



NORTHERN INTERMOUNTAIN DIVISION
 Professional Ski Instructors of America
 American Association of Snowboard Instructors

FALL NEWSLETTER, NOVEMBER 2020

President's Message

November 1, 2020

Greetings fellow PSIA-AASI members and snowsports educators!

I hope this newsletter finds you and your families safe and excited about this upcoming season of sliding on snow.

The Northern Intermountain Board of Directors and our operational staff have been working diligently through this summer in order to respond to current challenges and opportunities and to provide you with meaningful, relevant and valuable educational content as well as engaging membership in a community. I am looking forward to exploring with many of you through new web-based education, in addition to on-snow events.

With so much uncertainty in our current cultural climate, I want to share some reflection that has served me well over these past months. Like many of you, I experienced an abrupt end to last season that was followed by a version of day-to-day life that was quite foreign and more than a little unsettling. The process by which my priorities were distilled brought a lot of clarity to how and with whom I want to spend my time. I am more than ever committed to being a member of a community that welcomes those with an interest to learn and be a part of discovering what it means to slide on snow. I want to facilitate the pursuit of gaining knowledge, skills

and abilities that not only help people slide more accurately, adaptably and skillfully but also help them communicate to connect with and facilitate those abilities in others.

The Learning Connection Model (the People Skills, Teaching Skills and Technical Skills that instructors use to connect with students and to connect the students with the learning environment) can serve all of us to highlight what we enjoy most about this sport and develop in those areas where we need or want to make advancements. This model empowers us with fundamental truths about our sport and craft; our job is to carry what we know--those fundamentals--into a dynamic environment, challenge ourselves through exploration and experimentation and adapt our responses based on what we perceive. This versatility to create tailored responses allows us to connect with others meaningfully versus robotically relying on pre-baked, memorized prescriptions.

I want to challenge you this season. Take what you know about skiing, riding, gliding and sliding, and ask yourself

why you believe what you do. Do you possess a series of progression note cards with original etchings done by Joubert himself passed down for generations in your locker room? Did you learn through trial and error, trying to replicate what you heard or saw in a lesson or training session? Did a mentor show you "the way"? Whatever you believe you know about teaching, skiing and riding, test those beliefs with a flexible way of thinking. I believe you can use PSIA-AASI resources to help you engage with the fundamentals necessary to adjustably apply, convey and connect.

If you have questions for me or any member of the NI leadership please reach out to Ben or to me via broberts@psia-ni.org and president@psia-ni.org respectively. Have a super and safe season and I hope you can find me thigh-deep in frothy tree-shots soon.

**Warm regards and chilly mornings,
 Christian Luening, PSIA-AASI-NI
 President, Bogus Basin**

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Northern Intermountain 2020-2021

Celebrating 50 Years

**50th Spring
 Symposium Event
 hosted by:**



POMERELLE MOUNTAIN RESORT
 IDAHO

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NI News

A Message from the Executive Director

What does it mean to be a viable non-profit professional association? This has been a fundamental question for me as I have transitioned into my role as Executive Director of the PSIA-AASI Northern Intermountain division. From the perspective of the dictionary, *viable* means to be “capable of working successfully; feasible.” The same dictionary’s biological meaning is “capable of surviving, or living successfully, especially under particular environmental conditions.” The biological definition resonates for me, especially as we consider our current circumstances in the midst of a global pandemic with a great deal of uncertainty about what our snow-sports industry will look like over the next 9 months. What does it mean for PSIA-AASI Northern Intermountain to be “viable?”

This question has two answers, which must balance with each other. First, we must be viable as a small non-profit business entity. Finances and other resources must be carefully managed and operations should be efficient. As a general rule, slightly more money should be coming into the organization than should be spent by the organization. There should be sufficient financial reserves to ensure that operations can continue in the event of financial hardship and the loss of income sources. There should be infrastructure and support structures in place to ensure that business practices can be consistently and effectively undertaken in the event of changes in staff or volunteer leadership.

Second, the organization must be viable in terms of achieving its stated mission and vision. In our case, this means supporting our members as part of the snowsports industry as they work to develop personally and professionally, create positive experiences, and have more fun. More specifically, it means that we must help support the training needs of our member schools and the education and certification needs of our individual members. Our volunteer opportunities must be rewarding and meaningful while offering chances to learn by doing and opportunities for career advancement.

There is no doubt that PSIA-AASI Northern Intermountain is a viable organization as both a business entity and as a mission oriented non-profit. We have managed to be both frugal and member-centered over the years. The tone has been clearly set by our past leaders and the path is clear to follow. Can we be better? Absolutely. We can tighten our focus on how we balance income and expenses for our education and certification events. We can measure our success in not just whether or not events have been held, but have they exceeded our members’ expectations? Above all are we working to advance our viability as both a business and mission oriented organization? It is easy to focus on one or the other, but balancing the two is no simple task.

