student.

There are several ways to help manage fear, progression: repetition, understanding, and risk reduction are some of the most crucial. Create a step-by-step progression focused on students' specific needs. Allow them ample

time to practice and build confidence. Through explanation and reflection, help students better understand how to achieve their desired outcome.

One of the most important things you can do to help build confidence is to remove some risks. Try a smaller feature. Come back to the park when it's less crowded. Start with a trick they feel confident with. Fears may not go away, but they can be managed.

**Create A New Associated Emotion.** Yes, freestyle can be scary, but it can also be so much fun. The thrill of flying through air, adrenaline coursing through you, the feeling of accomplishment when landing a new trick, or the camaraderie of all your friends stoked on you landing a new trick, are just some of the things that get people so amped about the terrain park. But how do you get your students there despite their fears?

You can help your students re-associate the terrain park with positive emotions through encouragement, positive reinforcement, and by modeling those emotions. Find success in every try no matter how small. Although the steps may seem incremental, confidence will build. Get excited for them! They may not be stoked on their last attempt but you should be. Facing your fears despite the outcome is always worthy of praise and excitement. This sets the tone for your group and shows them how to support each other. This step is crucial, it tells your brain it's okay to have fun and not be afraid.

Naturally freestyle skiing and riding can be a frightening prospect, but it doesn't have to be. Using the FEAR model, you can help your students better manage their fear so they can enjoy the terrain park to the fullest. But this doesn't end with your students. You can use this method in your personal skiing and riding to manage your own fears. **Identify** the source of your anxiety; **acknowledge** and validate your fears; **manage** your emotions by building your confidence step by step; and **create a new associated emotion** by celebrating your wins, small or big. Yoda – and all Jedis – know: fear needs not lead to anger with the use of the FEAR model. <<



## Multi-Discipline Magic

By Greg Fatigate

AASI-E Examiner, ACE Team Member, AASI-E Steering

Committee Chair

Smugglers' Notch Resort

I've been fortunate to be involved in numerous multi-discipline events. These have been in the form of social runs in the woods, park sessions, specialist events, staff training, and general locker room interactions with peers. The multi-discipline dynamic offers super and unique learning opportunities that are not always apparent in a single-discipline clinic.

At my home mountain, I often see multi-discipline clinics in the form of "end of shift" social runs or preseason refresher training. In the Eastern Region, I see them at many of the Freestyle or Children's Specialist tracks. This article highlights opportunities and identifies practices to avoid in a multi-discipline clinic within the realms of group management, technical content, and safety practices.

### Group Management

*Practices to avoid.* All disciplines enjoy discussions about snowsports! The question is where to hold that talk. I've heard from both ends here. Snowboarders and mono-skiers say, "Alpiners just stand on the side of the trail and talk." Alpine and telemark skiers say, "The snowboard groups just go downhill; I never see them talking on trailsides." Herein lies one of the most important practices to be aware of – where to gather and group up. Why is it more common to see those on skis standing on the trail? *It's because they can*, where trying to stand on a snowboard or balance in a mono ski either takes incredible (and tiresome) balance, repeated strapping in and out, or – worse – having to sit down in the snow. Where do snowboarders and mono-skiers tend to talk tech? In liftlines, on chairlifts, top of the run, or a limited number of stops on the trailside.

*Opportunity for multi-discipline.* Consider the comfort of the group and minimize stopping locations to be at the unloading area of the lift, the reloading area of the lift, and one other spot that shares universal characteristics for all disciplines. Look for areas that are somewhat flat, but with enough pitch for a snowboarder or mono-skier to get going. Avoid steep exposed areas; these are difficult for mono skiers and snowboarders to stay upright. If such a stopping point isn't available, keep going. It's rare that clinic participants will complain that they didn't gather up more, and balance on the side of a trail often enough. Groups will find that the pace picks up, information is simplified, and everyone is engaged. If on-hill check-ins or conversations are a necessary part of the whole group activity, have a prearranged meeting spot and time that works for all so small groups can pace at their leisure

### Content

*Practices to avoid.* Referring to your discipline's specific fundamentals in the absence of reference to the others. Within all disciplines, some have four technical fundamentals while others have five, or six. Try referring to them simply as "Technical fundamentals" unless the content develops into a place where becoming discipline-specific is needed.

*Opportunity for multi-discipline.* First, start with what's similar in the technical fundamentals. Here's a dirty secret: they are all pretty much the same. Pressure along three planes, controlling edge angles, and controlling pivot/steering. What's different is how to get the equipment to do that. So stay away from that. Second, focus on the universal:

1. Turn shape (Open or closed)
2. Turn size (small, medium, large)
3. Carved or skidded
4. Speed

Maintaining focus on any one, or a combination of these four will allow the session to move into the realm of tactics. Every discipline has this in common. Multi-discipline park sessions, bump runs, or laps in the trees almost always (in my experience) come back to a focus on universal tactics.

### Safety

*Practices to avoid.* This is the most common challenge in the multi-discipline realm. Snowboarders tend to move across the fall line where alpine skiers tend to move down the fall line. Telemark skiers often fall somewhere in the middle, and mono skiers' lines will vary based on the skill level of the skier. Add to it that the snowboarder has the "blind spot" on the heel edge, and alpine skiers commonly keep their gaze in a fall line descent. Combine all these factors, and we have collision potential. And herein lies the opportunity.

*Opportunity for multi-discipline.* I love following behind my alpine friends. Why? Their lines are different than the general snowboard line. When the tables turn, I hear the same thing from my alpine friends. Telemark skiers always have creative lines in the woods to follow! Follow-the-leader type activities greatly reduce the collision hazard and often open each other's awareness to the habits of the other discipline. Where follow-the-leader is not an option, try allowing a discipline crew in your group to all go first with a focus for the other disciplines to observe or copy.

None of this is to say that during a multi-discipline session there will be no tech talk, or that only tactics are discussed, and only follow the leader. In fact, when these sessions go best, most of those three things happen in a spirited fashion. What's important is an awareness of the common practices each discipline engages in when it's just that discipline. This is what I hope you will experience at your next specialist event or multi-discipline clinic, whether that be at a PSIA-AASI event or at your home mountain. <<



## kids, kids, kids

### Make, Take, Find: My Pockets Are Full

By Tim Shannon

ACE Team Member

AASI-E Dev Team Member, Freestyle Specialist 1

Do you consider yourself a creative instructor? Have you ever considered what “type” of creative you are? Dr. Roger von Oech, a creative theorist, believes there are four roles of creativity. At the upcoming Children’s Academy, we will be hosting a session called “My Pockets Are Full” where we will be connecting roles in von Oech’s theories through a process of making, taking, and finding to release the creativity inside!

Von Oech’s creative roles include the Explorer, the Artist, the Judge, and the Warrior. The Explorer’s role is to collect materials for creativity. They ask questions, and process as many ideas and inputs as possible. The Artist takes raw materials and combines them in new and interesting ways. They are playful, and imaginative. They build without judgment regarding the quality of the outcome. The Judge takes the artist’s ideas and determines if they are practical and reasonable. They think critically about what can be done, and how the tools can be used to meet the outcome. And the Warrior takes an idea the Judge has determined worthy and follows it to execution.

