



Highlights from Kathy Brennan's Listening Tour

Eastern Region Update

By Kathy Brennan

Eastern Region CEO

Welcome to our midwinter issue! Here's some important information for all Eastern Region members.

Member/Event Numbers

New member numbers are looking good for the 2023-24 season. Retention is similar to last year at 86%. We also have 17% more new members than we did at this time a year ago. Further good news in our efforts to have a more diverse community: 25% of those new members identify their ethnicity as non-white, 36% as female, and 58% are ages 14 to 39.

As of mid-January, we have already conducted 192 events, with 2,928 participants, up from 109/2,112 respectively in 2022-23. I'm confident we will hit our target of 5,000 event participants this season.

Strong early season event numbers are largely attributed to successful early season events including the Snowsports Management Seminar, Children's Academy, Trainer's Academy, Pro Jam and Master's Academy. Even though we had some unfavorable weather in December, the weather patterns worked perfectly to support these early events. According to a presentation I saw from a Mt. Washington Observatory meteorologist, El Nino should be kicking in soon and we should finish up the season with great skiing and riding conditions.

Welcome Webinar

Beginning January 31, 2024 at 7pm, I will be hosting a free monthly Welcome Webinar. The webinar will run on the last Wednesday of each month. Any new members in the previous month will receive an emailed invitation to join me as we discuss how to get the most out of their membership. Topics will include information about our region, how to use the eastern and national websites, educational opportunities, how to register for events, code of conduct, pro offers, and more.

The webinar is free, no CEUs will be earned. If you are not a new member, but you would like to attend, please use this zoom logon information.

Welcome Webinar Zoom Info

Wed., February 28 or March 27 at 7PM EST

Zoom Meeting ID: 890 4571 7732

Passcode: 666130

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89045717732?pwd=NjludTFFUHBqOmpKT0YyL2tuSFh2Zz09>

Or Dial in - 646 558 8656

Scholarships

Our Scholarship Committee has completed the awarding of the 2023-24 scholarship applications. After a thorough and considerate review of the 151 applications received, they elected to award funds to 137 members. The average award was \$207 up from \$180 in 2022-23. In addition to factoring in the criteria for the various scholarships, applications were scored based upon the member's answers to the application questions including: How will the scholarship help you, your snowsports school/area, and your resort guests? What are some of your personal and professional goals in relation to snowsports and snowsports teaching? Do you have any particular financial need we need to be aware of? How will you share the information gained from attending the event?

# AWARDS	AWARDED	SCHOLARSHIP
81	\$16,352	General Member Scholarship
20	\$4,542	NextCore Next Steps
5	\$1,012	Women's Scholarship
9	\$1890	Promising SnowPro
4	\$939	James Leader Memorial
5	\$978	Russell Fleming Memorial
3	\$684	Terry Fund
2	\$418	James Kapp Telemark
3	\$475	Burbridge Memorial
5	\$1,140	Hetrick Scholarship
137	\$28,430	Totals

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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 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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» REGION UPDATE, continued from page 1

Our heartfelt thanks go out to the members of the scholarship committee who volunteered their time and energy to review and score the applications.

The Scholarship Committee is currently reviewing the new Winter Scholarships for member schools, futures camp, promising snow pros, and reinstatements.

Congratulations to all of the scholarship winners and thank you for taking advantage of this valuable member benefit.

Listening Tour

My Listening Tour for the 2023-24 season began with a brief trip to VA including a Freddie's Friday event at Massanutten and a trip over to Bryce. I have also visited Berkshire East and I hope to see several other resorts in MA and NH before the season ends. In early February I will be doing a brief tour in RI and CT.

Once again warm and wet weather in December and early January is affecting our region, particularly in the Mid-Atlantic. Fortunately, a little more snow than last year, and a brief stint of cold temps, helped many resorts to pile on the snow. In fact, during my visit to VA it was 70 degrees, but the snow conditions were awesome thanks to a ton of snowmaking the previous week.

Resorts I have visited are reporting that demand for lessons remains high. Fortunately, larger classes of new hires are helping, but everyone continues to look for ways to attract and develop more instructors. I am excited to meet many of these new instructors who are excited to become involved with PSIA-AASI.

Please follow my tour on social media at [#kbslisteningtour](https://twitter.com/kbslisteningtour). ☞





VIEW FROM THE CHAIR

Board Chair Report

By Peter Howard

PSIA-E Examiner

Eastern Board Chair

A view from the chair, well actually it may be hard to see when you are sitting in a chair. Occasionally it's good to stand up, look around, and say what you think. PSIA-AASI's mission is to support its members as part of the ski and snowboard industry to develop personally and professionally, create positive learning experiences, and have more fun. In my opinion, this means elevating the profession of snowsports instruction thereby improving the lives of its members. Near as I can tell, our education and certification system is second to none in the world, and I bristle when my peers are thought of as anything less than on-snow educators and professionals.

While safety and risk management are job one, and it's guaranteed when we get together there's going to be a good time, the birth of our organization was about professionalism and not the creation of a club. If you have been to a CS1 or CS2, you have knowledge about children's development that many parents and some college courses lack. If you understand the Learning Connection Model, you can see the transferability to any other teaching profession and many other aspects of life. If you have studied for or have attended a recent assessment, there is national unity in the curriculum and testing procedure. The creation of curriculum, programs, and testing structures are intellectual products of a professional organization. Instructors love to ride/ski, and to share that passion with others. But just because we like doing it, doesn't diminish our commitment to education and professionalism. If anyone doubts that, show them the CS2 workbook and quiz, the Performance Guides, any of our assessments, and our resource library.

The Eastern Board is about setting our strategic direction and supporting our CEO to deliver a premiere experience to you, our members. You expect and deserve a high level of professionalism from the Field Staff (course conductors/examiners), the Eastern Office Staff, the CEO, and your Board of Directors. Unfortunately, this is a complicated world where a problem with a computer program designed elsewhere can cause event registration and scheduling mayhem. The Eastern Office Staff knows you deserve

professionalism; their perseverance to deliver premiere service, in spite of a cloud-based program that "rained" on them, is admirable.

Eastern Board business is ongoing amidst a winter that has rained on us all at one time or another. The Eastern Nomination Committee, chaired by Brandon Pearce, has been busy reviewing candidates for a variety of awards. The Eastern Governance Committee, chaired by Katie Brinton, has been reviewing the Eastern Ends in light of the Ends recently adopted by The National Board. The Ends are statements that help us communicate the values and metrics that monitor the CEO's performance. The National Ends are a bit broader in scope and include things like marketing and global impact; therefore, to make the Eastern Ends region-specific, the Board is working to wordsmith them appropriately. The Eastern Board of Directors is looking forward to the results of the Zone 3 election and the nomination process to fill two "At Large" Board Seats. See page 6 for Zone 3 candidate statements and page 9 for more information on the "At Large" board seat application process.

Lastly, a well-deserved shout-out goes to our first and second-year members. You likely had a trial by fire this holiday vacation period. It has been a challenging learning environment at many areas. If you kept your guests and yourself safe, got learning to occur, and are ready for more, you have the right stuff – the stuff that makes our organization professional. ☞



NATIONAL REPORT

National Board Report

By Eric Jordan

PSIA-E Examiner

National Board Representative

Greeting Eastern Members,

It was certainly an up and down start to the season, but I am sure Mother Nature is going to start taking good care of us with plenty of cold weather and snow!

Your team at National has been very busy kicking off the season as well as putting together the winning bid to host Interski at Vail Mountain in 2027! PSIA-AASI, in conjunction with Vail Mountain and the Town of Vail, formulated a bid proposal that the international stage could not turn down. I would highly recommend you check our [Interski Bid Video](#). The level of professionalism that went into this proposal should make all of us proud to be members of such an amazing organization.

Interski 2027 will be held on April 4-9, 2027 so mark your calendars and plan on attending this once in a lifetime event. There will be

Snowsports instructors from more than 30 nations in attendance and there will be plenty of opportunities for our members to take part in the event both on and off the hill. Ask anyone who has traveled outside the country to attend Interski and they will tell you what an amazing event it is. Now we get to experience the event without having to travel outside the country!

Stay tuned to our social channels and Interski web site for more details. This is surely an event you will not want to miss.

That's it for now, I look forward to seeing you out on the hill this winter! ☞



Code of Conduct

By Kathy Brennan
Eastern Region CEO

In 2023 the National and Regional Board of Directors adopted a revised Code of Conduct which includes a new statement (4) that was added to support our member schools who may have people teaching lessons at their resort independent from the snowsports school. The code clarifies that members should not provide compensated instruction without the advance written consent and acknowledgement of the snowsports school of the resort at which they are providing instruction.

We are happy to support our member schools, where we work, and who also generously support our events by donating lift tickets, providing meeting spaces, offering food and lodging discounts, and at times even spinning lifts just for our use.

For reference, the complete Code of Conduct is listed below and you may also find it on the Eastern and National websites.

PSIA-AASI Code of Conduct

PSIA-AASI developed the Code of Conduct to help you achieve a level of personal conduct and standards of behavior that is consistent with the expectations of instructors across the country.

The Code of Conduct applies to: all PSIA-AASI members, member schools, and volunteers, including PSIA-AASI's regional and national board members and officers. It applies at all times when you are in a position to affect PSIA-AASI's standing within the snowsports industry or with the general public. If a member deviates from the Code of Conduct they may face disciplinary action, including the loss of credentials and membership.

1. You shall conduct yourself in a manner that is consistent with practicing safety, risk awareness, professionalism, a high standard of integrity, self-control, and responsible behavior.
2. You shall comply with all applicable rules and policies of your region and the association, including but not limited to its bylaws and conflict of interest policy.
3. You shall not accept any gratuity, gift, or favor that might impair or appear to influence your professional decisions or actions.
4. You shall not provide compensated instruction without the advance written consent and acknowledgment of the Snowsports School of the Resort at which you are providing instruction.
5. You shall not engage in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation.
6. You shall not engage in illegal conduct.
7. You shall not engage in harassment of any kind against a resort guest, resort employee, a member of the general public, PSIA-AASI association employees, volunteers, contractors, or another member.
8. You shall not discriminate against any member or any other person on account of race, religion, age, creed, disability, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, or nationality.
9. You shall not conduct yourself in a manner which would bring discredit to the association or any region.
10. You shall not abuse any privilege that may be extended as a result of your membership from industry partners, such as equipment manufacturers, distributors, retailers, resorts, or other professional groups.
11. You shall not allow the use of your name or likeness in such manner as to misrepresent or otherwise mislead the public concerning any given product or service.
12. You shall not misrepresent yourself in any way to the organization, for instance, your professional status, competence, or experience. ☞

Support Our Team - Donate Travel Points!

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 sharpening their skills for the upcoming challenge, practicing their presentation abilities, developing new content for webinars, and spending countless hours on the hill honing their craft. They are also busy mapping their travel and accommodations 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 is a great way to help:

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 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. ☞



Meet the Pro Jam and Master's Academy Award Winners!

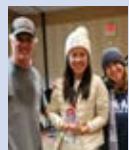
Each season, during our Pro Jam and Master's Academy events, the Education Staff select dedicated participants to be recognized for their outstanding commitment, effort, passion and spirit. This year seven amazing members were honored. Learn more about the awards and the deserving award winners below.



The **Adaptive Snowsports Award** recognizes outstanding effort and commitment to providing empowering experiences for individuals with physical and cognitive disabilities and chronic illnesses through dedication to Adaptive Snowsports instruction. This year the award was presented to Michelle Gambino by Norm Staunton.



The **Kare Anderson Free Heel Award** recognizes the extraordinary commitment to promote free heel skiing and inspire others in living the Nordic life. This year's award was presented to Chip Ziegler by Mickey Stone.



The **Shred Award** recognizes passion, commitment and great spirit for snowboarding while promoting the culture and mountain lifestyle. This year's Shred Award winner is Vicky Shi. Presented by Tom Vickery and Bonnie Kolber.



The **Benji Award** goes to a Level I instructor who conveys the true spirit of skiing, showing us all that true sportsmanship, patience, humility, and humanity can be a way of life. This award was presented to Patrick Bader by Joey Carey.



The **Bill Muller Award** recognizes a Level II instructor for their great spirit, enthusiasm, and contributions to the sport of skiing and in ski teaching. This year's award was presented to Kerry Murphy and Debbie Gibbons by Dave Capron.



The **Master's Award** honors a Level III instructor for their dedication to the highest level of professionalism in ski teaching and of sincere, deep commitment to the sport of skiing and the ski industry. This year's award recognizes Beth Limerick's contributions and commitment. The award was presented by Kevin Jordan.

Congratulations to all of the award winners and thank you for your dedication to our sport!

If you are interested in previous award winners, you may view the list here: <https://easternsnowpros.org/calendar/feature-events/masters-academy-snow-pro-jam/projam-awards-winners/> If you were a previous award winner and your name is not listed, please contact us. ☐☐

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Mid-Atlantic (Zone 3) Board Selection Seat

By Kathy Brennan
Eastern Region CEO

THE ELECTION FOR THE MID-ATLANTIC ZONE BOARD SEAT IS NOW LIVE! If you are an eligible voter living in NY, NJ or PA, or you designated a snowsports school in one of those states as your snowsports school/teaching affiliation, you will receive an e-mail, by February 12th, with a personal invitation (including login instructions) to vote in the Mid-Atlantic zone election for the PSIA-AASI Eastern Board of Directors for a three-year term beginning spring 2024. If you believe you are an eligible voter and did not receive an e-mail with log-in instructions, please contact Operations Director Jodi Bedson at jbedson@psia-e.org.

We have seven candidates running for the Mid-Atlantic seat. Candidate profiles are displayed in alphabetical order on the election website and reverse alphabetical order here. Candidates were given the opportunity to give a brief statement at the end of the Virtual Membership Meeting on February 7. Voting concludes on March 1, 2024.

Candidate Profiles

Mid-Atlantic Zone Board Candidate:

Dave Wenn

State of Residence: NY

Snowsports School Affiliation:

**Whiteface Mt. Snowsports School/
NY Ski Education Foundation**

Certifications:

Alpine Education Staff, Alpine Level III

Background & Qualifications:

Level 3 Certified member for 50+ years Eastern Examiner for 35+ years- still active

Head of School National Sports Academy for 35 years.. retired 2012. NSA was a 501c3 not-for profit independent boarding

and day school for winter sports athletes, located in Lake Placid, which I founded in 1978. I worked closely with the school's Board of Trustee for all



those years. I am very clear of the do's and don'ts of a Board member. Board members supports the mission of the organization, foster the organization's sustainability, set policy, support and guide management and stay out of operations, raise funds and have a passion for the organization- PSIA-E, Which I very much do.