As we move into the 2020-21 season, we must be resilient in the face of the uncertainty the Covid-19 pandemic creates. We must adapt our approach to continue to deliver meaningful and useful education in the current environment. Above all, we must strive to be valued by you, our members, as a key resource to support your work as snowsports instructors. *(Cont'd page 3)*



Make your tracks count this season!

NI News Cont'd

What can you expect to see this season?

- *More in-house clinics hosted by member schools based on their specific needs and their Covid requirements.*
- *Webinar content to support and at times replace in-person learning.*
- *A more limited clinic calendar, with the clinics scheduled more likely to occur and some clinics and certification events "pre-confirmed." These events will not be cancelled based on low enrollment.*
- *Some clinics and certification events will take place with a less traditional schedule to better fit the host operator's schedule and needs (for example look for some events at Bogus Basin to take place during the afternoon and evening hours).*
- *An event request process for member schools and members to request events based on their schedule and interests.*

I would like to take a moment to recognize Tom Koto's service as our Interim Executive Director and past Board President. Tom's tireless work and service to PSIA-AASI Northern Intermountain and our members has been exceptional. I would also like to welcome Nick Treat to our staff as our new Business Manager. Nick will be taking care of many of our behind the scenes financial reporting and accounting.

We are committed to making the best of things and look forward to serving you with the best possible education and support as you work to develop personally and professionally. Please don't hesitate to reach out with questions, comments, feedback, suggestions, or just to talk skiing, riding, and teaching.

**I look forward to hearing from you,
Ben Roberts
NI Executive Director, Bogus Basin**



Welcome Aboard!

Nick Treat has been a member of PSIA-AASI for 16 years and has been a member of the Education Staff since 2009. During Treat's career, he served on the Western Division Board of Directors and the Western Education Foundation Board of Directors. Treat's professional experiences include: Director of the Mt. Shasta Ski and Snowboard Team, Staff Trainer for Squaw Valley Ski and Snowboard School, Trainer, Alpine Coach, and Instructor for Perisher Resort, Australia and Mammoth Mountain Ski Area, and Instructor at The Remarkables, New Zealand. Currently, Treat

works as the Head Coach for the Bogus Basin Freeski and Snowboard Team, and now in his new role as Business Manager for the Northern Intermountain Division. When not on snow, Nick enjoys spending time outside with his wife, Heidi, and son, Willy.

Scholarship Opportunities 2020-21

For specific details on scholarship opportunities, please refer to the scholarship page on the Northern Intermountain website: www.psia-ni.org/membership/scholarships/.

To apply for a scholarship, you may either fill out the online application, or print the paper application and mail it to the address listed below. Regardless of your method of application, you must also submit a letter of recommendation from your ski school director, supervisor, or mentor from your ski school.

Mailed applications may be sent to:
PSIA-AASI Northern Intermountain Division
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Boise, ID 83707



PSIA-AASI NI

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Ketchum, ID 83340

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NI News Cont'd

NI Covid-19 Policies

What will Covid-19 operations look like this season in PSIA-AASI Northern Intermountain? The situation will continue to evolve throughout the season, though there are a few key elements that will be consistent throughout:

We will always follow the guidelines and requirements of our host areas and schools.

- Online, webinar, and outdoor learning will replace indoor meetings and learning.
 - ⇒ Event registration and group introductions will take place remotely prior to events.
 - ⇒ Plan to boot up at your car and meet your clinic leader and group at a predetermined outdoor location.
- Instructors who would prefer to avoid any chance of Covid exposure will be able to fulfill all their CEU requirements via webinars and e-learning.
 - ⇒ PSIA-AASI NI will offer webinars and members are encouraged to take part in webinars offered by other PSIA-AASI divisions and the national organization.
- Masks that cover the nose and mouth will be required at all PSIA-AASI Northern Intermountain events.
 - ⇒ If you would rather not wear a mask, webinars are an excellent option for you to earn CEU's and remain current.
- Clinic leaders and examiners will work to avoid gathering indoors and are asked not to create informal indoor meetings around meals or bathroom breaks.
 - ⇒ This goes against much of our training and how we prefer to operate, but it is the right thing to do.
- To limit potential exposure, areas hosting events may choose to hold events that are only open to their own snowsports school staff members.
- We will avoid hosting events on weekends and holidays. Most events will take place on weekdays.
- Clinic leaders and participants will be required to confirm that they are free of any potential Covid symptoms.
- Our cancellation process will not penalize those who need to cancel event participation due to Covid concerns or possible symptoms.
 - ⇒ Last minute cancellations will be acceptable this season.
 - ⇒ Event fees will be credited forward or refunded.