In “My Pockets Are Full,” we will explore tools and tactics to harness our creative teaching abilities. No more will instructors, towards the end of a lesson, far from the terrain they wish they could use, or the visual aids that could be helpful, pat their parkas only to find empty pockets. We’ll be Makers, Takers, and Finders, and everyone leaves with “Pockets Full.”

You may wonder, what’s a Maker? Makers are the Artists, the ones who take a pool of resources and create fun tools to use. They could be creating

hose snakes, pom-pom darts, or whatever their mind comes up with. In this session, you’ll explore your inner maker and use the resources provided to create something to use on-hill.

Or maybe you’re a Taker. A Taker is the Judge who evaluates the tools created by the Artists and selects those that best fit your abilities. You could be pulling brush gates from a bag or borrowing pom-pom darts from your instructor lunch table. You’ll explore tried and true methods and explore the effectiveness of newly created devices to see how they shape up for use on-hill.

What about the Finder? The finders are the Explorers, they are seeking terrain and tools within their working environment. They might be pulling sticks from the woods, finding bank turns and rollers, or bringing thoughts and questions on how you could execute on a new idea!

Finally, don’t forget about the Warriors. The Warriors are the unsung heroes of ski and snowboard schools. They’re the ones up before dawn setting gates and courses, raking boxes and rails, and grooming shapes and features for all to use. They’re our managers, trainers, and other leaders who ensure that the team is all together, harnessing the strengths of all four roles, and ensuring the Makers, Takers, and Finders are able to work together to be successful. They’re YOU! The ones who take the initiative to ensure you’re prepared for your students, trying your best, and being as creative as possible.

Dr. Roger von Oech’s research indicates that harnessing all four creative roles within a team helps ensure creativity and inventiveness and yields better results and more creative outcomes. To be a part of a creative team, you only need to be a part of one of the roles. During the “My Pockets Are Full,” you’ll explore ways to Make, Take, and Find creative teaching solutions that will enhance your skills and demonstrate how you can support your team. By harnessing the Power of von Oech’s theory as a team, we will leave with our “pockets full” of ideas and items to use with our students this season, and seasons to come. Join us at the Children’s Academy happening concurrently with Snowsports Management Seminar, Monday-Wednesday, November 27-29, 2023. ☞



Ericson Hopkins  
2 years  
McIntyre Ski Area

Share your child’s or grandchild’s first day on snow, submit their image:

<https://fs9.formsite.com/PSIA-AASI-E/FuturePro/index>

## CALLING ALL FUTURE PROS

The *SnowPro* publication is featuring pictures of our Future Snow Pros.

What did their first day sliding on snow look like?

Share their adventure!

Thank you to everyone who submitted pictures, we love seeing your future snowsports enthusiasts enjoying their first day. We don’t always have space for all submissions received, but we retain them for possible use in future issues.



Finnian Bellamy  
2 years  
Waterville Valley



Nicolás Fraile Betten  
10 months  
At home



Oliver Buser  
16 months  
Liberty



Victoria Dugas  
1.5 years  
Whitetail



Ray Gilmore IV  
2.5 years  
Cranmore &  
Black Mountain

## Speaking Their Language

By Kerri Petrillose

ACE Team Member, Snowboard Level III  
Mount Snow, VT

**S**peaking your student's language is a crucial element to lesson success. I don't mean English, Spanish, etc. but rather the unique combination of analogies, metaphors, and – simply – vocabulary that connect to your student at an elementary level. When we look at the world of snowsports instruction there is one language but there are innumerable “dialects” that leave the potential for things to be lost in translation. As happens in many technical occupations, snow pros often use an “instructor speak” dialect – that is, technical terminology that may not be a great fit for some students. The same goes for teaching children versus adults: some word choices and phrases don't hit right for either demographic. In the world of instruction, dialects are dictated by the student profile rather than geography.

You can use the Student profile as a decoder ring to help drill down into the specifics of your student's dialect. Student background, personal characteristics, and past experiences can bring us strong insights into what dialect they speak – especially when it comes to kids. You won't want to use paintbrush analogies with a dinosaur-loving kid!

Now that you have the decoder ring how do you use it? The answer is easy: just ask questions. Below are some basic questions you can ask to begin extracting the details that will help you decode:

*Background and personal characteristics.* “Tell me about yourself.” “What do you like to do in your free time?” “What TV shows do you watch?” “What's a passion of yours?”

*Past Experiences.* “What have you skied/ridden before?” “What other physical activities do you do?” “What is your favorite subject?” “What do you do for work?” “What has worked for you in the past?” “What do you like about the sport?”

Your students have the answers; you just need to decipher them. For example, in answer to the above questions you might find your student is a 10-year-old fourth grader who loves Pokemon, retro toys, and comic books. In this case, have fun with the dialect, diving into toys and epic battles on “catch ‘em all” journeys or in run-long searches to find the much-needed live-giving Energon.

Your questions about past experiences may reveal that the student is a blue skier who hates lines but loves trees, doesn't play organized sports, and prefers autonomy while on the snow. Think about the use of trial and error to keep the student engaged. Also, leave sports analogies out of your language choices when communicating with this student

Also, understanding a student's prominent Multiple Intelligence(s) is a great way to drill down to the specifics of your student's dialect. To identify your student's prominent Multiple Intelligence(s), again ask questions – the same ones you use for the student profile will work here too. Then it is about deciphering those answers to help you build a framework for their dialect. Jobs, favorite subjects, sports, and pastimes can regularly be binned into a Multiple Intelligence.

For example, a musician most likely has a dominant musical Intelligence, and would “speak” a dialect riddled with rhythm, counts, and parts of a whole. While an engineer who is likely “picture smart” and “number smart”, has an innate understanding of numbers and the mechanics of things would “speak” a more analytical and technical dialect where everything needs to make sense and be definable.

When looking at Multiple Intelligences you need to think of the core elements for each of the intelligences to determine how to “speak” that dialect. What makes up “picture smart”, “number smart”, and “body smart”? At their core you will find the framework for determining the dialect, and the student profile adds the extra bits that make you sound like a native speaker to your student.

If we combine above student profile example with a Multiple Intelligence of “logic smart” and “picture smart”, we will have further nailed down the dialect. To connect with this student, providing clear guidelines, mental images, and problems to solve will be key and the next element is to link that framework of communication to the student's Interests and Past Experiences. See the chart on pages 129-130 of *Teaching Children Snowsports* that will help in translating Instructor speech to a dialect that your student will understand. In this example, we could develop our student's technical skills visualizing how different Lego pieces go together and the shapes they make to understand sequencing. We could then shift gears and act like different Pokémon in a battle even pretending to use the mimic attack to help the student copy the demonstrated body positions.

Knowing a little bit about the student's interests can get you far when speaking their dialect but if you don't know enough ask the student clarifying questions. For example, you may ask a dancer if there is a certain position or move that they do that flexes the ankle and lifts the heel or toe (for snowboarding) or ask an artist to visualize how they paint a crisp line and relate that to edging. The examples are endless and so are our students' dialects. Learning to speak the right language to connect with your student helps build trust and can only happen effectively with two-way communication. ◀



**Scarlett Knight**  
4 years  
Waterville Valley



**Finn Legare**  
3 years  
Ski Bradford



**Frankie May**  
2.5 years  
Mad River Mtn,  
Ohio



**Hudson Positano**  
1.5 years  
Mount Southington



**Ryker Quickel**  
3 years  
Roundtop



**Parker Szalach**  
2 years  
Snow Ridge

## What's New in Kids' World

By Bonnie Kolber

AASI-E Examiner and ACE Team Coach,  
Eastern Team Member

**A**s I write this, we are having a rare day of sunshine and cool fall weather. The leaves are just starting to turn here in northern Vermont, and while the idea of snow still seems far away, after living in what felt like a rain forest this summer, I'm ready for all that precipitation to turn into big fat fluffy snowflakes!