Currently employed with the New York Ski Education Foundation as alpine race coach. 6 years running.

Past coaching position have been with the Vail Ski and Snowboard Club and Green Mountain Valley School

Two time PSIA National Team Selector

Statement of Philosophy & Direction:

I approach this Board membership position with a very open mind ,listen and learn. It will be necessary that my philosophy will be that of the needs of the organization, I have no personal agenda , my responsibility is to support and carry out the agenda of the organization for the benefit of the membership . I will avail my experience and expertise in areas as directed by the chairman. I am strongly committed in my role as an Examiner to provide the membership with the highest level of skiing education and certification available as our my Examiner colleagues. Maintaining that standard assure our membership receives a respected and quality experience and product. PSIA-E member first philosophy .

Mid-Atlantic Zone Board Candidate:

Aleks Smith

State of Residence: NY

Snowsports School Affiliation:

Whiteface

Certifications:

Alpine Education Staff, Alpine Level III

Background & Qualifications:

I am excited by the prospect of contributing to the Eastern Region as a Zone 3 member of the Board of Directors and representing you and the PSIA-E members. As a 22-year PSIA-E member with a wide range of ski industry experience I believe that I can make excellent contributions to the PSIA-E board.

I am a native and current resident of The Adirondacks with a uniquely regional, national, and global perspective on snowsports education.



As a PSIA Alpine Examiner for the past 10 years I have had the good fortune to travel to many ski areas and meet numerous PSIA-E members and Snowsports School Directors. This has allowed me to learn and realize what is important to the members. I am also accredited as a Children's Specialist II and Freestyle Specialist I.

As the former Snowsports School Director at Whiteface Mountain from 2002-2013 I was able to work with many instructors and guests to help them meet their needs. I've also had the good fortune of working as an instructor, staff trainer and manager for the Aspen Snowmass Snow Sports School.

Statement of Philosophy & Direction:

It has been the driving passion of my career as a former Snowsports School Director, Certified Ski Instructor, PSIA-E Examiner and Coach to work with the PSIA-AASI membership to help them achieve their goals and in support of our organization's mission. My hope is to continue to contribute to the Eastern Region alongside the other board members as we consider and plan for our future including our focus on the strategic alignment of PSIA-AASI and all 8 Regions.

I am a candidate who understands first-hand the challenges and interests of the members and member schools in Zone 3. My greatest strength is my ability to voice what is needed while listening to and working well with the staff and membership to move toward common goals. I'm hopeful that my background and forward-thinking ideas will bring a fresh perspective to our Board of Directors. Your support and vote for me as your Zone 3 Board of Directors representative would be greatly appreciated.

Mid-Atlantic Zone Board Candidate:

Gordon Sinclair

State of Residence: NJ

Snowsports School Affiliation:

Killington

Certifications:

Alpine Level I

Background & Qualifications:

I have about 25 years of leadership and experience in finance, including owning and operating my own advisor and brokerage firm. I believe I could leverage these experiences to help us grow and become a stronger organization.



Statement of Philosophy & Direction:

My general philosophy and direction of the organization would be on the growth of membership, while continuing to produce the best teaching product in the world. Additionally, I would focus on the fun aspect of snow sports.

Mid-Atlantic Zone Board Candidate:

Christa Ross

State of Residence: PA

Snowsports School Affiliation:

Seven Springs / Okemo Ski & Ride School

Certifications:

**Alpine Education Staff, Alpine Level III,
Children's Specialist 2, Freestyle Specialist 1**

Background & Qualifications:

I am interested in serving on the Eastern board to get more involved in the organization I have been a part of for over three decades. I started teaching at Seven Springs in Western Pennsylvania when I



was 17, not knowing that the job I took to get a ski pass would change my life. Through those years, I worked my way through the certification process, taught and trained for our Snowsports school, juggled family with a spouse who also teaches, got two kids out on the mountain, ran a full-time business, made Dev Team in 2021, and was elevated to Alpine Examiner this past summer.

This year, I am splitting my time between my home resort at Seven Springs in Pennsylvania, Okemo Mountain in Vermont, and working PSIA/AASI events in Zone 3. All this travel lets me meet many of our members and gives me insight into the different resorts and their needs.

My educational background is in design, marketing, and media technology, and for the past 15 years, I have worked in real estate and community development. Experience that I hope can be useful in helping foster inclusivity within our organization and the skiing community.

Statement of Philosophy & Direction:

My goal is to help PSIA/AASI-E continue elevating the skill and professionalism in teaching Snowsports, which is respected by the resorts we serve. I want the organization to aid in building a viable career path for instructors who want to make this their full-time profession, while also recognizing the passion and dedication our part-time instructor members contribute. This would

include promoting to the general public the value and excellence that PSIA/AASI instructors provide to all types of skiers and riders at all levels.

I hope to work on developing exciting educational events that go beyond certification and encourage members to step out of their comfort zones, and bring quality events to all our members, even those in the far reaches of our region. For those pursuing certification, I want to continue the development of tools which help members succeed, including those at ski and ride schools that don't offer robust training resources.

Our members vary in age, abilities, and experiences, and they ride on different equipment across many mountains. As a board member, I want to foster a sense of community that embraces and serves the needs of everyone within our region.

Mid-Atlantic Zone Board Candidate:

Brandon Pearce

State of Residence: NJ

Snowsports School Affiliation:

National Winter Activity Center/Winter4Kids

Certifications:

Alpine Level III

Background & Qualifications:

I am a 28-year Instructor Alpine Level 3 who absolutely loves teaching at Winter4Kids (formerly Hidden Valley) for the past 8 years. I regularly flip into teaching Snow-board and teach XC Skiing at our awesome Nordic Facility. My first Mountain was Windham for over 24 years where my college professor, Joan Heaton, urged me and my friends to take up teaching. I became Director of the first Mountain I ever skied.



Winter4Kids, Vernon NJ 8 years

- Training Manager and Curriculum Lead
- Snowsports Director 2020-2023

PSIA-AASI Eastern Member At-Large Board of Directors 2021-2024

Volunteer Chair PSIA-AASI Eastern Region Nominations Committee

PSIA-AASI Diversity Equity Inclusion Advisory Group 2021-2024

Windham Mountain 20+years

- Race Program Coach 2019
- Head Coach 'Set No Limits' Season Program 2001-2013
- Line up Instructor

National Brotherhood of Snowsports (NBS) Snowsports School

- Instructor 2020 to Present
- volunteer Coach to the NBS Youth Race Team in 1999 – 2001
- PSIA Level 3 Alpine Certified 2009

I taught at Windham Mountain for over 20 years and have been a Season Program Head Coach and Line up (like a Swiss Army Knife) Instructor. I like to help inspire membership and stoke others in Snowsports to value our professionals. I have always pursued the drive to reach higher goals and totally focused on personal development, both technically and teaching.

Statement of Philosophy & Direction:

I want people to realize the value of their membership. There are so many things that are offered, and I think we are not aware they are there. Many things we like have deadlines that pass or fill up. If elected, I plan to explore the ways to keep us up to date. I think there are a few regular emails and posts can be sent with the timely items. It could be in the messages we get now, but more strategic.

- Awards we nominate members for, lifetime, peer recognition,
- fall and winter scholarships, prep classes,
- limited space events,
- mentorships
- deadlines passing this month, etc.

As an organization we have a lot to offer, we are wonderful, but nobody knows what is going on. There could be a monthly splash of the dates that are hot right now, etc. I plan on looking into ways to amplify good communication that we have now without duplicating work. I feel that our organization has taken care of me when I need it. However, we often need a heads up, it could make every member more satisfied. It's a win-win.

I love the organization because it gives opportunities to all. I participated in several selections for Women of Winter Scholarships. It was life altering for me. What an inspiration to hear the stories of literally earth changing individuals. I share equally with everyone in my circle regardless of background because I think everyone should know how to navigate our organization.

Having 8 years work in a Non-Profit Mountain that operates on a mission, I bring skills in Fundraising, forming partnerships, building a community, mentoring and setting team goals. As a trainer, I like to have input and fresh ideas in programming all the time. I am sure that is because I work at a "Kids" mountain. However, I think the younger generation is a spring of re-invention that PSIA-E can never get enough input from. Initiatives like the NextCore are really are game changing, we need to keep channeling that feedback.

Mid-Atlantic Zone Board Candidate:**Alan Kinney****State of Residence: NY****Snowsports School Affiliation:****Song Mountain****Certifications:****Adaptive Level I, Children's Specialist 1****Background & Qualifications:**

I have been an adaptive instructor for 11 years and then a alpine ski instructor for 6 years and now a snow sports director for 4 of this years. I also have a background in human relations, former board member of Emotional Intelligence and Human Relations and chair of promotion. I have been a retired clergy which led to working with many different people at many different levels. I was chair of the Dismantling Racism Team which brought train to all UMC clergy in Upper New York. I believe these experiences and trainings will help to bring a different perspective to the Board which would benefit PSIA-E that would enable us to reach new members while sustaining the current ones.

**Statement of Philosophy & Direction:**

I feel we as PSIA are building on a firm foundation and are in need of fresh perspectives that will enable us too reach more and varied instructors in all our disciplines. I feel we need to open doors to people who have not been able

to enter the programs and membership of PSIA. There are some ski/board areas who do not benefit by using the resources PSIA has available to them. I believe improving communications between area and members will not only enhance the opportunities PSIA offers it will build a stronger and better trained membership. I would be willing to work towards this goal.

Mid-Atlantic Zone Board Candidate:**Gerianne Breck****State of Residence: NJ****Snowsports School Affiliation:****Stratton Mountain****Certifications:****Alpine Level II, Children's Specialist 1****Background & Qualifications:**

After retiring from a 35 yr career in financial services in 2019, I accepted a part-time instructor position. I figured after skiing for 20 years, experiencing numerous lessons, I would acclimate quickly. Boy, was I wrong! I joined PSIA-E after 2 days on the job and have not looked back since.



Prior to retiring I was VP of Professional Development at a large Financial institution where I oversaw the design, development and deployment of all training curriculum for sales teams across the USA. Leading the department

included responsibilities such as project management, providing cost effective innovative solutions, implementing new technology solutions, managing a budget, and development and growth of management staff.

I grew up in a non-skiing family on Long Island NY and experienced skiing aa a junior in High School. The see was planted. After graduating from College I started my career in Syracuse NY and tapped into the lesson programs offered at local mountains. Throughout my career, I was active in various ski clubs which kept me skiing every season in NY, NJ, PA, and VT on weekend, and annual trips out west. Since 2019, I have participated in numerous PSIA events both on snow and online. My certification journey was not without its hurdles, but I am a much better instructor today, not to mention a stronger skier for having persisted in the journey.

Statement of Philosophy & Direction:

My general philosophy is that understanding comes through experiences. Experiences come in different shapes and sizes. Success comes when experiences are accessible, aligned to interest and capability. Directions I would support if elected include opportunities to further grow and engage membership to access the limitless knowledge and camaraderie PSIA-E offers; help member schools leverage PSIA as strategic development resource for instructor staff (both f/t and seasonal); capitalize on collaborative opportunities across zones and nationally across regions. ❄️

**Board Report
Zone 3***By Shannon Rucker**Zone 3 Representative and Board Secretary***Mid-Atlantic Musings**

By the time you read this, my sincere hope is that all Mid-Atlantic resorts are open and bustling with edge-to-edge coverage. We started the 2023-2024 season optimistically. So many from the Mid-Atlantic made the early season pilgrimage north for Snowsports Management Seminar, Masters Academy, and Pro Jam – a testament to the drive we as professionals feel to better ourselves. Unfortunately, weather proved to be a bit uncooperative following those events. If there's one thing I know Mid-Atlantic instructors are, it's adaptable.

There are a lot of events on the calendar this year in the Mid-Atlantic region. Hopefully some of you took advantage of discounted January event prices and the Freddie Friday events. February and March are typically our big exam and cert months: lots of preps, exams, and

certification opportunities – many of which are offering concurrent options for differing disciplines at the same time so grab your friends from other disciplines and go check out Seven Springs, HoliMont, Blue Mountain, Big Bear, Greek Peak, or Whiteface.

While the Mid-Atlantic winds down in April, that is the time to head north! If you've never been, come check out Spring Rally at Sugarbush in Vermont – a mixed discipline, many option, weekend and sure-to-be-a-good-time event – and then stay for the total eclipse! If you're not ready to throw in the towel we have two late season events (Last Laps at Killington and the Alpine and Snowboard Beach Bonanza events at Sugarloaf) that will help you milk those last days out of your season.

Please help me congratulate Justin Whalen (of Holiday Valley) on becoming the new assistant chair to Matt Lyerly (of Massanutten) for NextCore. It is great to see Mid-Atlantic talent stepping up to donate their time and expertise to benefit our entire membership. Lastly – help me in a huge shout of encouragement to everyone putting themselves out there for an exam, certification, or tryout this season! Hope to see you out there! ❄️

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Education Foundation &
PSIA-AASI Eastern

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Eastern Board At Large Appointments

Greetings Eastern Members,

The Eastern Board of Directors is looking to fill two "At Large" Board seats. The formation of the Board is made up of four Elected seats and four appointed "At Large" seats. To maintain an effective functioning knowledge of on-going business Board members rotate on and off the Board. All Board members may serve a maximum of two three-year terms either consecutively or not.

At Large Board members will be found through a nominating process. At Large Board members will be selected for presentation to the membership by the sitting Board members. The selection of At Large members is based on the assessment of the Boards needs for diversity of thought, experience, demographics, disciplines, age, gender, race, and skill sets. The At Large nomination period runs from March 1 to March 31. The Sitting Board members will decide on the two appointed seats between April 1 and May 1. The Term on the Board for newly appointed Board members begins in June.

At this time the Board seeks people with skill sets such as philanthropy, legal experience, human resources experience, resort/snow sports school management, non-profit management, and marketing.