Over the summer I had the opportunity to work on the hill at Mt Hood and learned quite a lot about what teaching and coaching on-snow in the middle of this pandemic looks like. The good news is that it works; I was able to coach, ski and develop my own skiing with other pros at Mt Hood. Here are a few thoughts:

- Working in a mask means that your body language must be clearer and slightly exaggerated to help others read you.
- Work to project your voice through the mask and pay extra attention to whether or not you are facing the person or people you are speaking to when talking.
- People and groups take time to adjust to the rules and expectations of new environments. Be patient and firm when explaining safety requirements and be ready to remind people a few times to lift their masks or adjust their behavior before they get it right.
- When working in group environments, coaches and instructors must establish and maintain the norms—this can be a little different from our normal approach of following the lead of our students.
- Try different mask and eyewear combinations—nearly all will fog and different combinations work better for different people.
- When skiing or riding it very often works better to pull your mask down during the run. Stop a short distance away from the group or lift line to allow time to pull your mask back up and then proceed to your group or to enter the lift line.
- People are stressed out, while most will find time on snow to be a welcome reprieve from the stresses of life during the pandemic, some will bring the stress with them. Be ready to deal with these guests (and sometimes employees) firmly and make it clear that their behavior is unacceptable.
- Take time to take care of yourself, watch for mental and emotional fatigue, and recognize that you may react differently than you expect to various situations. Be ready to ask for additional support and assistance from supervisors.
- If you are supervising others, look for signs of mental and emotional fatigue and take opportunities to check in and offer breaks and changes in tasks and duties to help your staff manage their stress.
- Skiing and riding are amazing sports that bring personal freedom and are so much fun (even in the middle of a pandemic)!

We can't wait to see you out there!
PSIA-AASI-NI Leadership

NI News Cont'd

PSIA-AASI-NI 2020 Award Winners—Let's Give Them a Hand!

Every year, the Northern Intermountain division recognizes members who have exceeded the mark in different ways as members, instructors and often mentors. The nominations come from fellow instructors, trainers or ski school directors and are presented to your PSIA-AASI-NI Board of Directors for consideration. Last year was no exception, although with the premature ending of our 2019/20 ski season, we sadly were not able to present the awards at our annual Spring Symposium at Tamarack for jobs well done. We do hope to be able to present the awards in a future formal setting, perhaps at our upcoming Spring Symposium celebration at Pomerelle in 2021.

Top of the Course, National Award: Krista Clayton, Sun Valley

Having personally been in a couple of exams with Krista, I have witnessed and benefitted from her positive attitude and willingness and ability to empower the other exam candidates. Watching Krista evolve into a Level 3 certified instructor has been fun and encouraging and I'm sure inspires her peers at Sun Valley.



What does receiving the Top of the Course award mean to you? It is an honor to receive this award, to be nominated by colleagues who were with me through this journey, and to have them recognize my efforts. Having a goal, plan, and support was a necessary part of receiving this award. Last, but not least, is staying focused throughout the journey and having a growth mindset along the way. Good things.

On your quest to Level 3 certification, what felt different last year? My ski boots. I paid attention to my white, 22.5, Rossignol Hero ski boots. I took the time to focus on the movement of my foot and ankle inside the boot. Through this feeling and observation, I developed movement patterns that allowed my skiing to go to the next level. Also, I had the courage to get advice and listen to others to help me succeed and improve when it came to my boots.

What do you feel your tipping point was last season? Lots and lots of railroad tracks. Then take the tracks into turns, and being able to do this on all terrain. Skiing terrain that challenged my alpine skills, and lots of it.

What advice would you extend to others on their certification journeys? Making it fun and enjoying the journey whether it may be one season or several. Ski and ride every day, or as often as you can. Venture to terrain that takes you out of your comfort zone. Have a mentor who travels with you through the certification process. A mentor will keep you focused and they will tell you when your skiing is good and when it's not so good. Find someone you can laugh with and share your feelings as you go through the process from start to finish of your goal.

Do you have further goals as a ski instructor that you would be willing to share? I do have further goals to achieve, this certification is a step to reaching my ultimate career goal. With those future goals, I am working towards attaining DCL and becoming a Snowsports Education/Certification Director. Achieving this will allow me to develop paths that instructors can take to attain their certification goals in all disciplines. I will share my passion, not only for snowsports but for learning as well. Never stop learning. Continue to look through your lens and the lens of others.

Do you feel mentorship was a key element to your success? Having a mentor is the keystone to the journey of achieving certification. They keep you grounded and focused, even on days when you may not be. When you are skiing, they will be the ones to tell you what they truly see in your skiing/riding and movement patterns. They ignite your skiing/riding, feed your passion, and most importantly, they are with you through the journey. This season I will be mentoring the 1 - 3 year instructors in the Sun Valley Snowsports School. I will share my passion for snowsports, adapt training that ignites their focus and have a lot of fun watching them develop into amazing instructors. I will become their hero.