*Children's Events.* I'm getting excited for winter, not only for the fun it brings to all of us, but also because the Advanced Children's Educators (ACE) Team has put a ton of work into building more educational events for children's Instructors. There will be a number of offerings that parallel snowboard, alpine, and telemark events, with a creative and fun perspective that references children's development and communication. Look for children's events in the bumps, in the park, in the trees. Or if you want to dive deeper into children's movement analysis or teaching, there will be opportunities to do that in specialty events or even a Children's Specialist (CS) Prep if you are considering going for your CS1 or CS2.

*Member Customized Events with Kids Focus.* Not seeing the events you are hoping for? If you have at least six people, you can create a Member Customized Event at a host resort and bring an ACE in to train with your squad for the day! To request a Member Customized Event, contact your Snowsports School Director with details about the event you would like to schedule. Once your director has approved, send an email to the education department at [MCE@psia-e.org](mailto:MCE@psia-e.org) with the name of the person coordinating the clinic, resort location, preferred dates, topic to be covered, and number of participants.

*ACE Dev Team Selection.* PSIA-AASI-E will hold an ACE Development Team selection on Monday and Tuesday, March 18-19 at Sugarbush, VT. Have you ever been told "You're great with kids"? Members of the ACE Dev Team are not only great with kids, they are great at teaching pros how to be

great with kids. They are versed in children's developmental theories and applications, teaching and learning styles, and techniques to make connections with kids while meeting both their goals and parents' goals.

The ACE Team is a part of the education staff and is made up of creative, knowledgeable, and experienced snowsports educators who run children's focused events and assessments for our membership. To try out for the ACE Team you must be alpine, snowboard, or telemark Level III certified and have attained your Children Specialist (CS) 2. Knowledge of other disciplines is beneficial, as teaching children snowsports applies universal concepts across different equipment on snow. While there is no skiing or riding standard beyond Level 3, and no children's accreditation beyond CS2, the ACE Team is a place for those genuine Children's Specialists who can ski/ride and clinic at an education staff level.

If this sounds like you, please join us at Sugarbush on March 18-19, 2024, and show us what you can do! Stay tuned for registration and application details coming soon on [easternsnowpros.org](http://easternsnowpros.org).

*Children's Academy.* The best news yet – Children's Academy is back! Children's Academy will offer many opportunities to develop more creativity while crafting engaging, playful, exploratory kids' lessons. Participants will slide away with a deeper understanding of how to address the challenges which can arise in teaching children. This event is going to be an absolute blast and an educational boost for any instructor. In case you missed it, not to worry! In addition to the variety of events on the calendar, we will also be having a Spring Rally for Children's Instructors at Sugarbush in April – another great opportunity to spend a couple of days with like-minded skiers and riders to share experiences and fill your pockets with new ideas.

All of the Children's Instructor events are multi-discipline, with the potential of alpine, snowboard, and telemark participants in the same group. It's a unique and really cool chance to see how our equipment performance is similar or different, how we view the mountain and choose lines, and how much we can learn from each other.

I hope to see you out there at one event or another and let the snow fly! ⚡

## Donations are easy through your member portal!

To give online, go to your member portal at  
[members.thesnowpros.org](http://members.thesnowpros.org), and it's as easy as 1-2-3!

To make a donation, click on **Make a Gift** at the top right of the screen.



You will have the option of including a specific note for your gift,  
select the fund, and select any amount.

You can donate using your credit/debit card.



# we got next!

## NextCore News

**NextCore is a dedicated group of young members age 14-39 who 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.**

### NextCore Update

By Matthew Lyerly

NextCore Coordinator, Alpine Level II, CS1, FS1  
Massanutten Resort, VA

For the past two snow seasons, the NextCore Steering Committee has been proud to offer our Next Steps Mentorship program. In the program, we paired younger members of the Eastern Region one-on-one with members of the education staff for coaching and collaboration. The main goal of the program was to give younger members access to those who have been there and done that, and who could offer advice for career advancement. In addition, mentees had somebody to connect with and relate to as they began to find their places as snow sports instructors.

In addition to coaching and guidance, mentorship is also a pathway to develop community in the organization. Previous surveys of the NextCore demographic (14-39 years old) showed that community was one of the top qualities the age group was interested in. Several mentors agreed with that sentiment. "The Next Steps Mentorship Program gives people an opportunity to get some one-on-one personal input and coaching. I also believe it helps with a sense of belonging to PSIA-AASI," says Brian Dolin, alpine examiner from Windham, NY.

In the 2022-2023 season, our second season hosting the program, we used a similar format but considered geography as part of the equation. Rather than trying to mix and match across regions, we hypothesized that pairing mentees and mentors in close proximity would lead to more in-person meetups on snow and a higher likelihood of staying in touch after the program. What did the results tell us? Survey says: "Correct!" All survey participants who were able to meet on snow planned to stay in contact after the program ended. Summarizing his experience this past season, mentor Luke Martin, alpine examiner from Pats Peak, NH, says, "We got together to ski one day. It was great and all mentors should get together and ski with their mentees more."

Mentees have generally come to the program with goals for higher certification, specialist credentials, or both. Finbarr O'Connor of Big Boulder, PA had exam preparation as his main goal. He was successful in the teaching assessment of his Level III. "The NextCore Mentorship program provided me with another voice to bounce my ideas off of through the season in preparation for my exam," Finbarr says.

"This program is great, especially for individuals looking to progress their certification. My mentor was encouraging and supportive during my Level III journey," adds mentee Brian Collins of Whitetail, PA.

This is a program that we have been proud to offer as it has benefits for all who enjoy sliding on snow. "The mentorship program provides tremendous value to the organization, especially in the southern states of the region," says mentor and alpine Development Team member Drew Miller of Snowshoe, WV. "It promotes more frequent inter-resort

communication, knowledge sharing, travel, and relationship building to name a few, all beyond normal events. It provides an opportunity for presence of education staff to the mentees and indirectly to other members throughout the season when perhaps without the program, exposure to education staff is limited to two days every year or every two years. This increased knowledge sharing helps everyone (members, our guests, schools and the organization) succeed."

In Year Three of the program, we are on the lookout for veteran members who are enthusiastic about sharing their knowledge and expertise. Besides being education staff members, the only other requirement is a commitment not to "ghost" your mentee! We still have some work to do to ensure all participants are eager to contribute and are accountable. We continue to refine the pairing process and seek out the best outcomes for mentors and for mentees.

Year Three will offer a similar program with one-on-one collaboration between mentors and mentees. We are excited to provide some enhancements to the upcoming program. Stay tuned!

Have a question about NextCore or want to participate on our steering committee? Drop me an email at [mwlyerly@gmail.com](mailto:mwlyerly@gmail.com). <<

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# absolutely asi

## AASI Update

By Brian Donovan

AASI-E Coordinator and Examiner

PSIA-AASI National Team

Leaves are changing colors, local shops are hosting ski and snowboard swap sales, and the first Rocky Mountain resorts are waking up to dustings of snow. Yep, that sounds like fall to me. Here's some AASI-East content to make sure you're prepared for the approaching winter season.