Our Board of Directors is sized to be efficient. It does require all members to actively participate. It will require time and travel. The time involved is typically more unevenly skewed based on our more involved meetings or periods when your committee(s) are busiest. Listed below are the approximate number of hours and duties you likely will be committing to. This is an unpaid position.

- Two in person meetings per year (40 hours plus travel)
- Two or three virtual meetings per year (6-9 hours)
- Service on two committees (8-15 hours)
- Board work via email (10 hours)
- Board required reading (12 hours)
- Member outreach (4 hours)
- Total: approximately 90 hours over 12 months comes to an average of 7.5 hours per month

If you are interested in applying for, or nominating someone for, one of the two At Large seats, please complete the online form with answers to the following questions:

- Please state the reason you would like to serve on the Eastern Board of Directors
- How would you use your skill set(s) to benefit the members of the Eastern region?
- What do you believe are concerns or issues that presently affect our members and our region?
- How could the Learning Connection Model guide your time on our Board?

You may access the nomination form at: <https://fs9.formsite.com/PSIA-AASI-E/Nomination/index>. <<

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Plant a S.E.E.D and Watch It Grow

By Kathy Brennan
Eastern Region CEO

Over the holiday break I had a chance to catch up with June Henry and Isabella Bormann who are participating in Waterville Valley's new S.E.E.D. (Skill | Education | Employee | Development) Youth Instructor season long program. This program is the brainchild of Snowsports Director Lisa Dutto. Her intent is to foster interest in the opportunities that exist for a career in the snowsports industry. It is wonderful to see how programs like S.E.E.D, and others in our region are fostering interest and excitement for working in our industry.

As I travel on my listening tour, I find many examples of resorts who are using their seasonal programs for instructor development. Depending upon the resort, students might pay to participate in the program, or it might be a free recruiting tool. I've seen the program starting with skiers and riders as young as twelve or thirteen, but typically the program is intended for fourteen- and fifteen-year-old students who have outgrown the traditional seasonal program but are not interested in any of the competitive programs.

At Mount Abram, for example, students 14 – 18 years of age pay to participate in a Saturday afternoon program which centers around the Learning Connection Model and includes a full year's PSIA-AASI membership. In addition to becoming better all mountain skiers, their program includes understudying other instructors. Trained participants may be given work opportunities if they are legal working age and have the appropriate school permit.

Alternatively, Black Mountain in Maine, a non-profit organization, has a Snowsports School Apprenticeship program for participants who are at least 12 years old. Apprentices ski free during the initial six-week period, and if they choose to continue, they are rewarded with a season pass and a pathway to the instructor corps when they reach working age. According



June, Kathy, and Isabella

to Keith Bobrowiecki, Black Mountain Snowsports Director, their low stress / low expectation environment allows apprentices to shadow lessons and decide if teaching is right for them. Their mentoring process focuses on safety and guest relations, by including apprentices in training clinics that include lift safety, employee etiquette, teaching fundamentals, fulfilling basic student needs for warmth, safety and inclusion, and the proper "chain of custody" and communication protocols for young student athletes. Keith shared that the program is a resounding success. Since 2020, they have doubled their instructor staff, in large part due to this program. Furthermore, their newly appointed Snowsports School Manager was their first apprentice when the program began in 2016.

Lizzy Hyde, an AASI Level II member, works part-time at Gore Mountain and in the Eastern region's Member Services department while she attends college. Gore's Instructor and Patrol in Training Program "has helped bring many, well trained, instructors to our school who are eager to learn and grow as professionals," she told me. Students pay to participate in Gore's season long program but Lizzy feels it's worthwhile. "It provides an opportunity for teens 13-15 years old to get a taste of what it's like to be an instructor or patroller," she says. "They spend the season improving their personal skiing/riding skills while learning about the technical and teaching skills needed to be a successful instructor. They also learn about the daily operations of our Ski Patrol, observing how they handle trail sweeps, safety hazards, and the running of the rescue sled, among other tasks." According to Lizzy, the program helps the participants to develop guest service skills, professionalism, and confidence.

Waterville's S.E.E.D. program takes the junior instructor program to the next level. S.E.E.D. goes beyond how to be an instructor to encompass other life skills including resume writing, filling out a job application, interview skills and more. In addition, participants connect with all the different departments at the resort for a day-in-the-life experience from snowsports to grooming, management, and everything in between. For example, the day before I met Isabella and June, they had spent the day with the Marketing Department and, among other activities, helped film an Instagram post for the resort.

"I love the SEED program because I get to meet new friends, learn all about the mountain, and share my love of skiing with younger kids."

S.E.E.D. participant June

According to Lisa Dutto, she certainly hopes the S.E.E.D. program participants are inspired to become Instructors, but maybe more importantly, she hopes they see how a career in the snowsports industry may be an exciting, rewarding, and viable career path. Ultimately, this program hopes to increase their job preparedness, confidence, and independence as they prepare to enter the workforce, while also creating a strong sense of belonging within the Waterville Family and in the ski industry.

During the season, S.E.E.D. participants create a free PSIA-AASI membership and complete the free New Instructor Course, the Delivering the Beginner Experience, and Working with Children online courses. In addition, they earn the recognition of the National Junior Instructor Program. Successful participants of the program are guaranteed a spot in Waterville's Instructor Training Program (ITC), when they are old enough to work. They are also encouraged to sign up for the PSIA-AASI Level I Assessment when they turn 14 years of age.

As Izzy's father, Charles Bormann Ph.D. shared "The program is a great way for Izzy to learn new things and feel proud of herself. She's not only learning about skiing but also about working as part of a team."

Speaking for myself, I grew up skiing and began teaching when I was fifteen. But even with all that time at a ski resort, when I was choosing my career path, I assumed working for a resort was a part-time option while I pursued another career. Luckily for me, later in life, I was able to transition to a full-time job in snowsports. I believe my early career in banking, systems, and process consulting, combined with my later career in snowsports and seasonal business, helped to make me a suitable candidate for my role as CEO of the Eastern Region. However, who knows what opportunities may have emerged if someone planted a S.E.E.D. for a career in the snowsports industry as I was deciding what to do after high school or what I wanted to study in higher education.

As you are starting to plan your seasonal programs for the 24 - 25 season, consider the SEEDs you can plant to develop future snowsports staff and industry professionals. Who knows how the future leader; you may already be growing in your programs will inspire the next generation of snowsports enthusiasts! ☞

Exciting News for All PSIA-AASI Eastern Members!

Discover a world of possibilities with our NEW and enhanced tools, designed to elevate your member experience and professional development journey!

Introducing the NEW Event Finder Tool: Your Gateway to Unforgettable Experiences!

Are you looking for the right event for you? Do you want to check out course descriptions to see your options? [Watch this instructional video](#) to find out how to use this new tool to find your next event!

EVENT FINDER

Revolutionize Your Planning with the Calendar Filter!

Tired of sifting through a sea of events to find the perfect one? Our Calendar Filter is here to simplify your life! Filter events by **discipline, event type** and **location**. Do you want to find an event at a resort near you? Find out how - [watch this video here!](#)

EASTERN CALENDAR

Embark on Your Professional Journey with the Certification and Professional Development Pathways!

Ready to take your snowsports career to new heights? Our Certification and Professional Development Pathways provide a roadmap to success as well as easy access to important resources that will help you achieve your goals. Find out more in this video about what's available! Whether you're a seasoned professional or just starting, these pathways empower you to learn what you need to know to get certified, achieve your snowsports career goals and embark on a journey of continuous improvement.

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Why Wait? Dive into a World of Possibilities Today!

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NextCore Update

By Matthew Lyerly

*Alpine Level II, Children's Specialist 1, Freestyle Specialist 1
Massanutten Resort, VA*

Greetings fellow snow pros. I hope this edition finds you all well, healthy, and getting quality turns at this point in the season. I was fortunate to attend this year's Pro Jam/Master's Academy at Killington, VT, and boy did it start off with a powdery bang! After a snowstorm on Monday, consistently cold temps kept everything in mid-winter form the rest of the week. Conditions ranged from powder to cold chalk to bumps, and all the way to rock-hard racing snow. Speaking of hard snow, Superstar anyone? I was part of a rad Alpine Level III Prep group for this year's event. We spent the week tackling many of Killington's well-known steep trails as well as exploring variable snow conditions. We did lots of skiing but also spent a solid amount of time working on some level III assessment activities including 1-footed skiing, railroad tracks, and every skier's favorite...pivot slips! Come on, you know you love 'em; there's a method to the madness.

In addition to the awesome skiing, it was great to meet many members - including mentors and mentees - in our NextCore Mentorship program. It was so rewarding and exciting to hear about their experiences and to witness first-hand the value this program provides to our region.

Speaking of NextCore and mentorship, what have we been up to? Well, I'm glad you asked. As mentioned, we launched the Mentorship program for the 2023-2024 winter season. This year's program is similar to previous years but with a few changes that we think will enhance the experience for everyone. First, we asked mentors and mentees to submit a "Top Three" - based on mentor credentials, mentee goals, and the shared commonalities like physical location and frequency of communication - for the coming season and we matched folks as best we could. Second, we are improving our communication process through the duration of the program. Finally, we expanded this year's program to include those more experienced members who may be outside the 16-39 year old target of NextCore. We wish all mentors and mentees the best and look forward to hearing their stories at the end of the season.

In addition to the mentorship program, we will be undertaking an initiative aimed at talent recruitment and retention. One of the aims of this committee is to identify new young talent in the region. This initiative will renew that aim. Are you a talented young member between 16-39 years old? Do you have a question about NextCore and want to get involved? Drop me an email at mwlyerly@gmail.com. ☞



In Memoriam



Linda "Lyndy" Burdet Fischer

Linda "Lyndy" Burdet Fischer, of Lyndonville, VT, passed peacefully at the Jack Byrne Center in Lebanon, N.H., July 19, 2023, at the age of 91.

Lyndy was born in New York City, N.Y., on Nov. 29, 1931, to the late Carl Albert and Barbara Lathrop (Brown) Gray, and raised in Farmington, Conn. She was nationally ranked in the USA women's downhill ski racing during the early 1950's. She won many downhill and XC races throughout many years of her life.

Lyndy was an adventurous, fearlessly independent woman before it was in fashion. She was a certified ski instructor for over 50 years at areas including Otis

Ridge, Stratton Mountain, The Balsams and Burke Mountain. Lyndy was a proud member of the Professional Ski Instructors of America (PSIA) for over 45 years and one of the first women to be asked to join the American Alpine Association Club. Her car License plate was "PSIA" for over 40 years. She skied, hiked and climbed mountains all over the world and was the oldest woman at the time to scale Mt. Denali in 1976. She



Thomas Riedman

Thomas Riedman, of Connellsville, PA, passed away peacefully with his family by his side, Oct. 24, 2023.

Alpine Instructor Tahoe Tom enjoyed swimming, canoeing, softball, biking, and most of all alpine skiing. Tom graduated from Connellsville Joint High School in 1966 and graduated from California University of Pennsylvania in 1970. After high school and during college, Tom spent his summers in Ocean City, MD, as a beach lifeguard. Tom served eight years in the U.S. Army Reserve in the 429th Battalion. Tom was a high school English teacher for more than 35 years, teaching young people to be lifelong learners and to believe in the power of literacy. Tom spent many years as a girls' softball coach and founded the high school ski club. For every Connellsville High School home football game, concluding with 50 years this season, Tom was the ticket taker, a position they kept him social with all ages in the community. In the early 2000's Tom's voice could be heard announcing the times of the NASTAR Course racers at Seven Springs, PA.

Tom was active in his adult life managing a community ski program, teaching lifesaving classes, and volunteering in the community. He was a 30-plus-year member of the Professional Ski Instructors of America, placing great value on continuing education. Many of you would recognize them as the multi-generational ski instructors. Tom, and

daughter Isabelle, would attend the PSIA clinics together, and impress participants with smooth, perfect turns. If speaking to a young instructor on the chairlift, Tom would give a glowing review of PSIA's Trees and Steeps clinic, and encourage them to attend one at Mad River Glen, VT. When there was no snow to ski, Tom could be found biking along the Great Allegheny Passage. He was the type of person to welcome visitors to his home section of the trail, and give advice of local spots to eat, drink, and stay. A lover of live music, he regularly attended concerts and performances. Tom enjoyed many ski trips to the Northeast, and out West with his daughters, and granddaughter.

Tom would always lend a helping hand to his neighbors, church, and community members. He was always "paying it forward" and hoped that others would be inspired to do the same. His dedication to family and friends will leave a void in our hearts. His love of skiing, biking, the Youghiogheny River, and the outdoors will long be remembered.

Tom is survived by many family members including his daughters and granddaughter, who you will find skiing the powder. This winter we will shred in his honor- Alexandra Riedman of Crested Butte, CO; Isabelle Riedman, Althea Riedman, & Patricia Morris of Pittsburgh. We hope to carry on his passion for skiing by instilling in others a life-long love for the sport. ⚡

was one of the first women to join the National Ski Patrol. She was very competitive with tennis and pedal bike racing. At the age of 55, she became a master scuba diver and earned her motorcycle license.

After raising her two children, her opportunities to travel and adventures increased. When Lyndy married her second husband, Heinz Fischer, in 1981 they traveled extensively to all the continents. They share 38 years together until Heinz's death in 2018. She and Heinz sailed in the Virgin Islands, Fiji, and Tonga. At the age of 76 and 79, they skied to the North Pole and made it into the Guinness Book of World Records as the oldest couple ever to do so.

She was known as the "Balloon Lady" in the north east kingdom of Vermont because she and Heinz each flew their own balloons or often flew together.

She is survived by her sons William "Bill" Burdet and Rene Burdet; her step daughter: Gisela Fischer; 8 grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren and their spouses, whom all ski, thanks to Lyndy's instruction.

One of her favorite sayings was "If you rest, you rust, so I will see you at the first chair in the morning" and she would be there. ⚡



Tony Keller

Tony Keller passed away unexpectedly on December 30, 2023. Tony, the snowsports school director at Camelback, PA, had a positive influence on hundreds of Camelback instructors, acquaintances, friends, and, of course, family. He met his wife Becky Ann Keller at Camelback, where he worked since 1999. He served in many capacities at Camelback including in the tubing and rental operations, and he worked his way up through the ranks before becoming snowsports school director at the age of thirty.