Lex Kunau Legends, Divisional Award: Gary Baarson, formerly Brundage Mtn.

Gary, a former air force pilot, was on the PSIA-AASI-NI Board of Directors for 5 years and taught at Brundage Mountain. Gary has been a member of PSIA-AASI for 40+ years and a member of NI for 10+ years. He is a dedicated professional and worked tirelessly to enhance NI's membership experience. As a NI board member, Gary made it his mission to help modernize and streamline the division's operations and procedures. Gary undertook the massive job of rewriting the division's Bylaws to ensure clarity, functionality and continuity of NI procedures and it served as a framework for our current Bylaws. He also redesigned our Education Staff patch on their jackets and undertook getting those produced. Gary was part of the Brundage alpine training team up until two years ago. He now enjoys free skiing with friends and family and working with and coaching the McCall Winter Sports Club U8 racers. (Cont'd page 6)



NI News Cont'd

What does receiving the Lex Kunau Legends award mean to you? Being chosen by peers to receive this prestigious award is both an honor and humbling. Lex was instrumental in supporting NI. Not only is he a legend in NI, but he was also my friend. Lex was a kind, caring man that loved skiing and the membership of this great organization. He was a mentor and everyone's friend. I will never forget this outstanding man.

I can remember the fledgling years of PSIA when the manuals were, in some cases, handwritten or typed and put in a 3-ring binder. The evolution of PSIA and AASI is quite amazing to me. It has evolved into a professional development and educational resource that "sets the pace" in snow sports education and I am sure that it will continue to be at the forefront with new technology and education advancements. I am proud to be a member of this outstanding organization, and the dedicated professionals that support it.

What advice would you extend to others on their instruction and PSIA/AASI journeys? I would advise anyone that is serious about being a great ski/snowboard instructor to take advantage of the PSIA-AASI resources. Study and apply the manuals, take as many clinics and educational events as you can. Share your knowledge and learn from each other. Be a team player and don't forget to just have fun!

Instructor of the Season, Divisional Award: Theresia Bohnert, Brundage Mountain

As a fellow instructor of Theresia's, my experience is that joy is what she exemplifies on and off the hill. She truly succeeds at PSIA-AASI's mission statement of developing personally and professionally by creating positive learning experiences and having FUN on and off the hill through ski instruction adventures and leading Ski.Fit conditioning from her mobile business in the off season. Having witnessed her certification journey first-hand, I have been so inspired by her attitude and perseverance to succeed. Last season, she stepped up as a leader and coach by helping train Level 2 alpine certification candidates at Brundage Mountain and is always willing to help others.

What does receiving the Instructor of the Season award mean to you? I have no idea how that has happened! I feel honored of course!

What do you think makes a great instructor...how do you work with your clients to deliver your best lesson? A great instructor is someone with empathy, tolerance and good listening skills! Being able to adjust to each client and their needs. Have the knowledge and understanding of how we move on skis and adjust/teach accordingly. Deliver what they ask for and make sure they leave the lesson satisfied and wanting to return.

What advice would you extend to others on their instruction journeys...self-improvement, certification, etc.? Enjoy the process of getting certified if you are on that route. Don't stress too much over it. Learn from every opportunity and experience, good or not, with an open mind. I tried three times for Level 3 teaching and I'm glad I have failed that many times. The fourth exam was the win! I had a fantastic time skiing and participating in exams in different areas, met wonderful people and examiners! I don't think I'd be the instructor I am now if I would have passed on my first try. I have not lost anything with each failure. There is always something to learn. Even as a fully certified instructor, it's important to be flexible and never stop learning. We are all different and so are our clients/students.

How has being a Level 3 changed your teaching style? As mentioned in the last question, there is always something to learn. As a Level 3, I have a better understanding of how we ski and therefore can teach with a broader knowledge. Of course, each accomplishment and added knowledge gives you a bit more confidence as an instructor and person.

Do you have further goals you'd like to achieve as a ski instructor that you would be willing to share? I definitely would like to train and help get new and seasoned instructors the help they need and ask for. Of course, I always like to improve my own skiing and get constructive feedback and learn new skills because I want to ski until I'm 101!

Do you feel mentorship was a key element to your success? Mentorship is great! Find a mentor that works for you. Someone you trust and you feel supported by. I'd love to mentor anyone that wants to be mentored by me! (Cont'd page 7)



NI News Cont'd

Rookie of the Season, Divisional Award: Tucker Hyatt, Tamarack Resort

Tucker is a 14 year-old who began his instruction journey at Tamarack as a homeschool program student when he was 9 years old. He revealed his enthusiasm and thirst for knowledge very quickly by asking questions about the five fundamentals being shared through instruction and showing his ability to understand the intent of the fundamentals through performance and application.

Through the next few seasons, Tucker continued to improve his personal skiing and level of understanding. He additionally picked up snowboarding and became very adept at that. The instructors that have had Tucker as a student have commented that he isn't really a kid, he is an adult in a kid's body.