**Pro Offers.** Make sure to take advantage of this awesome member benefit and score yourself some discounted gear! Here are two places to access exclusive discounts and deals:

- PSIA-AASI National Pro Offers website:  
[members.thesnowpros.org/products/pro-offers](https://members.thesnowpros.org/products/pro-offers)
- PSIA-AASI Eastern offers website:  
[easternsnowpros.org/membership/current-members/member-deals/](https://easternsnowpros.org/membership/current-members/member-deals/)

Rules to follow with your Pro Offers:

- Don't share your Pro Offer discounts with friends or family unless that company's rules specifically state that you are allowed to do so. Ignoring this rule is the easiest way for a company to lock you out and for you to lose your discounts.
- If you go to a store to try on sizes or check out colors, don't leave the store a mess. Clean up after yourself and don't make extra work for the employees. And don't brag to the employees about how you're going to use your Pro Offer to get the gear at a discount. Don't be "that guy" or "that girl."

**Plan Your Events.** Check out the AASI Event Schedule and plan which event(s) you're going to attend this winter. The most up-to-date Event Schedule can be easily accessed at [easternsnowpros.org/calendar](https://easternsnowpros.org/calendar). Jump in and use the filter to see the events you want to sign up for and attend this winter. To make your search as easy as possible, here are some events to keep on your radar:

- Level II Assessments
  - Mount Snow, VT, January 22-24
  - Blue Mountain, PA, February 7-9
  - Snowshoe, WV, February 14-16
  - Holiday Valley, NY, February 28-March 1 (It's a Leap Year, y'all!)
  - Stowe, VT, March 13 – 15
- Level III Assessments
  - Killington, VT, January 31 – February 2
  - Stowe, VT, March 13 – 15
- Assessment Preps and Assessment Mega-weeks. Again this season we'll be offering Assessment Prep events and Assessment Mega-weeks that combine a two-day Level II or Level III Assessment Prep event scheduled the two days prior to the Assessment at the same

location. If you want to practice teaching and riding at the same resort with similar conditions and then take that momentum right into your Assessment, Mega-weeks are for you. Note: five straight days of riding can leave you exhausted. If you're combining the Prep and the Assessment, let your clinician know on Days 1 and 2 so that they can help with stamina and pacing for the week.

- AASI Halfpipe Camp at Okemo, VT, March 4-5. Open to all ability levels. Whether you've never been in a halfpipe before or you consider yourself a stunt ditch veteran, this event is one of the most fun events each season. Okemo has a dedicated T-Bar lift that accesses their halfpipe, and you'll be able to maximize your laps with dedicated practice and coaching.
- Trees and Steeps Camp at Jay Peak, VT, March 4-5. Our annual pilgrimage to Jay Peak in search of endless tree runs and powder stashes. We form groups of all abilities and experience levels, so no rider is left behind! Whether it's your first-time exploring tree terrain (Mild Salsa) or you're one with the woods and looking to charge the hardest and steepest terrain (Hot Salsa), this event caters to you and will have a group that aligns with your experience level. Grab some friends and make an adventure to Jay Peak this season!
- 5-Day Level I College at Killington, VT, December 11-15 and at Hunter Mountain, NY, January 8-12. These immersive Level I Colleges are aimed at instructors with limited teaching experience that want to go all-in towards training for their Level I Assessment. You'll spend three days in a clinic setting working with an AASI examiner on building your knowledge and skills, and the week will finish with a two-day Level I Assessment.
- Member Customized Events. Don't forget that if you don't see an event on the AASI Event Schedule that matches your schedule, you can create a Member Customized Event (MCE). Think of this as being able to order off a secret menu at your favorite restaurant. You can order any event that is listed on the Event Schedule except for Level 2 Assessments and Level 3 Assessments. You organize a group of instructors and you let us know how we can help fit your schedule with the event that you want. Here's the lowdown:
  - MCEs are typically scheduled at your home resort.
  - MCEs are two-day events.
  - You choose the topic. Need an Assessment Prep? Want a Movement Analysis or Teaching clinic? Want a freestyle event? Looking for a 2-day personal riding update clinic? Want to ride moguls, trees, or every trail at your mountain? The choice is yours.
  - Everyone that attends will get their 12 continuing education credits (CEUs) just like attending any other 2-day event.
  - You need to get approval from your Ski/Snowboard School Director before applying for an MCE. This is because they will need to work with the Eastern Region office to approve and coordinate lift tickets.

## snowsports school management

### Gearing Up for Another Season

By Gail Setlock

*Snowsports Management Committee Chair  
PSIA-E Examiner*

It's that time of year, once again. Leaves have started to change color here in the Northeast, and ski areas are buzzing with preparations for the 2023-2024 season.

Starting off the winter season for PSIA-AASI Eastern Region events is the annual Snowsports Management Seminar (SMS) for snowsports school directors, managers, and supervisors to gather together and attend an exciting event.

Kicking off the event this year will be our keynote speaker National Team member Ann Schorling, who will share her research and thoughts on "Increasing Gender Equity in Snowsports Instruction." Ann spoke to this topic at this past spring's Interski, held in Finland, where she received rave reviews for her presentation.

This year's event will be held at Mt Snow with a variety of indoor and outdoor sessions, as well as the banquet dinner and sponsor showcase.

The Snowsports Management Seminar is a great opportunity to meet with fellow directors, managers, and supervisors while attending indoor and/or outdoor sessions, all related to snowsports school management and snowsports instruction.

Some of this year's session topics will include risk management, understanding the Learning Connection Model, leadership training for new and seasoned directors/managers/supervisors, integrating adaptive students in group lessons, movement assessment, and more.

We hope directors, managers, and supervisors will join us for another fun kick-off to the start of Winter 2023-2024. ⚡



- Ready to book one? Have your Ski/Snowboard School Director email [MCE@psia-e.org](mailto:MCE@psia-e.org) with details of the event that you are requesting. Make sure to include your preferred dates, the topic, if you have a request for a specific examiner (we can't guarantee this, but we'll try), and the anticipated number of participants (max of 8-10). Get your crew together and order an event a-la-carte this season!
- Did you know that we have brand new Assessment Guides to help members train toward Level I, Level II, or Level III Assessments in the Eastern Region? Our snowboard examiners worked on creating updated Assessment Guides to help lay out the Assessment experience and what you should do to prepare for your certification pathway. Make sure to check them out!
  - Level I Assessment Guide: [easternsnowpros.org/download/ed/snowboard-ed/AASIAssessmentGuideI.pdf](http://easternsnowpros.org/download/ed/snowboard-ed/AASIAssessmentGuideI.pdf)
  - Level II/III Assessment Guide: [easternsnowpros.org/download/ed/snowboard-ed/AASIAssessmentGuideII-III.pdf](http://easternsnowpros.org/download/ed/snowboard-ed/AASIAssessmentGuideII-III.pdf)
- Attention resort trainers! Did you know?!? If you are a trainer at your home mountain, you can shadow a member of the AASI-E education staff running one event per season. Have your Ski/Snowboard School Director contact Melissa Skinner in the PSIA-AASI Eastern Region Office to inquire about opportunities to shadow an event and become a better trainer for your staff. Shadow opportunities are:
  - Limited to Level I Exams, Exam Prep events, and Exam pre-requisite events.
  - Available if a member of the AASI-E Ed Staff is not already understudying the event.
  - Available if the event is equal to or below your own certification level.
  - All shadow opportunities must be approved by the Eastern office. Members are not permitted to shadow Level II and Level III Exams.
  - Shadowing an event does not count for education credits; think of it as an unpaid internship where additional knowledge and snowboarding are your rewards.