Tony received PSIA-AASI Eastern region's Ron Kubicki Award in 2017. The Ron Kubicki Award recognizes a snowsports school director who demonstrates support and advocacy for his or her staff and earns tremendous respect, admiration and loyalty from school staff members. When he was nominated for this honor, a very impressive twenty-three Camelback individuals submitted supporting nominations.

One of the supporting nominations said the following: "Tony is one of those rare leaders who combines love and encouragement for his staff, a fully open door and a consistent drive for perfection. I've had many bosses in my 40-plus years of working for many employers and Tony is THE best one I've ever had."

Tony leaves his wife Becky Ann, daughter Leighna, and son Colin. Donations to Leighna's (code X13P8G) and Colin's (code P0MY15) educational future can be made at ugift529.com. ⚡



Mid-Season Update

By Mickey Stone

Nordic Coordinator

PSIA-E Nordic Examiner, PSIA-AASI-E

ACE Team Member

It was only November, but it seems like a year ago that National Tele Team member Keith Rodney, Alpine Development Team Coach and Telemark examiner Dave Capron, examiners Kurt Byrnes and Jay Nation, and I traveled to Loveland, CO to participate in Rocky Mountain's Tele Training. For the last few years, National Tele Team member Jim Shaw has invited attendees from all the other regions to join. The group totaled more than 25 participants with at least three or more Ed Staff members from six of the nine regions in attendance. We are grateful for the leadership of Jim Shaw and Dana Forbes, CEO of Rocky Mountain, who supported this event with tickets and lunch – we owe them our thanks for a great gathering.

During the three days of training, we reviewed Movement Analysis for Levels I, II, and III on the hill with activities to score for exams in small groups. Everyone had the chance to practice and participate, which is essential for good performance. We looked at similarities and differences from each region in our technical skiing – a great early season task to sharpen our eyes and words. The training was a great event.



Rocky Mountain telemark training with Jim Shaw

The East had an uncharacteristically fantastic start to an El Nino year. We had several snowstorms and continuous nights below freezing for ample snowmaking. Prior to the historic rain event just before the holiday, we were all in a great shape. This was especially helpful for our early season Cross-country events, which saw increased participation. Our ever-popular Cross-country Instructor Training Course at Bretton Woods, NH, had 14 participants on some of the best snow we've had in years. A big

shout-out to Julie West, Hal Westwood, and Mike Innes for spearheading the event. The group used icebreakers, and a square dance-like activity in the beginning to get people skiing, reinforce successful people skills, and initiate group interactions as they classic skied up to each other to shake hands with a short conversation about their three-day needs. This built great group dynamics and a sound foundation of trust for the week.



Cross-Country Instructor Training Course at Bretton Woods ITC Group



Mike Innes demonstrates the double pole technique.

Next our Cross Country team headed to Trapp Family Lodge, which has been our gracious host for exams and several events each year. Sam Von Trapp, who is also a Nordic skier, educator, and coach, and the Lodge have supported us well through the years. We had seven participants of many certification levels for an early-season primer. Normally we would have one or two events early season; now we have four events before the first week of December. Trapp's always has great snow due to its elevation and the huge Green Mountain spine collecting clouds to sit around the area. Great job Mike Innes and Trapp Family Lodge.



The group at Trapp Family Lodge, Stowe, VT

Our busy Cross-Country crew had one more December stop in Lapland Lakes, NY. A unique place that has been around for over 50 years, they actually have real reindeer. They are located in a perfect little snow area that collects 125 inches of snow annually. Originally designed and built by former US Olympic skier Olave Hirvonen and his wife Ann in 1978, it is now owned by the Zaharay family. They take coaching and educating seriously and host PSIA-E every two years for an in-house primer clinic for their instructors. This year, fourteen participants worked on children's education, video movement analysis, personal skiing, and the Learning Connection Model. A shout-out to Julie West and Mark Lacey for a great clinic.

Our yearly six-credit CEU Backcountry Accreditation course kicked off in November with Bruce Hennessey facilitating for seven two-hour nights with some 34 participants. This is a very comprehensive and scientific course covering orienteering, mapping, snow science, avalanche fundamentals, teamwork, rescue, reading terrain, knowing what gear to have and bring, and preparing for the four on-snow days later in the year. Way to go Bruce and participants! Also, most do not know this, but office staffer Jodi Bedson attended this Zoom call for logistics and support every night. A big thank you to Jodi for fulfilling that role.

Also in December, seventeen people participated in the Early Season Tele Primer at Seven Springs, PA. The group was about evenly split with two different focuses: one set took the Level I assessment, and the second set came to improve their technique.

The Level I assessment group worked together over the two days. The candidates' teaching segments focused on weighting the rear foot, monomark turns, different styles of lead change, diagonal telemark side slips, and the basic telemark turn. By Sunday afternoon, a tight group of instructors were congratulating each other as they all successfully met the standard.

The second group began their weekend exploring how to best move in relation to their base of support. They found that stacking their center of mass over the new outside ski at transition allowed them to move with the skis. That afternoon, they were challenged to do just that since the steeper terrain had turned into mogul fields. While skiing bumps, they found that activity of the legs independent of a quiet upper body made it easier to adapt to the variation in terrain. On Sunday they continued that theme as they focused on steering the skis as they

» » » **XX-PLORING**, *continued from page 13*

explored one-footed skiing, skating drills, and finished the day playing with the D.I.R.T. of the lead change.

The weekend concluded with everyone celebrating a great start to the 2023-24 season! Consider putting this on your calendar for next season.



Early season Tele Primer

Finally, our Telemark events went very well. Ali Pirnar spearheaded our Mini-Academy at Killington, VT with seven participants in soft spring snow on Sunday. Karen Dalury and Mickey Stone facilitated Pro Jam with fourteen participants. We invited our National team Member Keith Rodney to share what the Team received from Interski on Wednesday and Thursday. We awarded the Kare Anderson Award to Chip Zeigler from Jiminy Peak for his dedication to snowsports. Inspired by Rex Cronell, Chip started telemarking in 1984. Chip has attended this event for over ten years and is a strong supporter of our group. Way to go Chip! We are proud of you.



Chip Zeigler (left) and Mickey Stone

Thank you all for a great start up to the season. Check out the event schedule and we look forward to seeing you in our events. <<



SCHOOL MANAGEMENT

Another Snowsports Management Seminar Success

By Gail Setlock

*Snowsports Management Seminar Committee Chair,
PSIA-E Alpine Examiner*

We had another great Snowsports Management Seminar to kick off the 2023-2024 season! Participation was strong, and folks seemed to enjoy the sessions they attended. Along with the Snowsports Management sessions, the Eastern Trainers' Academy and the Children's Academy also happened at the same time.



Joe Forte



Mark Absalom

At the event, two distinguished members received awards – Joe Forte and Mark Absalom. Joe Forte was the first recipient of the new Double Diamond Award which is presented to an emerging leader in our industry who is nominated by their staff and/or peers for demonstrating innovation, growth, leadership, and exceptional contributions to their snowsports school. Joe Forte is the Learning Center and Adventure Sports Director at Blue Mountain Resort. He is also an Advanced Children's Educator (ACE Team) and a member of the AASI Development Team in the Eastern Region of PSIA-AASI.

Mark Absalom received the Snowsports Leader of the Year Award which is presented to an outstanding snowsports school director/manager for maintaining the highest standards in snowsports school management, their outstanding dedication to their instructors, commitment to their school, contributions to our organization (both regionally and nationally), and impact on the snowsports industry. This leader is nominated by their staff and/or peers. This award is inspired by Einar Aas, Ron Kubicki, Freddie Anderson, Dave Merriam and all of the amazing leaders who have impacted and shaped the snowsports industry in the Eastern Region. Mark is the Director of Snowsports at Ski Big Bear and an Eastern Region Alpine Examiner.

Congratulations Joe and Mark and thank you for your years of leadership and dedication to our organization and the snowsports industry!

If you would like to learn more about these awards, or the previous winners, visit: <https://easternsnowpros.org/new-eastern-snowsports-management-awards/>. If you have been inspired by a snowsports leader who has made significant contributions to our organization and the industry; or an emerging leader who exhibits innovation and growth, please take a few minutes to nominate them for one of these awards during the nomination period in October 2024.

I'd like to thank the Snowsports Management Committee for their time this past summer and fall to help plan sessions for the seminar. In addition, a great big thank you to all the staff in the PSIA-AASI Eastern region office for all their coordination to make the Snowsports Management Seminar happen! <<





Congratulations on New Arrival

Meghan Price, Eastern Region ACE Team Examiner, and her husband **Sam** welcomed the birth of their first child, daughter **Nellie Jane** in August 2023. Congratulations Meghan and Sam!

SNOW Pro

Upcoming *SnowPro* Copy Deadlines

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

**April 5, 2024 is the deadline
for the spring issue.**

Writing Guidelines

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

Thank you! <<



EDUCATION FOUNDATION NEWS

Education Foundation Donors

The PSIA-E Education Foundation expresses its sincere appreciation to the following members who have contributed at least \$50.00 to the Eastern Education Foundation through the annual dues "add-on" program and standalone donations from April of 2023 to February 5 of 2024. 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!

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Wayne Berthiaume	William Graham	George Phalen
Tom Bird	Pam Greene	Kimberly Phillips
David and Cathy Blinken	David Greenleaf	Pro Jam Women's Group
Ross Boisvert	Thomas Haas	Ole Retlev
Andrew Borbas	Douglas Hammond	Kristan Robertshaw
Kenneth Breen	Donald Haringa	Stephen Robertshaw
Anonymous	Karen Haringa	Don Rock
Michael Bridgewater	Karen Hauda	Rebecca Shiffman
Charles Brown	Joseph Hill	Thor Simon
Barbara Burbridge	William Irwin	Harold Smith
Herbert Burnham	Peter Isaia	John Sniezyk
Deborah Butts	Mac Jackson	Emily Spiker
Roland Cagnon	Robin Jackson	Elizabeth Starr
Linda Carabis	Walter Jaeger	Wesley Stone
Russell Carr	Murray Johnson	Mickey Sullivan
Mark Carvlin	Lynn Johnson	Catherine Sweetser
Thomas Chase	Kirk Jordan	E. Scott Tezak
Ed Chernosky	Peter Jucker	Gregory Thall
Peter Comiski	Greg Kennedy	Chris Tinkham
Robbin Comiski	Patricia King	Evelyn Trebilcock
Eugene Connell	Helen Knapp	Brooks Tuttle
Charlie Criss	Richard Knight	Andrew VonDeak
Jennie A. Crossley	Keith Lawrence	James Wagner
Ned Crossley	Susan Lehnés	Karl Waizecker
Ralph Currey	Roger Lichtman	Cynthia Wallace
Chris Dayton	Eric Lipton	Waterville Valley
Robert Del Boca	Bruce Livingston	Freddie's Friday Group
William Deriscavage	Horst Locher	Shawn Watkins
Robert Deutsch	Karl Loh	Sherman White
Richard Downing	Robert Malecki	Larry Wilberton
Dan Earley	Stacy Malecki	Robert Wisser
Karen Earley	Richard Marron	William Zelenakas
John Eason	Luke Martin	Roger Zilliox
David England	Michael McCabe	



Using Park SMART to Teach All-Mountain Safety

By Greg Fatigate

AASI-E Examiner, PSIA-AASI-E ACE

Team Member,

AASI-E Snowboard Examiner Coach

At the entrance of most Freestyle Zones you will see signage for Park SMART. SMART is an acronym for safe park usage:

- Start Small
- Make A Plan
- Always Look
- Respect
- Take It Easy

Your Responsibility Code (YRC) is posted on trail maps, and other signage throughout the mountain environment. Both Park SMART and YRC are similar in the safety tenets they promote, and both are excellent resources to use when teaching safety. I find several parallels between the two. Understanding how they are similar will help you to adapt your safety message to a wider range of audiences.

Start Small - Work your way up. Build your skills.

Related Responsibility Code point: “Read and obey all signs, warnings, and hazard markings.”

In the terrain park environment, Start Small refers to using elements and taking challenges appropriate for your ability. Those skiers and riders who are new to the terrain park environment are advised to make the choice to start with small jumps, small slide features, and transitional features that aren't terribly steep.

By coaching students to obey signs, warnings, and hazard markings, you guide your student to understand the signage so they make appropriate terrain choices. Trail signage and designations are straightforward for those who are familiar to the mountain environment, but newer skiers and riders will benefit from an introduction to what it all means. This sort of information will help them make choices to Start Small.

Make A Plan - Every feature. Every time.

Related Responsibility Code Points: “You must know how and be able to load, ride and unload lifts safely. If you need assistance, ask the lift attendant” and “Do not use lifts or terrain when impaired by alcohol or drugs.”

Make A Plan in the park refers to a number of things including planning what features to use during your run, deciding where to drop in for the

appropriate speed, deciding what maneuver to try, and knowing how you plan to control your landing zone to avoid collisions.

Planning of this sort allows you to make appropriate decisions so that your selected park line is safe for you and does not interfere with others.

Knowing how to load and unload lifts is part of Make A Plan. How many people are you on hill with? If the lift has a mid-station unloading area, does your group know where to unload? Do you unload the lift to the left, right, or straight ahead?

Additionally, avoiding skiing and riding under the influence definitely applies here. Teach your groups to consider what they choose to eat or drink for breakfast or lunch. Is there a lot of water or hot chocolate being consumed? Proper hydration sets students up for success (and may also create the need to plan for bathroom breaks).

Always Look - Before you drop.

Related Responsibility Code Points: “Look uphill and avoid others before starting downhill or entering a trail” and “You must prevent runaway equipment.”

Always Look before dropping refers to the approach and landing zones. Park riders land jumps with speed and may even land backwards on purpose. Looking before you drop means look uphill, *and* in the air to avoid a collision. It also refers to inspecting features (especially rails and boxes) to see if the setup has an unexpected “additional” piece that you cannot see from the takeoff. Examples of this would be kinked features or close-outs.

Looking uphill before starting up or merging is a critical safety piece everywhere on the mountain. Before heading onto a trail, whether you merge at an intersection or just get going from a trail break, look uphill and merge carefully to avoid a collision.

Meanwhile, every skier and rider is responsible for inspecting their equipment for functional release brakes, and tele-skiers/snowboarders must inspect their bindings for a snug, tight fit. In addition, when your equipment is off and stored at a lodge, ensure that it's in a place where it won't get knocked over and slide away.