In the 2019/20 season, Tucker became a new PSIA Level 1 ski instructor for Tamarack. As a new instructor, he took on the challenge of teaching groups as well as private lessons with great success and confidence. The veteran instructors love having Tucker as a part of the school. He is always asking questions and seeking to become his best for the school and his students. His enthusiasm, kindness, team attitude and thirst to learn shine through. Tucker also volunteer teaches at McCall's Little Ski Hill two days per week.

Tucker worked hard, delving into the PSIA certification process and attended the PSIA-AASI-NI Level 2 ski and instruction prep clinics as well as a weekly movement analysis group in McCall as a productive participant. Both the clinicians and fellow attendees were impressed with the young man. Tucker's hard work culminated in also successfully passing his Level 2 alpine certification in 2020.



What does receiving the Rookie of the Season award mean to you? Receiving the rookie of the season award means so much to me. Thank you for the nomination.

On your quest to Levels 1 and 2, what do you feel helped you? On my quest for Levels 1 and 2 what helped the most was volunteering to help teach skiing at the Little Ski Hill's after school program.

What advice would you extend to others on their teaching and certification journeys? I would extend the advice to keep trying and ski with people who are better skiers than you. You will learn just by watching and following and if you are lucky like I have been they will give you tips and tricks along the way. Having someone teach you is very helpful as well.

Do you have further goals you'd like to achieve as a ski instructor that you would be willing to share? I still want to learn to be a better skier and a better ski instructor.

Congratulations to our award-winning instructors for jobs well done and their much-deserved recognition!

Deann Miller

NI Secretary and Awards & Recognition Committee Chair, Tamarack Resort

NI Awards

Help recognize those Northern Intermountain members who have had a positive impact on you, your school, our organization, and snowsports as an industry! If you know someone with infectious enthusiasm for instructing, a giving individual who has committed hours to an extensive NI project, a role model with a long-time history with the association, then take a moment to nominate them to receive an award. Division Awards include the following:

Instructor of the Season

Rookie of the Season

Northern Intermountain Hall of Fame: Lex Kunau Legends Award

Walt Coiner Distinguished Service Award



For complete descriptions and eligibility please refer to the website: <https://www.psia-ni.org/info/division-awards/>. Nominations must be submitted in writing (email or print) to the Division Secretary. Please mail or email submission by **March 15th** to:

PSIA-AASI-NI

c/o Deann Miller, Secretary

138 Brookdale Dr

McCall, ID 83638

deanntamarack@gmail.com

NI News Cont'd

Fall 2020 Alpine Certification Update

Alpine certification has been continuing to evolve forward with changes nationally and divisionally. Much of the work being done at the national level by the alpine taskforce is directed towards the 2021-22 season. The updated Alpine Certification Standards that were approved in June are set to take effect a year from now. Until then, the previous standards will continue to be in effect. What that means is that we have time to make subtle adjustments to the assessment process which should allow the training candidates have been doing to continue to be effective and will help us avoid any sense of needing to step back and start over in our exam preparations and processes.

The new Alpine Certification Standards are revised to reflect the Learning Connection Model (LCM) and the fundamentals of Technical, People, and Teaching skills. Our certification processes for the 2020-21 season will not change very much. There will some modifications to the scorecards and some of the feedback, however the actual skiing, teaching, and technical skills being assessed will remain the same. Due to Covid, portions of the exam prep clinics and the exams themselves may be conducted by videoconference. Post-event feedback will also be delivered online.

I would like to thank our alpine certification committee for their work in updating our materials to align with the new Alpine Certification Standards. Please feel free to reach out with questions, ideas, or suggestions that you have about our alpine certification processes. Our objective is for them to be as transparent as possible.

Thanks for reading!

Ben Roberts

NI Executive Director, Bogus Basin



National News

PSIA-AASI-NI Letter to the Community

To the members of the PSIA-AASI-NI community,

“Today, PSIA-AASI is more committed than ever to its vision of ‘Creating lifelong adventures through education’ and its goal statement of ‘Members benefit from participating in a diverse professional community’...As an education organization for ski and snowboard instructors, we can and should do more to educate on the topics of diversity, equity, and inclusion within our sphere of influence. Continuing to have frank, open, and honest conversations with one another inside and outside of our organization is a start, but it can’t end with words alone. Together, we must do more than create a blanket statement of support and solidarity for communities of color and others who are underrepresented within the snowsports industry.” (<https://www.thesnowpros.org/who-we-are/diversity-equity-inclusion/>)

PSIA-AASI has created the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Task Force. We understand that the creation of this task force is just one small step, and the first step, of a larger action plan to help us truly bring to life an education culture and a community that is more supportive of, and connected with, all goals for diversity, equity, and inclusion. (<https://thesnowpros.org/2020/06/08/psia-aasi-creates-diversity-equity-and-inclusion-task-force/>)

PSIA-AASI-NI shares these intentions and we are excited to be joining together with over 200 PSIA-AASI leaders from around the country to move forward with the next step in this action plan. In November and December all 9 PSIA-AASI Boards of Directors, all national and divisional office staff members, the PSIA-AASI National Team, and all National Task Force members will be engaging in a three-part learning process focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion training. The Northern Inter-mountain Board of Directors, office staff, and our national taskforce representatives are excited to join this learning process. We believe it will help us join in the positive discussions required to become more inclusive as an organization and as an industry.