I can't wait to see you this winter! Thank you for being part of this community! Thank you for spending your time teaching people how to snowboard! Thank you for all the lives you're going to change and for all the people that you're going to share your passion with! As you spend time with your students this winter, teach them more than just how to go left and right. Teach them about the snowboard industry, the snowboard community, and what you love about snowboarding! Thank you for being the reason why thousands of new snowboarders will fall in love with our sport! ⚡

# xx-ploring

## Nordic Preview 2023-24

By Mickey Stone

Nordic Coordinator

PSIA-E Nordic Examiner and ACE Team Member

**W**hat a summer! The La Nina wave hit the upper northeast hard with rain, wind, and hurricanes. In Maine, 87 out of 98 days from June to September were rain days. We accumulated 8 inches of precipitation above our average rainfall, accumulating 46 inches compared to the yearly average of 38-40. Two things for sure, our vehicles are very clean and the aquifers, snowmaking ponds, and wells are full and ready to go for the start of snowmaking season. In the next couple of months, the forecasters say we will change into an El Niño (Little Boy) season, which for the Northeast could bring less precipitation than we had in the summer. Forecasters are unsure because they do not have any real data of this type of occurrence since it is just happening these past couple of years. Most assuredly we are all ready to go no matter what.

### Early Season Cross Country Events

- Instructor Training Course, December 12-14, Bretton Woods NH (A review of classical and skating from beginner to expert, teaching, people skills and utilizing our Cross country Performance Model will be the crux of this three-day event.)
- Cross Country Update, December 16-17, Lapland Lakes, NY.
- Early Season Primer, December 16-17, Trapp Family Ski Lodge, VT.



Camel's Hump, 4023 feet, peeks out of the clouds.

We are trying to have offerings in each major geographic region near the same time to allow for less driving and expenses for the organization and to enable our members to remain in their own backyards to start off the season.

### Early Season Backcountry Events:

- Backcountry Series. This will be the 20th year of this successful series, with Bruce Hennessey now leading the series. These courses are for all disciplines, and we strongly encourage doing the online course first.
    - Snow Sense and Planning (live online webinars), November 2, 7, 14, 16 and 21 from 7PM to 8PM.
    - Collecting Data (on-snow), Maple Wind Farm, VT, February 3-4.
    - Putting It All Together (on-snow) Maple Wind Farm, VT, March 9-10.
    - Early Season Primer, Sunday River, ME, December 6-7.
- Avoid the crowds!

### Early Season Telemark Events

- Telemark Mini Academy at Killington VT, December 9-10.
- Telemark Pro Jam, Killington, VT December 11-15. You can attain Level I here too.
- Early Season Primer, Seven Springs PA, December 16-17. (A note: thanks to staff members Kurt Byrnes, Jay Nation, among others at Seven Springs, and the efforts of the Appalachian Telemark Organization started by Jim Kapp, Seven Springs has become a hotbed for beginner to advanced telemark skiing. So, like Cross Country, we are trying to have a lot of offerings early in the year.)

### Education Staff News

Our telemark and cross country education staffs holds training in early January 2024. Both groups will again be working with our Assessment Forms and reviewing Assessment logistics and activities so that we can set up a comfortable learning environment capitalizing on our people skills segment. Our goal as a team is to bring all up to speed with our unification updates, which will bring all PSIA regions into alignment by 2026. Hal Westwood and Mike Innes have spearheaded this effort in cross country, while Keith Rodney and Mickey Stone spearhead the telemark unification side.

### Education Staff Retirements



Dale Rodgers

Dale Rodgers, who has been teaching since the late 1970s as an EPSTI (Eastern Professional Ski Touring Instructor) which predated PSIA-E Nordic. Dale's life has traveled him all over the world to ski, race and coach. He worked at two Olympics (Salt Lake City and Vancouver). He became a PSIA-E examiner in 1981 and worked at Trapp Family Lodge, VT and was the longtime cross country director at Smugglers Notch, VT. A former Olympian in pentathlon, one of his sons was a US Ski Team member and the other raced at the collegiate level. Dale was a mentor to me and made an immense impact on my career. He knew everyone in the cross country ski business and now retires to spend time with his wife Peggy on their horse farm in Vermont.



Randy French

Also retiring is Randy French, Nordic examiner since 1989. Leader of our cross country education staff, he spearheaded training, event topics, and making adjustments in processes as we work toward national unification. Randy started cross country skiing in the days of wooden skis, pine tar and three pin bindings. He was one of the top junior college racers in 1979; he skied 250 miles across Yellowstone National Park in two weeks, building igloos for shelter in 1983; he established an adventure travel business, he raced for over 20 years in New York's Empire Games, and he competed in the American Birkebeiner in 2023 and 1987. In retirement Randy intends to spend time with his wife Deb and grown children... and to race in the Gatineau 50K.

And one more retirement: we thank John Biff Russell for his many years of creative dedicated time spent all around the world teaching and sharing telemark.

Meanwhile, congratulations to Kurt Byrnes of Seven Springs PA for his elevation to examiner. We look forward to having his talents on our education staff for many years to come. Congratulations! ⚡



John Biff Russell



Kurt Byrnes

## national report

### National Board Report

By Eric Jordan

PSIA-E Examiner

National Board Representative

I hope everyone had a great summer and fall. Winter is right around the corner, and it will not be long until we are skiing and riding again!

The Lakewood office has been extremely busy during the off-season. We have been working closely with the Regions across the country in order to deliver the best education content and member services possible. I am confident that all the pieces are in place for us to have the best season yet.

The vision of our organization is to provide lifelong adventures through education. We are working extremely hard to make our educational content and processes more focused and relevant to the skills and attributes that make a great instructor/coach. The Learning Connection model of teaching, people and technical skills is the result. I encourage you to get out on the hill this year and participate in an on-snow clinic in order to experience firsthand the inspirational educational content being delivered.

As a National Board, we have been very strategically focused and have rewritten our “ends.” These ends, or long-term goals, are how we measure the performance of our CEO and the ultimate success of the organization. It has been a few years since we modified the ends and now seemed like the perfect time to do so since we recently on boarded our new CEO, Peggy Hiller. These new ends are very member-centric and will provide the framework that sets up our organization for long-term success.

You can review the rewritten ends (and all of the entire PSIA-AASI Board of Directors’ Governing Policies Manual) at this link: [thesnowpros.org/who-we-are/how-we-operate/](https://thesnowpros.org/who-we-are/how-we-operate/).

If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to me via email at [enj5050@yahoo.com](mailto:enj5050@yahoo.com). I would welcome the opportunity to chat with you. Best wishes for a great winter and I hope to see you on the hill soon ☺!

## Eastern Board of Directors Report

### Membership Communication Committee Update

By Shannon Rucker

Membership Communication Committee Chair

“No, I can’t help but to hear an exchanging of words.”