Respect - The features and other users.

Related Responsibility Code Points: “Keep off closed trails and out of closed areas,” “People ahead or downhill of you have the right-of-way. You must avoid them,” and “Stop only where you are visible from above and do not restrict traffic.”

In the terrain park environment, this has a wide application of meanings. It refers to you, others in the park, and the park itself. Respect the park staff and others in the park by calling your drops, ensuring that landing zones are clear, not obstructing approach lanes or landing zones yourself. Respect park staff and the park itself by using the ramp for the rail or box for their intended purpose (not a mini jump).

Respecting closed areas is respecting mountain operations. Teach your group that the trail is closed for good reason – whether it's conditions, grooming operations, or something else. Respecting the rope is respect for the huge job of keeping the mountain safe.

Avoiding downhill skiers and riders is simply respecting others on the hill. Not everyone follows the same line on the hill. Alpine skiers tend to be more in the fall line; snowboarders tend to be more across the fall line. Respect each other by being aware of this line difference to allow traffic to flow smoothly.

Stopping where you're visible from above implies respect not just for others trying to avoid a collision, but also for self. Stopping in a blind area puts you and others at risk. Respect other mountain users by being aware of your surroundings and whether or not you are visible.

Take It Easy - Know your limits. Land on your feet.

Related Responsibility Code Point: “Always stay in control. You must be able to stop or avoid people or objects.”

In the park, there's just no reason to go bigger than your abilities allow for. This point gets into knowing the limit of your own abilities. Taking on challenges beyond what your abilities allow for has huge consequences.

If a member of your group is struggling to link controlled turns on green terrain, avoid a black diamond trail. If a member of your group has outdated or poorly tuned equipment they should either update the equipment or avoid taking on challenges when the conditions are icy. Someone who is going too fast for their abilities is a danger. The idea of “Take It Easy” relates to choices made to remain in control and stay on your feet.

Teaching snowsports is just as much about teaching safe behaviors and sharing the mountains as it is the technical fundamentals. Recalling all ten points of YRC is a lot. By being aware of Park SMART, you may be able to simplify the YRC message in a manner that is more relatable to the audience in front of you. Be safe! ⚡

Freestyle Camps

By Greg Fatigate
AASI-E Examiner, PSIA-AASI-E ACE Team Member,
AASI Steering Committee Chair
Smugglers' Notch Resort

This season there are two great opportunities to build your skills and confidence in the park or halfpipe. Both events are run according to "challenge by choice" principles with excellent opportunities to receive coaching from the best in the east.

Halfpipe Camp at Okemo, March 4-5 (Snowboard or Alpine). Okemo offers one of the best halfpipe venues in the country, and they have been generous enough to allow the eastern region to hold

snowboard Halfpipe Camp there for 5-plus seasons. Building on that success, this season we'll be offering halfpipe camp for both Alpine and Snowboard. This event is also designed for all abilities. It is a great opportunity to improve your skill set in this unique freestyle venue.

Freestyle Camp at Mount Snow, March 21-22 (Snowboard or Alpine). For 10+ seasons, AASI-E has held Freestyle Camp at various locations. Building off of that success this season the Freestyle camp at Mount Snow 3/21 & 3/22 will be offered for both Alpine and Snowboard! This event is designed for all abilities. Mount Snow offers the Carinthia park network with several different park sizes from extra small and up. Whether you are looking to explore the park environment or a regular park user, please consider signing up. <<

CALLING ALL FUTURE PROS

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

What did their very first day sliding on snow look like?

Share their adventure!



Luke Gunnar Mawhinney (Age: 25 months - Front yard, PA)

Submit your child or grandchild's image here:

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

Thank you to everyone who submitted a picture, we love seeing your future snowsports enthusiasts enjoying their first day. We didn't have space for all of the submissions, but we have retained them to use in the future if possible.

Future Snow Pros

What did these future Snow Pros look like the very first day they slid on snow?!



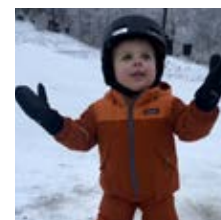
Pepper Bellamy
2 years
Loon Mountain



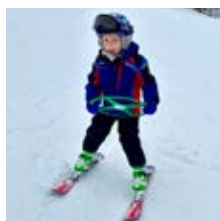
Liam Bristol
5 months
Windham



Christopher Burnham, Jr.
35 months
Roundtop



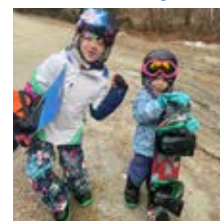
Greyson Czenczelewski
20 months
Pico



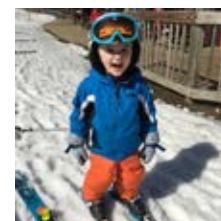
Odin Deney
5 years
Pine Knob



Andrew Hiltz
5 years
Mount Snow



Aurora & Merida LeBlanc
7 & 3 years
Okemo



Chase Legare
2 years
Ski Bradford



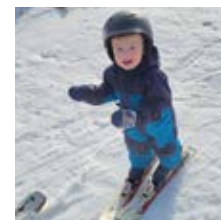
Ethan Lorraine
3 years
Greek Peak



Milo Novum
2 years
Okemo



Kian Nugent
3 years
Toggenburg



Henry O'Brien
2 years
Bellevue



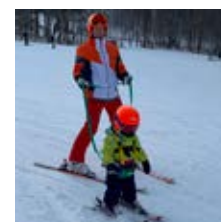
Marie Ross
3 years
Park City, UT



Mikayla Schwartz
5 years
Bear Creek



Jace Weeks
14 months
Loon



Matvei Yunusov
2 years
Bear Creek

Congratulations

to 30, 40, 50 and 60 Year Members

The following PSIA-AASI Eastern members are completing 30 or more years of membership in PSIA-AASI during the 2023-24 season. We congratulate these individuals on this outstanding accomplishment and thank them for their dedication to snowsports education. Later this season, all qualifying members will receive a commemorative pin and a letter of recognition directly from the national PSIA-AASI office.

30 Year Members

Douglas Aaronson
Karen Alessandro
Jason Altman
Alisa Anderson
Michael Arcand
Ken Aubry
Kevin Beach
Rena Bernstein
Steven Bernstein
Brett Bishop
Steve Blair
David Borland
Catharine Branch
Gordon Brewster
Glenn Browning
Richard Brunelle
Brian Bulman
Karl Butler
Clark Caplan
Russell Carr
MaryEllen Charles
Michael Chonko
Cheryl Church
Larry Clark
David Clyde
Ralph Conner
Martin Connor
Richard Coolidge
Brian Coon
Joseph Crescente
Paul D'Antonio
Billy Davidson
Ellis Day
Edward Devine
Robert Dick
Charles Dietz
Thomas Donnelly
Charles Downs
Maureen Drumme
Dan Earley
Karen Earley

Jim Eilenberger
Tim Farwell
Kevin Fitzpatrick
John Freeman
Philip Freudenberger
Todd Gaboury
Brian Gallagher
Mark Garon
Nancy Geibel
Edward George
Donald Glennan
David Gniewek
Cheryl Goldberg
Yvonne Gopsill
Michael Grimm
Jamie Grust
Alexander Halachis
Edward Hall
Karen Haringa
Jason Heller
Amy Hicks
Pamela Hogan
Timothy Hogan
Alison Hyer
David Iskowitz
Eric Jordan
Gene Julian
Kenneth Keirn
Daron Keller
Karol Kloc
Stephen Kolb
Ferdinand La Motte
Mark Lacek
Leslie Lazarus
Karen Leitner
Michael Logsdon
Thomas Loring
John Maczko
Robert Malecki
Phyllis Martin
Charles Mazzucola
Scott McClain

Kurt McConnell
Richard McMahon
Brian McVicker
Bill Melvin
Theresa Mills
Michael Moran
Michelle Moren-Grey
Paul Motts
Evelyn Murphy
Edward Nowak
William O'Brien
Todd Ohlerich
William Olmstead
John Pawlak
Patrick Parks
Robert Patty
Roberta Phillips
Steven Positano
Melissa Pottinger
Michael Reppucci
Seth Robins
Ray Rosenbloom
Matt Ruddy
Scott Ruel
Christopher Saylor
Mark Scavone
William Schott
Barry Schwartz
Lisa Schwarz
Donna Shaw
Jonathan Shefftz
Deborah Shenton
Philip Shutler
Robert Simms
Robert Sliwa
John Spina
Doug Stewart
Bryce Swanker
David Thomas
Amy Thomson
Andrew Tilly
Sean Tomko

Patty Tompkins
Sonya Van Valkenburg
Joe Veshinfsky
Bob Vickowski
Kirsten Voss
Troy Walsh
Chip Walters
David Ward
Kevin Weil
Julia West
Bruce Wilson
Sandra WoehrBlouin
Gregory Wrobel
Jessika Yates
Austin Young

40 Year Members

John Angier
Sandra Barber
Andre Blanquer
Rick Bultman
Alan Bunting
Joe Cartier
Kenneth Connors
Alison Cummings
Leroy Dame
Jon DeNormandie
Dorie Deyo
John Diemer
John Droter
William Eckert
David Eley
Doreen Eng
Janet Friday
Ken Futch
Jocelyn Goldberg-Schaible
Chuck Graziano
Glen Grondahl
Timothy Guilbert
Patrick Hawkins
Barbara Hendricks
Dusan Henigman
Jamie Hess

Elizabeth Hodgdon
Will Horton
Leonard Hurrell
Stephen Klein
Helen Knapp
Richard Knight
Sandra Leclair
Joyce Lockert
Brenda Lowman
Douglas MacLeod
Steve Martin
Tim McCarthy
Dave McFarland
Joanne McIntyre
Michael Meehan
John Morrissey
Fred Munro
Victor Nastasia
Scott Nowak
James O'Donnell
David Parsons
Charles Rees
Bjorn Reiseter
Stephen Robertson
Leonce Roger
Julia Rosenblatt
Bill Sandreuter
Carrie Scheetz
Jeff Smith
Susan Steinbach
Jerry Thier
Nicholas Urnoski
Susan Weinschenk
Richard Weiss
Patty Weston
Mike Youse
Chip Ziegler

50 Year Members

Russell Achzet
Joanellen Barker
Margaret Battiste
Lynne Bishop
William Copeland
Charlie Criss
Ellen Davidson
Michael Dunn
Al Farrell
Erik Garnjost
Mary Louise Gilotti
Vincent Gilotti
Gary Goodwin
Daniel Helin
William Hill
Stephen Howie
Randy Krull
Richard Marron
Joan McCarthy
Thomas Nangle
Carole Ann Olufsen
Edward Osgood
Cheryl Robinson
Cathrine Sanginetti
Geo Spangler
Wesley Stone
Philip Straus
Peter Theriault
John Tidd
Lana Washburn
Edwin Weibrecht

60 Year Members

Thomas Andrews
Barry Bryant
Magdalena Doughty
Virginia Jenks
Paul Mello
Gary Pearson
Jon Putnam
Adolph Scheidle
Lars Skylling
John "Jack" Wheeler



AASI Update

By Brian Donovan

AASI-E Coordinator and Examiner,
PSIA-AASI National Team Member

Greetings AASI-E Community! It feels like winter is finally ready to begin after an extremely slow start to things. But by now, you've had the opportunity to be on your snowboard riding and teaching through the holidays. As resorts start to get more snow and open more and more terrain, it is time to finalize your education and certification plans for the season! I'm here to help!

Planning to get some Continuing Education Units (CEUs)? Here are some events to check out!

* *Intro to Splitboarding Camp*, The Hermitage Club, VT
February 29 – March 1.

- Listen to this! Don't have your own splitboard? No problem. PSIA-AASI Sponsor Burton Snowboards has your back. They'll provide you with a demo setup for the 2-day event if you're one of the first ten people to register and pay for this event.

* *National Freestyle Academy*, Woodward Park City, UT
January 29 – February 2, 2024

- Training Camp. The first two days of the Academy consist of a training camp in which you develop skills in freestyle. Plenty of time for feedback on tricks you want to get while helping to develop your Technical Understanding, Movement Analysis, and Teaching skills in the Freestyle environment with a focus on the Freestyle Specialist standards.
- Clinic. Day three is a clinic in which an examiner reviews the content that will be assessed in the exam. The examiner will lead some warmup runs and a park inspection, while getting to know the group to decide the best focus for the day. Participants receive feedback on the tricks that are going to be assessed during the ride day, and there's time for practice, teaching, and movement analysis.
- Freestyle Specialist Assessments. Participate in a FS1, FS2, or FS3 Assessment during the final two days at Woodward Park City.

* *Snowboard Halfpipe Camp*, Okemo, VT, March 4-5

- Spend 2 full days riding and receiving coaching and feedback in the halfpipe. Okemo has a T-Bar lift that provides easy access to countless laps through the halfpipe over the course of this 2-day event. Whether you have never been inside a halfpipe, you aspire to be the next Chloe Kim or Danny Davis, or you're working toward getting your halfpipe riding dialed for a Level II or Level III Assessment, this event will not disappoint. Always a fan favorite event. Sign up soon so you don't miss out!

* *Intro to Trees*, Stratton, VT March 7-8

- This event is meant to help you explore snowboarding in the trees if you don't have much experience riding off-piste. You should be comfortable riding blue and black terrain at your home mountain and looking to have your mind blown by the fantastic amounts of easier and intermediate tree runs at Stratton Resort.

* *Trees and Steeps Camp*, Jay Peak, VT, March 4-5

- This event typically needs no introduction or description. If you haven't yet attended the legendary AASI-East Jay Peak Trees and

Steeps Camp, what are you waiting for? We build groups to match the skill level and aggressiveness of participants. Whether you are newer to riding in the trees or you are pressing the envelope of what your legs and equipment can handle as you charge the hardest and steepest terrain, this course is meant for you! Come see for yourself why this event has become the year-after-year must-attend event on the AASI-E Event Calendar.