The PSIA-AASI Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Task Force plans to work together with PSIA-AASI leaders and members from around the country to develop a meaningful statement outlining the role diversity, equity, and inclusion will play in our actions moving forward. In many ways, this statement will be similar to our organization’s statement regarding climate change and sustainability.

As we move ahead with this discussion, we encourage our members to join in the conversation. We want to celebrate the diverse community that different individuals cultivate in our division, and we want to hear from you about it. We want to hear stories from individuals in our division about your experiences. We are committed to making all voices heard.

If you are wanting to share your perspective on this please email Executive Director Ben Roberts: broberts@psia-ni.org, or President Christian Luening: president@psia-ni.org.

For more information about the PSIA-AASI Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Task Force, please email memberservices@thesnowpros.org.

**Respectfully,
PSIA-AASI-NI Leadership**

National News Cont'd

PSIA-AASI is Us!

Covid-19 has made it necessary for us to see and use different ways of communicating as an education association. Using the tools now in place with our AMS operating data management system and our website, we are able to consolidate information and deliver links to education and certification. Divisions, member schools and members can participate in this self-directed culture of sharing experiences, forming a 'Brain Trust.' A great example can be found by logging in to the national website: www.thesnowpros.org, and opening the events tab on the menu. Opening the event calendar gives you access to events happening this season nationwide in PSIA-AASI.

We are all concerned with the on-the-hill education events this upcoming season. If you want to get a jump on your education requirements, filter the events calendar to show the webinars currently being offered. Content has been developed by the Brain Trust so as to allow all of us to participate with the best of the best in forward thinking discussions. Get involved and evolve and with the organization. Many webinar events also offer continuing education credits. Join in. You have your own unique snowsports teaching experience. As a member of the National Board of Directors, I want to make sure to include your voice with all other members' voices and make PSIA-AASI ever more sound and solid!

Written by,
Walt Coiner
PSIA-AASI National Board of Directors, Sun Valley



NI Articles

Discovery Leads to a Great Ending for my Guest!

It's my **first**-year teaching and I have an adult class of 12 for 4 weeks (one day per week), while learning "the bag of tricks of teaching." In my class there is one guest, Jane, who wants to be the star of the class and constantly talks over me about her family's traveling for a year through South America. During the second lesson, she constantly harps on me for more feedback, so I decided to use her as an example for the class to point out some pressure/balance techniques to improve her turning. Looking back, I should have been more subtle. The last run that the class made that day, Jane improved big time! As I am saying "see you next week" to my class, I singled Jane out with a compliment, "Jane, your last run was a great improvement!" Then I noticed a "look" through her goggles, so I slid over to her and her husband and asked, "Am I imaging things, or am I getting a dirty look?" She **yelled**, "You always look when I am doing it wrong and never when I am doing it right!" Stunned, I skied off saying, "Have a nice day." So, I wondered if I just lost my position of my first year of teaching, and then I consulted with my mentor on a chair ride. He tells me, "memories often fade a week later." I was not so sure, but a week later during this class lesson, out of the clear blue, she tells my class that I am a great instructor! I am confused, but a **happy camper!**

It is now **summer**, and I am setting up for my Yoga class while talking with Kim, my instructor, about the connection of balance in yoga and skiing. A woman already sitting on her mat speaks up and said, "You taught me how to ski!" Turning to the voice and looking for a few seconds, I realize it's **Jane**. *It's really a small town*. After class, I decide to initiate a conversation with Jane (*do a little digging*) and through a long conversation, I **discover** that she has a neurological condition in the Parkinson family. She has good days and bad days that revolve around her balance. I explained that I will put her in my class the next season and we will have a short discussion (confidential) before each lesson on how her day is going and I will give her tips to help her overcome her balance issue that day. Jane told me she will re-dedicate herself to Yoga workouts so she will be ready for the next season to work with me. From that day on, I'm her best friend! So, the next couple of winter seasons, I would spend extra time with Jane working on her balance issues. It was a neat personal bonding experience with Jane, watching her grow in confidence each week on her skis.

Incidentally, Jane worked at one of my favorite little shops in Twin Falls, and for several years when I came through the doors to the shop, I heard loudly "**Hi Jim!**"

Discovery Worked!