This lyric by pop band Panic! At the Disco from their song “I Write Sins Not Tragedies” may get you thinking about communication: conversation, an exchange of ideas, and imparting information. Communication covers a broad spectrum. When done well, it helps relationships and fosters growth. When done poorly, it hinders relationships and growth and leads to frustration, alienation, and error. It comes in many forms, and, as snowsports instructors, we know it is important (so important it’s in our assessment criteria for people skills). This is why we wanted to share with you the actions the Membership Communication Committee (MCC) has taken this season to ensure we regularly communicate with you – our members.

The MCC thoughtfully and strategically identified target groups to focus our efforts. There was much discussion to ensure we were strategic in our efforts while also being realistic about financial and logistical constraints. We started with the end in mind by defining what messaging and information we were trying to receive and relay and for what purposes and benefits.

Over the 2022-2023 season, the MCC attended several premier events: the Area Reps Meeting during Pro Jam at Killington, VT, the Area Reps Meeting during Snowsports Management Seminar at Mount Snow, VT, the Annual Membership Meeting at Pro Jam, the membership meeting held during the southern Eastern Trainer’s Academy in Wintergreen, VA, snowboard staff training, and larger multi-discipline events. At press time, we are lining up a Board education session at our October meeting featuring members from the adaptive and snowboard disciplines. Most Board members are also members of our social media Facebook groups and some contribute to the *SnowPro*. As winter gears up, we’re hoping to have at least one member attend telemark staff training.

Why undertake these efforts when Kathy does a much more comprehensive listening tour? To ensure the Board stays connected with membership even as it reduces its own size, to ensure we receive direct information from our members about their experiences and perceptions, to identify opportunities for growth and betterment of the organization, and to share what we are doing. We work to make our organization better for you. If you have an idea or thoughts you’d like to share with the Board of Directors, please feel free to reach out to myself (chair of the Membership Communication Committee) or any current Board member. You can find us here: [easternsnowpros.org/about-us/board-of-directors/](https://easternsnowpros.org/about-us/board-of-directors/) and the office staff will be happy to connect you with us via email. ☺☺



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## zipperline

### Is the Alpine Development Team Right for You?

By Dave Capron

PSIA-E Development Team Coach

I worked over 50 days at alpine and telemark events and assessments in 2022-2023 as an alpine and telemark examiner. Members often ask, “what’s it like to be an examiner?” It is rewarding, and it requires a willingness to continue to learn and grow. To be a great educator, one must observe and interact with the student to understand not only how they are performing but to also understand how the learning environment you are creating impacts the student. If every student and every skiing situation were the same, coaching skiing would be a one size fits all. Each student has their own personal needs, and we must adapt to each student and the environment that we have at that time.

I continue to learn with every student and every situation on the mountain. After safety, the most important part of my job is continuing to learn and being open to learning at all times. I need to make sure I don’t let myself think I have learned enough. Following this thinking is what I believe makes an educator great; it is also why I believe so many of our greatest educators opt not to take on challenges like the PSIA-AASI E Alpine Development Team Tryout. They feel they have too much still to learn.

I know this feeling firsthand: I worry I am not good enough to go to the next level. Do I know enough? Do I ski well enough? Can I watch high level skiers and figure out what to work on? Asking these questions are great; these are the questions I continue to ask myself as I continue to read the books, talk to my mentors and coaches, and, yes, work to stay in good physical shape so I can work on how my body moves to be skillful on skis. This is what it takes to be a great educator, and it is what we are looking for on the alpine Development Team.

The Alpine Development Team Tryout prerequisites are alpine Level III certification and a love of lifelong learning. You need to show strong skiing skills in all terrain and on all snow surfaces. Coaching situations will be set up to allow you to display your knowledge and expertise applying the Learning Connection Model. From the start of the tryout to the finish the evaluators will be scoring your use and application of the technical, teaching, and people fundamentals and how you make decisions based on them. There will be movement assessment, technical discussions, and technical questioning sessions in addition to skiing and teaching.

Being part of the PSIA-AASI-E education staff is a job that requires sharing, collaboration, and continued personal growth. As an education staff member, you will work with members at events, attend staff training and be expected to bring the knowledge and information back to your home resort. Education staff members must be teachers, mentors, guides, cheerleaders, motivators, and, most of all, leaders.

The length of a term for a Development Team member is four years. Each one of those years includes a commitment of 15-20 days.

In preparation for the tryout, reading materials should include (but not be limited to) the *Alpine Technical Manual*, *Teaching Snowsports* manual, *Teaching Children Snowsports* manual, and PSIA Alpine Performance Guides. For preparation for the skiing a good place to start is the Eastern Region Alpine Assessment Guide to understand and be able to perform all the Level 3 Assessment Activities. The list in the Assessment Guide will not have all the activities that may be utilized at the tryout but those tasks or variations of those tasks will greatly help you practice the application of the alpine fundamentals in different situations and on different snow surfaces. The assessment activities that will be used in the skiing at the tryout will focus on your ability to adapt and adjust your application of the alpine fundamentals in situations ranging from the beginner zone to advanced zone.

When preparing for the coaching and movement assessment sections of the exam you should focus on the fundamentals of teaching. How to you use them in the teaching cycle to coach what is actually happening in the performance in front of you, not focusing on a presentation you brought with you. Being able to adapt and adjust your plan to the candidates you are coaching is the mark of good teaching. The ability to use your people skills to manage your emotions and actions and influence the emotions and actions of others, while leading the group, are important to be able to have a positive impact on each individual in the group. Your ability to use your people skills while not leading the group will also be very important to show your willingness to learn and accept feedback and how you can be a productive member of a team.

This year the tryout for the alpine Development Team is scheduled for March 12-13, 2024 at Waterville Valley, NH. The tryout will test all of your skills in the three triangles of the Learning Connection Model. How you communicate information and how you interact with other candidates and the scorers will be looked at and evaluated during the entire tryout process. Both verbal and non-verbal communication will be evaluated. There will be a cut on day one based on the skiing scores. Those candidates that do not make the cut on the first day will be invited to attend a training day on day two.

If you focus on the fundamentals of good skiing, good teaching and good people skills in your training and preparation you will be able to adapt and adjust to any skiing and coaching situation that comes up in the tryout. I can’t emphasize enough, the path to success, is being able to adapt and adjust. That is what the greatest skiers and teachers are able to do. ☞



Alpine Dev Team Selection, Stowe, VT 2022

## Don't Let Your Certification Prep Go Downhill

By Chris Ericson

PSIA-E Certification Committee Chair

If there is one thing I have learned over the years as a coach, it's that we all learn differently, and how I train myself to get better is not necessarily something that works for every other person. There are however, a few standard practices that you should be reminded of as you prepare for taking the next step towards a certification.

- *Be physically ready.* This is a sport and it does require you to be in a physical condition where you can do twisting, extending, flexing and tipping of various body parts. Sometimes these movements happen at slow speeds and at other times rapid speeds with intensity. At an assessment, your adrenaline is cranking, and the calories are burning before you even set foot on the snow. When you start getting tired after doing your sixth skiing task or leading the group in a teaching segment, mistakes start to happen, you become less accurate with what you are trying to do. So if you haven't done some training that gets the heart rate up, start now.
- *Know Before You Go.* The Alpine Assessment Guide tells you what you need to know about every alpine certification level. This includes start time, layout for each day, and the potential assessment activities that you might be asked to ski. Knowing what to expect, does a lot for mental preparedness and calming some of those nerves. It's a free guide on the Eastern PSIA website and is typically updated by November every year. In addition, make sure you get on the National PSIA-AASI website and at the very least, look at the Assessment Scorecards. Understanding what the Assessment Criteria are and what you will be scored on is important.
- *Practice, Play and Repeat.* Well before the Assessment, get on the hill and do the skiing tasks that are in the Alpine Assessment Guide for the appropriate level of certification. However, here's the trick: do them at various speeds (slower and faster), in different conditions and on different pitches. Go to a different mountain to practice these, not your home mountain where your turns are predictable and autonomous. Practice on snow you would normally avoid. That frozen rippled stuff that still has a few petrified ski tracks in it from yesterday – perfect!