Schedule for Level II and Level III Assessments in 2024:

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

Prerequisites for Level II or Level III Assessments? Don't forget that you need to attend a prerequisite event prior to attending a Level II or Level III Assessment. Not every event on the calendar counts as a prerequisite. Level II Preps, Level III Preps, Teaching Improvement events, and 2-Day Riding Improvement events all count as qualified prerequisites. You can also schedule and/or attend a Member Created Event (MCE) for any of the topics above and that will count for a prerequisite event. Call the Eastern Region Office at 518-452-6095 to set up an MCE. You might wonder: Why don't other events count as prerequisites? The above events are selected as those events that will best prepare you for your Assessment. They'll give you all the necessary information, feedback, and experiences that will help you to train for your next level of certification. This doesn't mean you won't learn at the other elective events or camps on the AASI-E Event Schedule; it just means that the content won't be as focused on preparing you for a certification assessment.

You don't need to be planning on taking your Level II or Level III Assessment to attend an Assessment Prep event. You read that right! While these events are designed to help you prepare for different levels of certification, you can attend these events regardless of your intent to attend the actual assessment this season, next season, or anytime soon. You'll still learn a ton and improve your own skills and understanding of the certification process and assessments.

Level I webinars. The AASI Eastern Team has been hosting online webinars geared at helping members prepare for the Level I experience. On the first Wednesday of each month this winter, there is a webinar scheduled where a member of the AASI Eastern Team will walk participants through what they need to do to prepare for their assessment. These webinars cost \$20 and count for 1 CEU. These webinars are designed for those who may be nervous about an upcoming Level I Assessment, who do not have access to training at their home mountain focused on teaching beginners, or who just want to get the most out of their membership and certification experience. If you're a trainer at your home mountain and you want to understand better how to train your fellow instructors and where to find the resources needed to be prepared for the Level 1 experience, these webinars are for you as well! Check them out through the Eastern Region Event Calendar.



Navigating the Slopes Adaptive Skiing and Neurocognitive Diagnoses in the Senior Population

By Mary Ellen Whitney

Eastern Adaptive Clinic Leader, Adaptive Steering Committee Member, STRIDE Adaptive Sport at Jiminy Peak, MA, Catamount Mountain, NY, and Titus Mountain, NY

Adaptive skiing has taken a remarkable turn in recent years, with one of the latest trends focusing on neurocognitive diagnoses in the over-60-years-old population. This emerging area of adaptive teaching is driven by the fact that humans are living longer, resulting in older athletes with diverse health conditions. With advancements in technology, equipment, and teaching methodologies, individuals diagnosed with neurocognitive disorders are finding ways to stay active in their sport for a longer duration, even after diagnosis.

Neurocognitive disorders, previously referred to as organic brain syndrome, are conditions leading to impaired mental function which most commonly occur in older adults. Causes vary, with neuronal cell death or damage being a common factor. Disorders commonly fall under the Dementia umbrella (there are over eighty types) such as Alzheimer's, Huntington's, Parkinson's, ALS, Post-stroke, Multiple Sclerosis, and others resulting in specific neurocognitive dysfunctions depending on where the damage occurs in the brain.

The Impact of Regular Physical Activity on Aging

Research has consistently shown that regular physical activity plays a pivotal role in promoting healthy aging, both physiologically and psychologically. It has been observed that engaging in activities like skiing can prolong life, even after a neurocognitive diagnosis. In the last decade,

the number of neurocognitive diagnoses has doubled, reaching a staggering 55 million individuals. These diagnoses encompass a wide range of conditions, from degenerative disorders like Alzheimer's to non-degenerative issues such as traumatic brain injuries. Regular exercising can slow symptoms.

Challenges in Adaptive Skiing with Neurocognitive Diagnoses

Adapting skiing lessons to individuals with neurocognitive diagnoses poses unique challenges. Lesson planning requires a deep understanding of each diagnosis, considering the combination of physical, cognitive, and behavioral characteristics. Additionally, the natural progression of aging for this senior population must be addressed including diminishing vision, hearing, bodily functions, bone mass and muscle endurance issues. Safety concerns must be addressed, and emotional support is crucial for both the guest and their caregivers or family members.

To plan effective lessons, instructors must identify and understand safety concerns related to diminished brain and body functionality. Emotional support is key, and instructors should be prepared to adjust lesson plans based on the evolving needs of the individual. Simple behavior management strategies and physical considerations for an aging population are essential components of successful adaptive skiing lessons.

How Instructors Can Adapt

Instructors must implement evidence-based practices that create a supportive environment for students with neurocognitive diagnoses. This includes emotional, informational, or companionship support, as well as tangible or intangible aids. Making environments more predictable and preparing well in advance for transitions are crucial, especially for students with stress-related symptoms.

Adaptive skiing's latest trend, focusing on neurocognitive diagnoses in the senior population, is not only a testament to the advancements in technology and teaching methodologies but also an acknowledgment of the growing number of individuals facing these challenges. Instructors in adaptive skiing must continually educate themselves, adapt lesson plans, and provide unwavering support to ensure that individuals with neurocognitive diagnoses can enjoy the thrill of snowsports while maintaining their dignity and quality of life. ‹‹



Adaptive Development Team Tryout

By Ed Meltzer

Eastern Adaptive Coordinator, PSIA-E Adaptive Examiner
Alpine Level III, Children's Specialist 2

PSIA-E will be holding an Adaptive Development Team tryout this March 25th and 26th at Loon Mountain in Lincoln, New Hampshire. In the spirit of personal and professional development, our Adaptive steering committee has made some exciting changes regarding eligibility. In the past, the requirement was an Adaptive Level III certification and an Alpine Level II. We are now accepting Alpine Level III and Adaptive Level II to try out for our development team. The same will be true for our AASI counterparts.

We are hoping this new pathway will attract those individuals who have interest or experience in teaching Adaptive skiing and riding. By developing your Adaptive knowledge and teaching skills and attaining a Level II Adaptive certification, this new approach can accomplish your current or future goal of joining the PSIA educational staff.

The direction of the "One Team" vision makes this pathway a sensible evolution as we move forward with our national alignment plan. We look forward to supporting inclusivity throughout all disciplines. ‹‹

Be More Adaptive

By Dan McIntyre

Adaptive Level III, Alpine Level II,

Eastern Adaptive Clinic Leader

Wintergreen Adaptive Sports, VA

When I first started coaching adaptive skiing, I often worked with an 8-year-old boy at Massanutten Mountain with severe cerebral palsy. The thing I remember most about him was that he was an early evangelist for helmets on skiers. This was more than 20 years ago, and helmets weren't common, certainly not in central Virginia. He rode a Mountain Man bi-ski with fixed outriggers, not hand-held. He wanted to "put on the turbo" on the way down the mountain and talk about safety as we rode back up. So we really leaned into it. Helmets, lift ops, signage – he had ideas about all of it having heard me and others talk about their value. At one point, he convinced Massanutten Therapeutic Adventures program (then called Massanutten Adaptive Snowsports) founder Mark Andrews to make pins we could give out to recognize people who made an outstanding contribution to safety on the mountain. I think this was one of my most successful teaching experiences because I let the student guide the content of the lesson, and I adapted my coaching to fit their hopes and dreams.



**Safety
recognition
pin**

Being a great adaptive instructor means leveraging the Teaching Skills fundamentals to find ways to connect your lesson content with your students' motivations.

Unfortunately, I know that not every lesson I've taught has achieved this goal. Through training and experience, it's easy to just pull a page from my standard ski lesson playbook. They are washing out at the end of turns because they can't engage their edges, so let's do side slips, traverses and then work those in at the end of a turn. In addition, as instructors, we know the terrain on our mountain, the conditions, the schedule, and many other factors that encourage an instructor, rather than student, driven lesson.

Rather than short-change our students' motivations, we as instructors must be adaptive in order to deliver the appropriate technical knowledge in the context of the student's interests, goals and abilities. For example, since putting on the turbo could easily conflict with safety, we talked about where and when it was safe to go fast and what moves he could use to speed up or slow down when needed. We collaborated to set goals that were both technically relevant and motivating for that student. Then I presented information and facilitated reflection in the context of his interests in safety and mountain operations.

This season I'm challenging myself, and all of you, to lean into the teaching fundamentals and be more adaptive. For every lesson, consciously identify one or two ways you can adapt that day's program to your student's hopes and dreams. I'm going to hold myself accountable by noting these in my student evaluations. As a trainer, I'm going to make space in my clinics for participants to reflect on how they can more effectively adapt their coaching program to the needs of their students. And if you are taking an exam this season, as you train on all the technical progressions that might come up, go ahead and brainstorm ways to adapt these to the students you regularly see on your mountain. That practice will make you better prepared to apply the teaching fundamentals in both your exam and real lessons.

Remember every student is unique, every lesson is different, and great teaching is adaptive teaching. So be more adaptive! ⏪

» » ABSOLUTELY AASI, *continued from page 19*

Waitlist for full events.

IMPORTANT WAITLIST NOTE: For events that reach capacity, we encourage you to add yourself to the waitlist by completing the online registration process and clicking WAITLIST. If there is enough interest on waitlist and we have staff available, we could open another group. If a spot opens up, waitlisted registrations will be automatically added to the event and your card will be charged at that time. You will get a confirmation email when your card is charged and your registration confirmed. We will do our best to get you into the event if possible, but please don't make firm plans unless you get a confirmation that you're officially registered. If you want to be removed from the waitlist at any point, you can do so in "My Events" in your member portal, or please call the Eastern office (518) 452-6095 during regular hours: Monday to Friday, 8:30am to 4:30pm EST.

PSIA-AASI National database of E-Learning content. That landing page contains a wide offering of free courses, courses for CEUs, Certification Pathway Courses, and Webinars. Log in to the PSIA-AASI National website and dive in! You won't regret it!

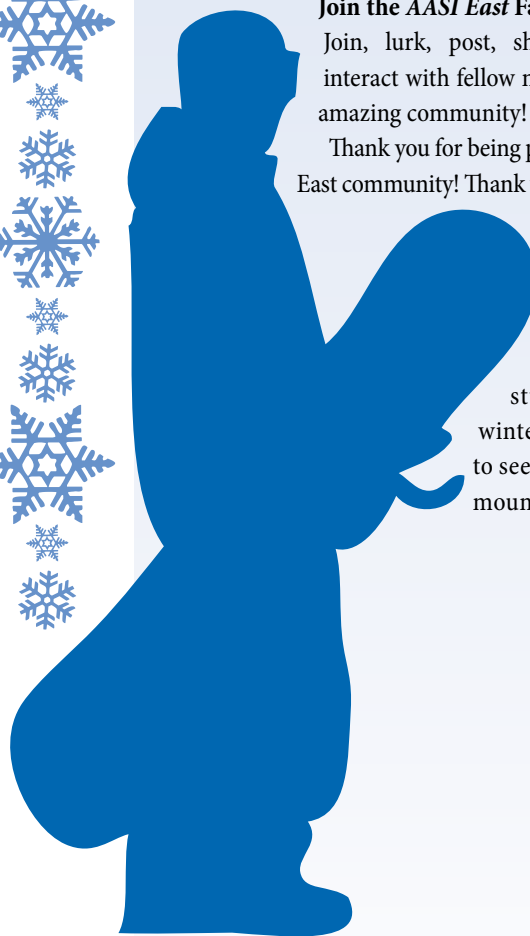
Be an AASI Ambassador! Take the time to identify the new instructors at your resort. Get to know them, go out and ride/teach with them. And be an experienced friend and mentor to connect with.

Join the AASI East Facebook group.

Join, lurk, post, share, like, and interact with fellow members of this amazing community!

Thank you for being part of our AASI East community! Thank you for teaching snowboarding!

Thank you for sharing your passion with all your students this winter! I can't wait to see you out on the mountains! ⏪





To Achieve You Must First Attempt

By Dave Capron

Alpine Development Team Head Coach

A very talented group of Level III pros will converge on Waterville Valley Ski Resort to compete for a spot on the PSIA-AASI Eastern Alpine Development Team on March 12-13, 2024. The Development Team Tryout tests your skills across the entire Learning Connection Model and also your belief in yourself. This is the first place in the certification journey where you are judged and scored against your fellow candidates. In the certification process your performance is scored against a standard, and all can be successful and attain the pin. Shooting for a place on the Development Team is to demonstrate that you have what it takes to not just be *at* the Level III standard but, rather, *above* that standard. At some point you may wonder whether you are good enough, or whether you ski as well as the candidate who went before you. You may wonder what you can do to demonstrate that you are the one they should select. Don't worry; all the candidates ask themselves these same questions. Some may not admit it, but they did – even the greats.

This tryout is a job interview that tests your ability as a ski teacher to lead groups, your poise and adaptability in situations relating to ski performance, teaching performance, and your ability to be part of a team. The tryout shows who can collaborate, lead, support, and inspire those around them. Successful candidates don't just perform at a high level; they lift others up and make them better.

I tell you this not to scare you out of signing up for the tryout. Rather, it's this: if you are not signing up for the tryout because you don't know if you are good enough, that to me is not a good reason. You will never truly know if you were Dev Team worthy if you don't try. The only way you find out is to go and leave all your talents on the hill with your performance. You can't make the Development Team if you don't go.

The questions you need to ask yourself are the following:

- Do I have the desire to challenge myself to continue to learn and grow as a ski teacher and a person?
- Am I willing to dedicate time and energy to not just make the Development Team but to dedicate time and energy to train, mentor, and inspire others to reach their goals?

There is a time commitment to being an education staff member, and that is around 15-20 days a year. We have two days of training to start the season, and then there are understudies to do as a Development Team Member. If you complete the journey to Examiner, the minimum number of work days remains 15-20 days per season. Yes, you have to put in time, but my personal experience is that what you get in return from the experience is beyond description. The more time and effort you put in, the more you get back.

My ed staff journey has had ups and downs but the rewards have been many. I have had so many incredible experiences being able to coach and help guide others to their personal and certification goals. To see the smiles and – often – tears of joy when they reach that bronze, silver, and gold milestone or they have a bump run they dreamed about. Being even a small part of each person's journey is incredible.

Meanwhile, the training opportunities and the mentors and coaches I have access to has grown beyond my expectations. I can't list them all here so I put it this way: just list the entire current Eastern Education Staff and

anyone who has served since 1997. Yes, every one of them has had some impact on me, my skiing, teaching, and how to do the job better. Being on this team has allowed me to meet so many great educators in ski teaching and outside ski teaching. And all of this education and training is there for you to soak up and then share with the membership and those at your home resorts.