Written by,
Jim Stevens
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NI Articles Cont'd

How to Become a Better Instructor

During this time of year, I know we all start thinking about getting back on the slopes. Already dreams of a foot of fresh powder are floating around in our heads. Some, if not all, are getting in some semblance of shape for the upcoming season. Some may even be hitting the books. Start this season by setting some goals and objectives. Top of my list, as always, is be a better instructor... then, be a better instructor... then, be a better instructor. You get the drift. Then I add, be a better skier.

Being a better instructor and a better skier, in my opinion and experience, are always tied together. Getting ready early and practicing the basics will enhance our teaching and skiing ability.

The question of how to become a better instructor is simple to answer. Review your discipline tech manual and the Teaching Snowsports manual. There is no need to memorize this information, but it is important to know where to find it. In the Alpine Technical Manual, for instance, chapter four is the place to look when biomechanical questions arise, and chapter six is the place to look for movement analysis information. Chapter seven is there if you want to add a bit more technical information for a lesson. In other words, it all starts by getting into the books. Each time a review takes place, something new might be learned.

In the Teaching Snowsports manual, you will find the various learning theories and practices we use on an everyday basis. Reading it leads you to believe whoever wrote it was spying on your lessons. We do this stuff every day. The most inclusive of these is the Learning Connection, which is divided into three spheres of influence during a lesson: People Skills, Teaching Skills, and Technical Skills. The fundamentals of each of these areas create the basis for the Teaching/Learning Cycle. Our discipline fundamentals remain the same as previous iterations. Both the People Skills and Teaching Skills fundamentals are being revised slightly to the following and will be implemented during the 21-22 season:

People Skills Fundamentals:

*Develop relationships based on trust.
Engage in meaningful, two-way communication.
Identify, understand, and manage your emotions and actions.
Recognize and influence the behaviors, motivations and emotions of others.*

Teaching Skills Fundamentals:

*Collaborate on long-term goals and short-term objectives.
Manage information, activities, terrain selection and pacing.
Promote play, experimentation and exploration.
Facilitate the learner's ability to reflect upon experiences and sensations.
Adapt to the changing needs of the learner.
Manage emotional and physical risk.*

While this list may seem daunting to take on individually, if you visualize yourself during a given lesson, you will understand you generally meet at least most of both sets of fundamentals. They give us the **you, me, us** aspect of teaching. Note the people skills and teaching skills fundamentals blend within the

set and between sets. For example, when I, in conjunction (collaboration) with my student, determine what the student wants to achieve during the lesson, I have the beginnings of a trusting relationship. With each step of the lesson I ask for and include my student's input. This works to close the loop from introducing to recapping the lesson and previewing what can come next for the client.

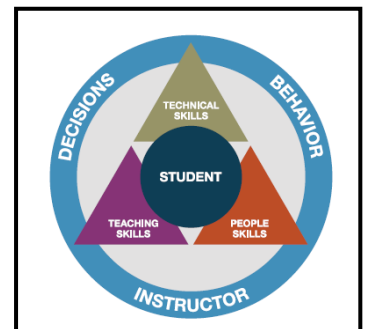
Practice teaching a fellow instructor. Take runs together, where one person can teach on the first run and the other person can teach during the second run. These practice sessions WILL pay dividends during real lessons.

Revisit the fundamentals of your discipline and rediscover blending the essence of each of the movement patterns through each phase of a turn. Find the basics. Practice again and again. Refuse to give anything but a perfect demonstration of whatever needs to be demoed. As an Alpine instructor, I try to take at least one warmup run each day to focus on the wedge, wedge christie, and basic parallel turns. My intent is to ensure my stance and movement patterns feel the same for each type of turn. Save room to ski all three turns in a series of 5-10 wedge, 5-10 wedge christie, and 5-10 basic parallel, blending the fundamentals as appropriate. The look of the skiing should be the same for all three except for what the feet and legs are doing. There should be progressive flexing and extending, appropriate upper/lower body separation, and consistent turn shape and size from one turn type to the next.

When free skiing, make every other run or so a training run. During the training runs work on one of the specific goals you set at the beginning of the season. For example, if the goal is to have a finished turn by turning skis more with the feet and legs than using the skis' edges, work hard on feeling the femurs turn in the hip sockets to aid the feet in progressing further through the turn. Presenting a lesson is a great time to not only practice the goal but to teach the guest the same movement. Incorporating your training and skiing into a lesson enhances your understanding of the biomechanics and technical aspects of the movements. It makes you a better instructor.