Incorporating these three things will give you something that separates you from the rest: the ability to have FUN at the Assessment. As Educational Staff, nothing makes any of us happier than seeing someone who has prepared and is having fun showing us what they know. «

## your turn

*The Your Turn section is an opportunity for members' voices to be heard. Submissions are welcomed and are subject to editing (and in some cases the opportunity for the author to workshop a piece with editorial staff). Opinions expressed may not reflect the views of PSIA-AASI or all of its members.*

## Teaching Kids to Make G-O-O-D Decisions

By Andrea Kornbluh

Alpine Level II, Children's Specialist 1  
Stratton, VT



Andrea Kornbluh

When I'm not skiing, I work as a plant ecologist. I am often faced with decisions regarding natural resources or working in wilderness settings. For example, should my partner and I split up to cover more ground before nightfall? Or more broadly, will this burned forest recover more quickly if we remove the dead trees or leave them in place to provide structure? Intuition is not always the best guide for complex decisions. We are all primed with cognitive biases that can lead to errors in thinking.

Thankfully, there exists a process for dealing with uncertainty and improving the quality of one's decisions over time. Called structured decision-making, it is an approach to articulate objectives, consider risks, respond to group values, and share responsibility. Ideally, situational risk is reduced by considering options in light of both experience and facts. But how would one get students in snowsports lessons – particularly younger, fearless, daredevil types – to implement structured decision-making? Can we share this way of thinking with children?

Consider the lesson I taught last winter. I had two brothers with opposite approaches – Zack, age 7, was a daredevil willing to explore and try anything (and at high speed). Meanwhile, Adam, age 5, was cautious and took it slow. The split dynamic often resulted in Zack having to wait for Adam. When partway through the lesson I asked Zack to count to 100 at the top to give us a head start, Adam and I found ourselves waiting. Where was Zack? Should I have left him? Were my instructions clear? Where could he have gone? I called him. No answer. Adam called, and we waited.

It turned out that Zack had counted as instructed and then opted to explore a path in the woods next to the trail – and promptly wiped out, losing a ski and getting stuck. "I hit a pile of snow and just kept going," he replied. "It looked fun in there. But then I crashed into something, and I couldn't get my ski to stay on. And my goggles are filled with snow."

Whoa, I had asked Zack to stay on the trail! What went wrong here, and how could I have prevented it? Perhaps I should have included Zack in my decision-making process. One of my goals as an instructor is to encourage students to make good decisions based on what they see on the slope and what it means to them. What do they see? What don't they see (or know)? Are they considering the big picture? We should not assume that our students know what information is pertinent, especially when it is related to safety or risk. The experience with my student Zack prompted me to develop a kid-friendly decision-making process.

Modeled after the structured decision-making process that I use in my ecology job, I devised a kid-friendly process that I call *Making G-O-O-D Decisions*. This is education; of course, I included an acronym! Here is the method:

- *Goal.* What are we trying to accomplish on this run? What do we value or prefer?
- *Options.* Are there alternative ways to accomplish the same goal? What are the merits of each?
- *Outcomes.* What are the likely consequences – positive and negative – of each option? What information are we missing?
- *Decision.* What is our course of action? Does everyone agree?

continued on next page »»

After a break, Zack, Adam, and I headed out again, our explorer mindset still intact. At the top of the next run, we paused to review our goals: Look for untracked snow that lets us see our turn shapes. Have fun and stay within sight of one another. “But, Zack, what routes to the chair are possible? What options do we have?” Adam reminded us to stay out of the trees (there wasn’t enough snow in the early season), although they looked enticing. I suggested we traverse across the run to take the high side; it had a better fall line. Zack wanted to ski in the drifts along the low edge.

Once we had a few options to consider, I turned our attention to the possible consequences of each choice. Along the way, we assessed possible risks by focusing on what we did not know. “I don’t know if I can make it all the way over there,” said Adam, referring to the traverse, “so what happens if I lose you?”

“We can ski the drifts,” I said, “but maybe those bumps are actually rocks, since they are near the closed sign.”

“Yeah, and I can’t see the rest of the trail from here,” said Zack. “Guess we’ll have to ski under the chair,” Adam realized. Our decision – based on our goals, options, and likely results from each option – was made. We looked at each other and grinned, then peeled off one by one, making our best turns of the morning in the soft, fresh snow. <<

## Fall Sports Prime Winter Skills

By Joe Forte

ACE Team Member, AASI Dev Team Member, FS1  
Blue Mountain, PA

**F**all is an excellent season for so many awesome adventures sports here in the Northeast. The temps drop, the air is crisp, and the leaves decorate the landscape with a new color palette each week. For us snow lovers, our minds begin to dream about winter sports and fortunately for us, there are many excellent ways to hone our winter sports skills using fall adventure sports. Below is a list of great fall sports, as well as a few examples of the analogous skills that they share with snowsports. Whether you already participate in these sports, or are considering picking up something new, you can use them to prime your mind and body for the upcoming winter!

*Mountain Biking.* Mountain biking shares *so many* skills with winter sports, but if I had to pick my favorites, it would be line choice and separation. On a mountain bike, you learn to look past the individual rocks in front of you and look farther ahead to plan your line, just like skiing or riding in moguls or trees. I honestly haven’t found any sport that feels closer to ripping glades than mountain biking. The other major mountain biking skill that carries over well into snowsports is separation. We learn to allow our bike to take a separate path than our body, much like we work on upper and lower body separation on snow. This skill allows us to manage uneven terrain, regulate the pressure of the tires and/or edges into the trail surface, and control our inclination vs angulation.

*Hiking/Trail Running.* Besides the obvious cardiovascular and endurance benefits, these two sports have many other great benefits that carry over into snowsports. Both hone the proprioceptors and the fast twitch stabilizer muscles that are associated with dynamic balance. Moving on uneven terrain is an excellent way to build up the muscles that support knee and ankle health. As a matter of fact, hiking is excellent rehab for lower leg

injuries. Just be sure to use the proper form when hiking downhill to avoid stressing the knees. The key is to keep your center of mass right over your knees, never allowing it to move too far forward or back. Sound familiar, skiers and riders?

*Rock Climbing.* Personally, I love how rock climbing requires me to slow down and open my bubble of awareness. Many of the other adventure sports I participate in are fast-paced and tend to pull me into a very narrow zone of focus (typically downhill). Climbing, on the other hand, teaches you to take a step back, carefully assess the variables surrounding you and then adjust your plan. This “big picture awareness” is a crucial skill that we use to keep us safe everywhere from the teaching hill to skiing and riding big mountains.