Why tell you all this? Because I want you to look within yourself and ask: do I love to share my knowledge and help others reach their goals in skiing and ski teaching? Do I want to open learning avenues so that I continue to grow and learn and reach levels I did not know were possible? If you say yes to these two questions, then you should be thinking about the Alpine Development Team. I will see you at Waterville Valley on March 12-13.

Two final thoughts. First, it is normal to question how you will match up at the selection. We all need to continually focus on how we are doing and how we can improve. Second, don't worry what others think. Don't worry about going and having an unsuccessful result. Please don't let those thoughts stop you. We all worry too much about other people's opinions. If you don't try because of fear of what people will think if you don't make the team, you have failed without even trying. If we let other's opinions stop us from trying to reach our goals and dreams, one thing is certain: we will never attain our goals or dreams.

Listen to those you trust and who support you in success and failure. Then decide for yourself. The only person who can make the PSIA-AASI Alpine Development Team for you, *is you!* I have done and continue to do things that I may have success in and sometimes not. But I keep going and refuse to let my fear of other people's opinions stop me. I encourage you to take chances and your dreams can come true – things beyond what you dream are possible. You just need to believe in yourself. ☞



Sue Kramer hikes past a Norwegian fjord

The Outdoor Life

By Sue Kramer
Alpine Examiner
Head Coach

Here's a fact about the Winter Olympics and Norway: Norway has

the most winter sports medals of any country in the world. With a population of just 5.5 million, I ask you: how is this possible?

My husband and I toured northern Norway last fall, and I returned with some insights. For one, I am pining away for the fjords, and I can report that Norway is simply an outdoor enthusiast's playground. At every bend in the road is a picture worth framing, every dip or rise on the hiking trail looks out to jagged peaks, fjords, or low lying carpets of berries. If you're lucky, you'll catch a reindeer herd hanging out (seriously).

This article is not a travel ad for Norway; rather, it's to share a cultural core value that I witnessed. It's called *Friluftsliv* (free-loofts-liv), and the English translation is "open air living." Another interpretation of Friluftsliv

Step Away From the Can... Please!

By Chris Ericson

Alpine Certification Chair



The best instructors dare step away from canned lessons

For some, the “can” can be a comfortable place to live. With thirty-seven years of teaching people to slide down the hill, mostly in control, I have developed some great, and not so great ideas on how to do that

effectively. Through the years, the can of progressions or canned lessons has become full of scripts on ways to help convey a message, develop a sensation or just create that moment of learning. Having this resource of information can be great, but unless you know when to use them, and more importantly, how to appropriately modify them for an individual situation, these canned approaches can start rotting and smelling pretty awful after a while.

Our love for the canned approach starts from the very beginning. We learn as first-time instructors, working the assembly line of new snowsports enthusiasts coming to our learning areas. Start with boot drills which may include bow ties with your boots, then put on a ski, then one-ski bow ties, then scooter around on one ski, and so on. This is what we do, and we don't expect a new instructor to stray much from the plan, or modify the instruction depending on

their student. It is the typical canned presentation start to finish. Whether your introductory student is Mikaela Shiffrin or Bob the Builder, they can expect to be walking in circles in their boots as you work them through your tried-and-true beginner progression.

But as we become more seasoned and working towards possibly even a higher level of certification, this “same activity for all individuals” needs to be adjusted. It was once explained to me like this: A typical Level I instructor *copies* other instructors or their trainers, replicating lesson after lesson. A Level II instructor *chooses* the best type of activity or teaching approach to use in the current situation based on a couple of situations they have been coached on and learned to do. And a Level III instructor *creates* and *adjusts* activities as needed based on the evolving situation that is currently in front of them with one or multiple students.

Another way to look at this is a new instructor should be able to organize the learning environment to align with the initial assessment of the group. But a more experienced instructor should be able to tailor the learning environment to the needs of the individual. That same instructor should also have the ability to customize and pace the learning activities to allow students reflection time as they explore, experiment, and play toward the desired outcome.

When examiners are conducting an assessment, there is nothing more obvious than a canned presentation. The candidate practiced their program, got all of the steps just the way they wanted them, perfectly executed – which

most likely had nothing to do with the other people in the group or any of their needs. The question ultimately comes up: “Why did you have the group do those activities?” There is typically a lot of silence after that question.

Do you ever see an instructor at your home mountain teaching the same thing, to EVERYONE? It is statistically unlikely that one instructor happened to get every lesson that had a student that needed to be coached on turning their legs more and keeping the upper body quiet by holding their poles out front. Ugh!

Our ability to be successful with our clients might involve you taking some risks. On more than one occasion I have started off doing something (convoluted, yet sensible in my head), looked over at my client and said, “Let's see if this works; I have actually never tried this before.” It usually gets a few laughs, breaks some tension, and often works to achieve the desired outcome.

The canned approach rarely, if ever, considers the motivations and emotions of those who are in your lesson and for sure doesn't create an environment where active listening will take place, since you already have a plan and are sticking to it.

Stepping away from the can is going to take some time and practice. For now, think of just modifying one or two things in your canned teaching approach. Ask yourself, why would I modify this, who is the student, what challenge do they have, or how can I make this more challenging for other people in the group? Ultimately, your ability to become a better coach rests on you, and your willingness to stay out of the can. ☞

is essentially having a lifestyle where spending time outdoors is a daily ritual, regardless of what the weather presents, because communing with Nature is good for one's mental and physical health.

Have you heard the phrase “There's no such thing as bad weather, only inappropriate clothing”? Well, it is alive and well in Norway. I can tell you firsthand: the Norwegians love their “kits” (clothing and equipment). Everyone on the trail has high tech hiking pants, jackets and boots. And people really do go out no matter what the weather is – every day. It rained every day of our visit, but we went ahead with our plans and only had to turn back from reaching the exposed rocky peak of Blatvatnet due to severe winds.

Children growing up under the custom of *Friluftsliv* learn about their surroundings through play and exploration. In sport, the idea of winning isn't the driving force; in fact, Norwegians tend to emphasize involvement in multiple sports throughout childhood as being good for them because they focus on fun, camaraderie, and learning new skills. As a longtime ski coach, I have observed children being pushed to win at very early ages, and by the time they have reached puberty they're burnt out. How many of those children could have gone on to have positive skiing experiences had the emphasis been on enjoying movement, social development, and skill acquisition?

Which brings me back to the stat about Norway's Winter Olympics success.

It's no surprise if you spend your childhood playing outside even in the winter, then the cold and snow is just another environment. For example, *National Geographic* reported on a Norwegian father who took his young daughter out in the hills and by the time she was 5 years old she had already spent 300 days in a tent. Too often we focus too hard on perfecting new skills. Yes, basic skills are important for safety reasons. Beyond that, my focus would be on how to enable our guests to enjoy being outside, on acquiring skills that would allow them to reach a higher viewpoint on the mountain, and simply enjoying the scenery and learning to appreciate being outside with friends, no matter what the weather is.

In Norway, they are not counting wins and losses; they are simply out there participating and loving it. And, as their Winter Olympics success attests, that translates into winning. Who can argue with that?

For more information on how Norway views involvement in sport, here is their Children's Rights in Sports: idrettsforbundet.no/contentassets/482e66e842fa4979902ecc77f0c05263/36_17_barneidrettsbestemmelsene_eng.pdf.

The father and daughter article in National Geographic: nationalgeographic.com/travel/article/how-norways-friluftsliv-could-help-us-through-a-coronavirus-winter. ☞



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.

Building Relationships Based On Trust

By Austin French

Alpine Development Team Member,
Children's Specialist 2
Sugarloaf, ME

In the arena of people skills, we often talk about developing relationships based on trust, but what actually brings this complicated interpersonal process to fruition? What builds their trust and confidence to point their equipment downhill and glide straight for the first time, to slide their first box in the park, or to go from groomed corduroy to ungroomed territory? There are many pieces to the puzzle that allow us as instructors to convince people to take these leaps, but we need to be intentional to make it happen.

In his 2019 talk "How do you measure success?" author and motivational speaker Simon Sinek talks about the traits Navy Seals look for when they choose members of their most prestigious operational teams, like Seal Team Six. The two metrics that they use to analyze their team members are *performance* and *trust*. To illustrate what they mean by performance and trust, says Sinek, they ask two questions: Would I trust this person with my life? And would I trust the person with my wife?

Obviously, they would prefer to populate their teams with people in the "high performer, high trust" category, but who would they choose next? According to Simon, the Seals would rather have a person who was "medium performance, high trust" than a "high performance, medium trust" individual because the trust between the members of that team is the greatest asset they share. Often, instructors think that the fastest and best way to build trust is to perform at a high level, showing what great skiers and riders we are. However, while students may feel confident in their instructor's ability, will they walk away saying they trust their instructor? Would they – to use Sinek's terms – trust that instructor with their wives (or partners)?

While being technically sound—both in our ability to demonstrate and describe what we want to happen on snow—is important, it is hardly the sole contributor to our guests developing trust in us. This is where we, regardless of our current technical ability level, can make meaningful change in our guests' lives through honing in on our people skills, including developing trust.

Developing relationships based on trust is a People Skills fundamental. But how do we actually do it? Here are a few things to think about:

- Trust takes time and is built through a series of smaller events that compound on each other, as compared to a singular, larger one. Take fitness as an example: if you exercised two days in a row and looked in the mirror, you would likely see no results. So working out must not be a successful way to improve physical fitness, right? False. It is because of our consistency in doing the little things over a period of time that creates change.
- Start with the things that you can control, and understand that you're not just making decisions that impact your interaction with them today. Rather, think long-term for when you see them again.
- Be authentic. When you ask someone a question about their personal life outside of snowsports, do you genuinely care about their answer? If you do care about the answer, you interact differently with people. We have tendencies to make more eye contact and actively listen while picking out the key aspects of their response. The people we're on snow with pick up on our social cues, the tonality of our voice, and our body language as we stand in front of them or sit with them on a chairlift. These things impact your client's perception of whether you're invested in them. If they feel like you're invested, aren't they more likely to be invested in you?
- Instead of solving a problem for them, think about proposing to solve a problem together. Learners gain greater satisfaction by being part of the creation of a solution as compared to being the recipient of the solution. Therefore, if we present a problem to solve together, this is the equivalent of us displaying that we trust them to come up with the solution. This could look like asking a guest: "People describe the sounds that their equipment makes as they slide on snow in so many different ways. Let's explore this."

If we set up the scenario in this fashion, now we've created a relationship with our guest(s) where we are problem-solving, and we need their input to be successful. Plus, we still get the information of the sounds their equipment makes, what might cause those sounds, and what we could try to do to change the sounds. And please, show gratitude when they bring their solution forward. It is with this gratitude that you are able to encourage the next set of solutions.

The best part is that this doesn't exclusively apply to being a snowsports instructor. For those of us who find ourselves in leadership positions within our snowsports schools or elsewhere – or aspire to be there one day – these strategies could help you not just manage, but *lead* your team toward success. The next time you're on your way to lineup or a meeting and you walk past one of your team members and give them the passing "how ya doin'?", are you going to hear their answer as you continue walking past them? You, after all, asked the question. Or are you going to be the person who stops and listens because you care? And that's the first step to begin to build trust. «

Can We Do More?

By Bobby Gallo

Alpine Development Team
Mount Peter, NY

Here's a stat that I find alarming: only 9 to 12 percent of skiers take lessons. I understand that lessons can be a major investment, and they cost a lot of money. Meanwhile, snow pros need work. While I believe there are steps resorts could take to better support pros and better communicate the value of taking lessons, I also think pros could in some ways take matters into their own hands.

Skiing is often viewed as an activity that can be self-taught or learned through trial and error. Many skiers believe they can simply put on a pair of skis and figure it out as they go. This mindset can lead to a reluctance to take lessons, as people feel they do not need instruction in order to enjoy the sport. Meanwhile, many ski resorts charge extra for lessons on top of the already high cost of lift tickets and equipment rentals. This can deter people from taking lessons, as they may feel the additional cost is not worth it.

Some skiers may be intimidated by the idea of taking a lesson. They may feel self-conscious or embarrassed about their skill level and worry that they will be judged or criticized by their

instructor or other skiers. This fear can prevent people from seeking out instruction and improving their skills. Furthermore, some skiers may simply prefer to ski on their own, without the structure and guidance of a lesson. They may enjoy the freedom and independence of exploring the mountain at their own pace, without the constraints of a class schedule or lesson plan. This can be especially true for more experienced skiers, who feel they have already mastered the basics and do not need additional instruction. Finally, ski lessons may not be readily available or accessible to all skiers. Some ski resorts may have limited lesson offerings or only offer lessons at certain times or on certain days. This may make it difficult for skiers to schedule a lesson that fits their needs and preferences.

A related problem is that some states don't require mountains to pay pros for coming to work unless they are giving a lesson. I believe resorts could do more to show customers the value of lessons, but I wondered: what can we pros do for ourselves to drum up business? If we can reach out to more clients and create more work for ourselves, maybe we won't have to be on a steady diet of Ramen noodles and cheap beer. For instance, when free skiing many mountains forbid pros from wearing their uniform. Although I feel it could be a great way of breaking the ice on the chair or trail to open a dialogue, with liability and worker's compensation insurance rates going up all the time, resorts will do what they have to do. So, we could look for other creative ways to let customers know we're instructors. Put a sticker on your helmet or cruise the beginner area (where we all cut our teeth) picking people up and handing out cards. Sit next to a family eating lunch with a fellow instructor and start talking about a great lesson you had (maybe while wearing a piece of your uniform – even though you may not be able to ski in uniform, there are no rules I'm aware of about eating!). Hit the parking lot or rental or ticket line and chat people up. Let's get out there and create new mountain school skiers and riders. If you do, you could make a few extra dollars in tips and treat yourself to a nice meal and drink, meet new people and work on getting the percentage of people we teach up.