Attention to the details of the basics is essential to bettering your ability to teach. The things we teach a client during their first lesson are invariably the first thing they fall back on during a tight spot throughout the rest of their skiing lives. It stands to reason then that we must be well prepared and able to present the basics in a positive, professional manner. Mikaela Shiffrin did not become great with just talent. She became a champion because she worked hard on the things that do not require talent (the basics) so her talent could push her to greatness. None of us will reach her skill level in our sport, but, if we master the basics more each season, we will become better at what we do and perhaps one day inspire a student to be the next Mikaela Shiffrin. Become a champion, be a better instructor!

**Written by,
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NI Articles Cont'd

Senior Specialist Training...Why it Rocks!

The first time I heard of the Senior Specialist Training offering from PSIA, I saw it as another professional opportunity to help me be more versatile and valuable to my ski school and for my future move from Washington to instruct in Idaho.

Until you delve into the program, it can be confusing to understand what a senior skier is. In Washington, many of the resorts I skied at were made up by generally younger skiers and lots of snowboarders. You really didn't see what I would think of as a "senior skier" ... I pictured Mr. Magoo, and was way off base.

As I began the Senior Specialist process, I discovered a "senior" skier is actually someone young and hip like me, 50 years or older. In fact, a large number of PSIA instructors, examiners and clinicians fall into this category. While my clinicians for both Senior Specialist 1 and 2 were in the senior profile, there was certainly no resemblance to what my initial thoughts were about who fit in the profile...definitely no one resembled or skied like Mr. Magoo!

As I began to learn more about the program, I began to embrace the importance of relating it more to my own ski improvement and certification journey. I have weathered several foot and shoulder surgeries and issues since acquiring my SS credentials (none due to skiing). The reality is that we change physically and cognitively as we age. There are things we can do to enable us to hopefully not miss any of the ski season and help our clients ski efficiently and with minimal impact so they can stay on the slopes and have fun!

My motivation for taking the Senior Specialist 2 really crystallized for me in 2015 on vacation with my husband at Brundage and Tamarack before moving here. What I saw struck me as different from my Northwest skiing experiences... there were multi-generational families and skiers my age and older in greater numbers enjoying the mountain.

Most of the folks I love skiing with and learning from are "senior skiers." Many of my clients also fit into a senior skier profile.

I thought about my non-skier and used-to-ski friends and my lack of ability to get them on the slopes. I've heard about bad knees, hip and knee replacements, a fear of injury and lack of confidence, and it's sad. I love to ski and share the mountain experience with family, friends and clients. I fully expect to be a super-cool grandparent sharing the mountains with young fami-

ly members someday, instilling a passion for the mountains that they will pass on to their families.

The passion for skiing at ALL ages is what I see in greater numbers in Idaho with amazing memories being made. I can only guess the reason I see a greater number of "senior" skiers is because perhaps, like myself, they ended up moving to Idaho to retire and continue their love of the sport.

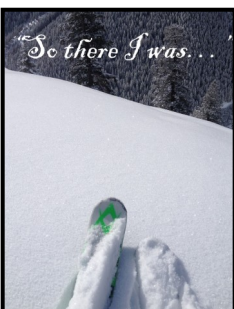
What is the purpose of Senior Specialist training? In a nutshell, it's about giving instructors of any age and ability the tools and the knowledge about the way senior skiers move, learn and engage in the sport. Participants in the training learn to effectively work with senior clients at whatever stage of skiing they may be at in a way that reduces physical stress through good skeletal alignment and joint stacking. The training equips the instructor to provide high quality skiing experiences the clients are seeking while having an awareness of concepts and tactics with theory specific to coaching the senior skier.

Through the Senior Specialist accreditation, I learned information and activity ideas to work with adults in a way that will help keep seniors on the hill as long as they desire and instill in them confidence and continued ski improvement.

There are great descriptors and written material about Senior Specialist training on the PSIA-NI website. There are workbooks and manuals that go into detail about the CAP, VAK, Senior Teaching Cycle and Maslow's theory with more information than I can delve into while attempting to keep this article a reasonable length.

I would encourage you to investigate the online material towards becoming a Senior Specialist and plan ahead for the 2021 and beyond seasons. Rally your fellow instructors to attend a clinic and speak with your Technical Director about the desire to teach adults if the opportunity is there.

Written by,
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Letter from the Editor

As always, we are grateful for the submissions we receive for the newsletter and welcome any and all members to submit words of wisdom to the tri-yearly NI Newsletter. We have so many great people in our membership, from first-year members to long-timers who have never contributed to the newsletter, and we want to encourage YOU to send in an article, a story, a list (of anything snowsports related), a teaching or learning memory, a technical question, or even a PHOTO of a moment in time. We want to hear from YOU, the membership voices of our division!

If there is something on your mind, or if you have an idea or an experience that just one other instructor would find useful, email it to us! Let's all get better by hearing from more of YOU! Please email submissions and/or questions to Martina: media@psia-ni.org.

Thank you, and have an epic season on the snow!
Martina Vala, NI Newsletter Chair, Sun Valley Resort

Carve' Diem

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