*Whitewater Rafting/Kayak/Stand-up Paddleboarding.* These sports teach us to go with the flow and not “fight” the forces of nature, because just like the mountains, “the river always wins”. In the river, you learn to use the water currents to your advantage, much like we use the terrain to our advantage on snow. This results in greater performance with less physical effort. Another analogous skill we learn from water sports is the ability to stay calm under pressure. Being underwater can be quite unnerving, but panicking only makes the situation worse. We can apply this skill to the hill, where we might feel the pressure of a steep drop, large jump, or challenging lesson.

*Fishing /Hunting.* At first glance, similarities with sliding may not appear obvious. Consider that hunting and fishing both require incredible patience and force you to simply trust in the process until you find success. Both pastimes teach you how to simply enjoy your time outside, regardless of the outcome. After enough time in the woods, you realize that a day on the mountain is better than any day in the office!

As you can see, there are many analogous skills that we share between “green season” sports and winter sports. If we bring intention and awareness to our development of these skills, we can better prepare our minds and bodies for when the snow finally falls. <<

## Hippocrates on Skis: First Do No Harm

By Doug Reddy

Alpine Level III, Children’s Specialist 2  
Mount Snow, VT

**M**any assume that “First do no harm” appears in the Hippocratic Oath. Actually Hippocrates introduces the concept slightly differently in his *Of The Epidemics*. “To do good, or to do no harm,” he writes. The principle applies both to medicine and snowsports instruction.

Newbies have just enjoyed the confusing rental experience, are walking in strange boots, and are carrying gear that is completely new to them. And now they are going to slide down a hill which, come to think about it, is a bit nuts. Fear and apprehension abound so do not add to it.

As instructors we must frame the experience through verbal and non-verbal communication and our choice of words and movements are crucial. Words such as dangerous, fast, speed, falling, injury have no part in the beginner lesson. We all know about the inherent risks. There are all manner of interesting features surrounding the slope: fences, sidewalks, parking, snow guns, lift structures. We are not going there so keep the focus on where we *want* to go and the process to get there. Use boot drills to get students to feel the action of turning the foot and leg. Emphasize a centered stance and turning the feet to create the first turns. Maintain the center of mass over the base of support to keep it simple. Flex the ankles, and, in a narrow wedge, flatten the skis to facilitate the first turns. A feeling of control and competence



will allow the novice to push through fear or apprehension. A process focus is effective coaching and also serves as a useful distraction. If an adult expresses fear, acknowledge it, even embrace it – and emphasize the movements that create control. Ask students to rate their feeling of control on a scale of 1-6 and return to this question frequently.

*Speed Control.* We love speed – it is one of the best elements of our sport. But speed may terrify beginners, so do not talk about it. Focus on turn shape to control speed. By changing the turn shape students can sense the control this allows. Speed control will increase the comfort level as the skier can regulate speed and direction. Demonstrate a variety of turn shapes and sizes and provide a variety of opportunities and techniques (read: “tricks”) so the skier can practice the new skill. We know that varying a movement and the terrain is a powerful means to foster mastery, so keep turning in a variety of ways. Use the entire slope; do not follow the same path each time.

Only now can beginners embrace speed – just a little! Students will figure out that speed makes turning easier. In the course of skiing we turn to a stop. We are teaching sliding not stopping, so keep the focus on turning. A breaking wedge is a lift line maneuver and utilized very rarely on the hill. Emphasize turning for speed and directional control. For younger students, think about teaching them to make big smiles and little smiles on the snow instead of having them power wedge straight down the hill in red light/green light fashion.

*Falling Down.* Kids fall, get up, and go again. Toddlers will fall 50, 60, 70 times an hour and be unfazed as they learn to walk. Falling scares most adults, so talking about falling makes it the elephant on the slope. Demonstrate and promote a balanced stance making skiing a two-footed activity in the strange, slippery space. If the stance is working and there is a modicum of control, falls are less likely. When a fall happens, make it a teachable moment. Describe and demonstrate falling to the side and demonstrate how to get up. Do *not* talk about ACL tears!

*Chairlift Riding.* The chairlift is potentially hazardous but don't highlight the hazard. Emphasize the skills necessary to ride the chair safely, and new students will be successful. Again, beginners are apprehensive; it is a mistake to add to this. Remember the power of distraction. Tell the new skier that the steps to get off the chair are “land, stand, Superman (extending the arms forward).” Then they focus on the steps instead of the potentially scary ramp off the chair. Kids just giggle.

Through careful management of our vocabulary and a careful and intentional focus on skills, we can guide beginners to successful first experiences. Use all the tricks to teach skills, remembering that the trick is the means and the skill is the end. Provide sensations the beginner can utilize to self-coach. Focus on what students need to be successful and not on negative consequences. ☞

## We The People

By Tina Buckley

ACE Team Member, Alpine Dev Team Member

Blue Mountain, PA

**H**ere is a sample scenario. Two private lessons go out on the same day. Two students with similar ability levels and the same goals ride with two instructors with the same certification level. They ride similar terrain and the exact same lift. How likely is it that the lessons will be exactly the same?

Zero. Even if the students had identical backgrounds and personalities (which no two people do) the lessons would not be similar at all. Despite all of the similarities, there are just too many unique differences for the lessons to be exactly the same.

Let's start with the skill application. While Movement Analysis is fairly scientific, every instructor observes student movements with their own biases of importance. In the movement analysis process every instructor forms an opinion about where to start and which activities will accomplish the desired outcomes. Part of instructor decision-making is knowledge (what we learn, know, and understand), and part is experience. But another part of this process has to do with the character of the instructor and how the instructor behaves and engages in the lesson and with the student. In other words, each instructor's interpersonal skills.

How motivated is the instructor to engage with this student? Is this the first lesson of a gorgeous day or the last lesson of a wet, cold or busy day – and how does each instructor deal with these factors? Is the student one that the instructor loves to teach? Will this be a ‘boxed’ lesson or is it going to be geared towards the needs of the student? Does the instructor separate private and work life to deliver an excellent lesson? Is the communication between student and instructor lesson-appropriate? Is the instructor listening to respond or listening to understand? Does the non-verbal communication support the trust-building and fun delivery of the lesson? Is the instructor's mind occupied with other things than this lesson?

Further, do the instructors exemplify the people skills fundamentals?

- How does each instructor build relationships based on trust? Do they look students in the eye? Do they ask questions to understand where students are coming from and what they're hoping to get out of the lesson? Are they warm and genuine?
- How does each instructor engage in meaningful two-way communication? Do they really and truly listen to students? Do they talk but not really listen?
- Does each instructor identify, understand, and manage their own emotions? Are they professional? Do they talk excessively about their own experiences?
- Does each instructor recognize and influence the behaviors, motivations, and emotions of others? Are they compassionate and empathetic?

The students in this scenario could end up skiing/riding at the same level or they may demonstrate different skill developments by the end of their lesson. The point is that no lesson will be the same. Even though we might have our basic “road to success”, every lesson, every student and every day on snow creates a different outcome. To ensure our students have a great experience, it is important to shift your focus to the lesson and the student. Be curious about who you teach. Try to walk in their boots. Get to know them to be able to prescribe what they need most.

Have the student get to know you, too. Just as students bring individual characteristics, so do instructors. Sometimes we will be pleasantly surprised, and sometimes we will walk away disappointed. Let's learn from it and move on. We are in the “people business” and when we talk about people skills, let's not forget that we, the Instructors, are people, too! ☞





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