Here are two anecdotes demonstrating the above. First, over the Martin Luther King holiday, I approached a father, mother and a ten-year old who was on the ground looking sad. Her mom explained she was having a hard time. I called

over a snowboard instructor and asked her to take the young girl for two complimentary laps on the Sun Kids Carpet. Several hours later I ran into the parents and their happy, smiling daughter. They told me about their great experience and how they booked a private lesson for the following week. The second was when a mother who had purchased a bunch of private lessons for her children was unable to get her youngest into the kinder-school lesson due to it being sold out. I was lucky enough to be at the right place at the right time and heard the mother's frustration over this matter. I asked the kinder-school supervisor if we could make today a great experience for this family by making room for this young child. The supervisor immediately engaged the child and accepted the child into the lesson, and the mom and I went to line-up where she paid for the lesson on the cube on the hill (another great tool to make people's experience easier) so we didn't have to walk all the way back to customer service. The mother thanked me, and I invited her to take a run with me when she had the time. There are thousands of similar stories, and I believe you get the idea. So get out there get on the hill, interact with your clients and let's get more people taking lessons. «

Ski Like a JEDI Outdoor Scholar

By Hannah Hunt

Alpine Level I

Windham, NY and Winter4Kids, NJ



Skiing is one of my lifelines and a passion that's woven into the fabric of my existence. As a woman of color, a ski instructor, and an advanced skier for over three decades, the slopes have been both my sanctuary and my training ground. In January 2023, I participated in the transformative JEDI (Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion) Outdoors initiative for Black, Brown, and Indigenous Women of Color who hold PSIA certification. There is a noticeable lack of Level II and Level III Black, Indigenous, and Women of Color snowsports instructors. The JEDI Outdoors program, pioneered by Humaira Falkenberg, bridges this gap by giving PSIA-AASI Level I and Level II instructors the opportunity to train

with Deb Armstrong for a week to deepen our technical skiing.

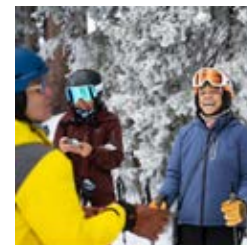
I attended the program in 2022 and 2023 – and the opportunity was an immense honor for me and a beacon of progress for women of color in the advanced ski category.

During last year's training, I encountered a challenge. Altitude sickness crept in, a subtle warning that something was amiss. Despite discomfort, I persevered through the training, refusing to miss moments with iconic figures like Armstrong and Burt Skall, the snowsports director of Taos. Admittedly, I felt off-kilter and had to exert extra effort during the sessions. I even went to Urgent Care on the mountain, where they administered fluids and oxygen. Still, my ski bug urged me to continue.

However, signs persisted. On my flight home, jaundice began to appear in my eyes. Concerned, I rushed to my doctor upon returning. But fate intervened; before I made it home from my doctor, I was redirected to the emergency room. A battery of tests uncovered the unthinkable: early-stage pancreatic cancer. The revelation startled me, yet I couldn't shake the belief that skiing at high altitudes had unmasked this sickness, allowing me to heed my body's warnings. Without the JEDI Outdoors training, the cancer might have stealthily lingered, evading detection until it was too late. Alpine skiing saved my life.

Ten arduous months ensued—chemotherapy, surgery, more chemotherapy, and everything that goes with it. With the support of God, family, and friends, today I stand cancer-free, on the precipice of embarking on my next ski adventure -- pursuit of Level II certification.

Well, incredibly I learned of my selection to a third Jedi BIPOC Scholarship. Taos Ski Valley, a place that has become my place, beckoned once more. And in an unexpected turn of fortune, Fischer Sport has generously equipped the six JEDI Outdoor Scholars from around the United States with brand-new skis, boots, and poles. YAY! It was another exhilarating journey—a reunion with familiar faces and the forging of new connections among fellow scholars... and I can't believe I was able to ski all five days.



Hannah Hunt's facial expression says it all

Ever since I learned to ski as an adult (I wanted my daughter, nephews, and now grandsons to learn, so I learned with them), the ski life has been a profound marvel. It not

only fuels my soul and recovery from the “whatevers” but, also unexpectedly played a role in uncovering a life-threatening ailment. From the camaraderie that snowsports brings (for example, I co-founded with Dwayne Wilkins, a black, National Brotherhood of Skiers-affiliated ski club called Thrillseekers) to the challenges and sheer exhilaration, skiing has been a transformative power in my life, and something I can do with my family forever. I am looking forward to the forevers. ☞

Ski Turn Curve Generator

By Jonathan Miner

Alpine Level III, Adaptive Level I,

USSA Level 100

Pats Peak, NH

Show of hands: How many of you have tried to draw the perfect turn? Maybe you tried to use your ski pole as a writing implement, or pencil on a pub napkin? Maybe on a whiteboard in your locker room? While working on our weekly training newsletter, another trainer and I were texting back and forth, trying to convey “the turn” we wanted to draw to go with the text. A picture is worth a thousand words, but we were running out of words... and time. It was a lightbulb moment. I told the other trainer, “Can you give me a couple of hours?” In my off snow-career I write software, and most recently browser-based tools to visualize data in the railroad industry. I knew I could come up with a way to model the shape of the turn, the foot to foot pressure, and the orientation of the skis, and let the computer do the hard work of actually drawing it.

Shape of the Turn

A ski turn is a complex combination of arcs but to keep it simple, consider three key distances.

- Turn radius. Slalom turns have a smaller radius, Giant Slalom turns have a larger radius. This simple model assumes a constant radius through the arc of the turn.
- How far through the arc does the skier travel? Did the skis come across the hill (90 degrees), or a less complete turn (20 degrees)?
- And last, how far did the skis traverse between arcs?

Three key distances: turn radius, crossing the fall line, and length of traverse.

The fall-line to fall-line example in the above diagram shows a turn with a radius of 100 (pixels), an angle of 65 (degrees) and traverse of 30 (pixels). The skier is traveling “down” the page.



How much pressure on each foot?

The next fundamental that usually comes up is where the skier is pressuring the ski. How much pressure foot to foot, and where in the turn? To indicate the pressure of the ski on the snow, the arc is thicker where pressure is the highest. On the fall-line, the skier likely has more pressure on their outside foot; through the traverse it's more equal, and then builds back up on the other outside foot. The model also allows control over where along the arc the pressure transitions occur. In the example in the above diagram, the skier is on the fall-line with an 80/20 ratio, which changes to a 50/50 ratio through the traverse.



How much steering angle on each ski?

The last thing added to the model was the steering angle. How much were the skis rotated? Where, along the length of the ski, was the point of rotation? And where along the length of the arc did the transitions occur? Lots of numbers, but computers excel at dealing with numbers! Consider the beloved wedge Christy: at the fall-line both skis are steered in, making the wedge, and as the ski gets to the traverse, the skis are matched, with less steering angle.

In the example in the diagram, on the fall-line, the right ski is steered in 25 degrees, while the left ski is steered in 10 degrees. When the skier reaches the traverse, both skis are matched, and straight ahead (steering angle of zero). The skis' rotation occurred at the midpoint of the ski, with tips and tails deflecting evenly.

Conclusion

I initially sent the other trainer the foot-to-foot pressure image of the turn, and we realized this was a game changing moment. Just by changing a few numbers we could easily generate a new picture. We could be creative and let the computer do all the math. Over the remaining weeks of the season, the steering angle and pivot point was added to the model. Future thoughts revolve around how this could be extended to model more than one turn, how about modeling an entire slalom course?

The “Ski Turn Curve Generator” is written in HTML/Javascript and runs inside a web browser. It includes some presets for wedge turns, wedge christies, skidded parallel and carved parallel turns. If you're interested in giving it a try, contact me at jonathan.miner.232@gmail.com. ☞

Skiing Through Transition

By Dave Raybould

Alpine Examiner, Children's Specialist 2,

Freestyle Specialist 1

Stowe, VT

I've heard a lot of chairlift chat recently about turn transition. Is there a right or wrong way to transition from one turn to the next? Is it situational, tactical, or a baseline technique? What's the desired outcome for the skier and how do different types of transition affect ski performance? When you break down turn transition using the fundamentals as a foundation, things become much clearer.



Dave Raybould makes another transition

The cross over. This is probably the most common type of turn transition you'll see out on the hill and is characterized by both legs being long (or “tall”) when both skis are flat on the snow. Rewind a couple of seconds and what you'll actually see is, after the apex of the turn, the inside leg begins to lengthen so by the time the skier gets to transition, both legs are long. When both skis are flat on the snow, the hips and the center of mass align over the feet and the base of support. The upper body moves up and over the feet into the top of the next turn, which can also cause a toppling sensation. As the skier enters the new turn, the new inside leg will begin to shorten and the new outside leg stays long. More simply: long leg, short leg (apex). Long leg, long leg (at transition). Short leg, long leg (apex).

The cross under, or flexed transition. After turn apex, the skier allows both legs to flex through the end of the turn and realign underneath the upper body. The legs flex at a rate that keeps the magnitude of pressure between the skis and the snow constant. The feet cross underneath the upper body at turn transition when both skis are flat on the snow, while the upper body remains

very stable with little/no movement. From the side, the skier appears to be squatted with the hips and center of mass behind the feet. This is very similar to, but not the same as, a retraction turn, which is when the skier actively pulls the legs toward the center of mass. Long leg, short leg (apex). Short leg, short leg (at transition). Long leg, short leg (apex).

The cross through, or hybrid transition. A combination of the cross over and cross under where the skier allows the feet to come back underneath the upper body at the end of the turn, while at the same time allowing the upper body to move across the feet and down the hill. Skis remain engaged with the snow, and the skier uses ski performance to propel the center of mass into the next turn. The “pedaling a bike” analogy works perfectly here.

When you pedal a bike, you have one long leg and one short leg at the top and bottom on the stroke. As you continue to pedal, one leg begins to shorten as the other begins to lengthen and for a split second at mid-stroke both legs are the same length. They’re not long or short, instead medium in length (medium leg, medium leg). In ski terms, after the apex, the outside leg begins to shorten as the inside leg begins to lengthen. Both legs are medium length at edge change, and the new inside leg continues to shorten as the new outside ski continues to lengthen into the apex of the next turn.

We often talk about a “flexed” transition. What we really mean is being in an athletic stance through transition with two medium length legs as if you were about to shoot a basketball. This athletic stance gives us options to move in all planes as we ski into the next turn.

So, when should you use each of these transitions? Well, it depends of course! Different transitions tend to be more or less effective given the situation. For example, skiing in bumps or short slalom turns, a cross under might be more effective as it allows for a quick edge change and redirection of the skis. The cross over takes more time to develop and may be more applicable for a larger radius turn. The cross through transition is super-fun on groomed blue terrain on a 15m hybrid/cheater Giant Slalom ski.

Not all transitions are the same, and there are different ways to go from the beginning of one skiing turn to the beginning of the next. Alpine pros should have an appreciation for the different ways we can transition from turn to turn, and be able to demonstrate and utilize all three in appropriate situations. ☞

Who Are You?

By Shannon Rucker

Alpine Level II, Snowboard Level I, Children's Specialist 2, Freestyle Specialist 1 Liberty Mountain and Mount Snow

This New Year’s (like many), I chose to reflect. Where have I been? Where am I going? Who was I in 2023? Who am I becoming? These might seem like deep questions for a professional snowsports educators’ publication, but my PSIA-AASI membership has been a guiding light in my personal development. Aristotle said, “We are what we repeatedly do.” Perhaps you’ve even channeled that message to keep you working towards a goal in life. I suspect snowsports instruction and membership in our organization may have helped you grow as a person too!

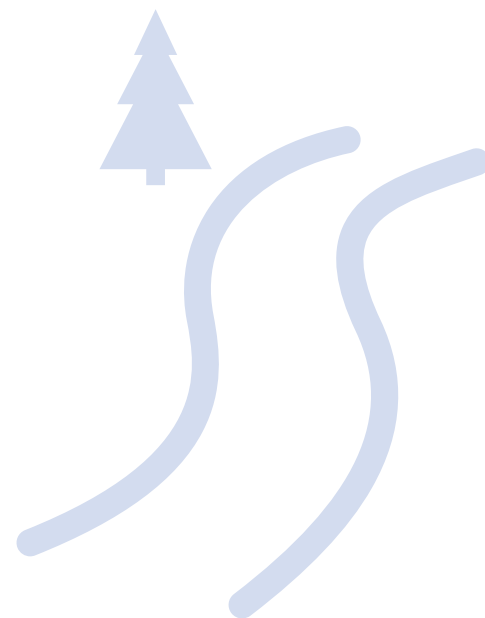
So, who are you? Based on what we repeatedly do as professional snowsports instructors, I bet a know I a bit about you:

- *You rise to the challenge.* So many people find the shorter and colder days of winter difficult to navigate and they retreat mentally and physically waiting for spring to emerge. But not you. You wake in the dark months of winter and travel (some of you quite far) to inhospitable climates and geographies. You subject yourself to snow, ice, wind, and cold rain. When your student struggles, you dig deep and find another way to demonstrate, explain, or encourage. When language, disabilities, injuries, or conditions make things hard – you find a way through.
- *You lift others up.* So many people allow jealousy, ego, and pettiness to negatively impact their relationships with others. But not you. When you feel the energy of the group dip, you adjust the task, the terrain, or you give them a break. When the locker room is crowded, smelly, and you are tired, you find the energy to ask your peer about their day (and genuinely listen because you care). When the new hires at your school or event struggle you encourage them and connect them to resources. When someone throws down a killer run, you cheer them.
- *You get back up.* So many people let their adversities in life drag them down permanently. But not you. When you literally fall on the slopes, you get back up. Better still, when your students fall, you show them how to

get themselves up. You rehab through injuries to get back on the slopes. Perhaps you’ve even been unsuccessful at a certification or exam but found your way back up.

- *You allow yourself to be uncomfortable.* So many people avoid new places, new people, or anything uncomfortable or stressful. But not you. You meet new people for your job. You develop relationships with them. You learn and practice new skills and drills. You try new terrain and conditions and mountains. You work in the cold, sometimes the dark or foggy, and the icy. You allow others to examine you.

Is this you? I encourage you to ask yourself some deep questions this year. Who do you want to be? Where do you want to go? No matter the answer, I suspect PSIA-AASI can help you get there. Looking to grow your network? Consider engaging in our Facebook or Instagram pages or joining the mentorship program next year. Looking to hone your leadership skills? Keep your eyes peeled for opportunities to join or lead a committee or group, ask your Director to be an area representative, or put together a training circle (Public Service Announcement: some more at-large Board positions are coming available this March). Do you want to expand your horizons? Register for an event far away from home, learn about a discipline other than your own, push your freestyle or children skills, or befriend another pro who does not run in your normal circle. While we cannot change who we were in 2023, we have the rest of the year to start repeatedly doing the things to make us happy with who we are in 2024. ☞



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