



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

# WINTER NEWSLETTER, JANUARY 2018

## President's Letter

### The Character of the Instructor!

This past fall, I had the opportunity to attend the Fall Conference of President's Council of the PSIA-AASI National. I had a chance to meet with the Division Presidents and Executive Staff, as well as the Chief Executive Officer of National, Nicholas Herrin; a great guy dedicated to the profession and education of its members. This conference provided me with the opportunity to find out what was going on in other divisions and their alignment with National on all topics related to PSIA-AASI. I also took the opportunity to see the Northern Intermountain Division's representation on the National front. From our board members, education staff and division chair representatives, I was impressed with our membership presence on the National board and the impact our division had on other divisions. This was a great learning experience for me and the thought of how I could continue to apply these concepts has helped me start the year off on a positive note. One of the last take-aways was at a President's Council meeting where we came away with a revised **Mission Statement:**

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***“To foster and develop pathways for better communication and collaboration nationally. Keeping the membership, industry partners, member schools, and guests at the forefront of all decision making.”***

Now that the ski season is officially underway at all of our resorts, this mission statement is applicable to all of us as a division and as instructors. Within our snowsports schools, we should always look for ways we can improve on our communication within our schools to collaborate and work with our directors, supervisors, staff, and instructors to keep our resort hosts and guests at the forefront. We always consider what is best for our guest and the overall guest experience and how our teaching impacts this experience. As instructors, we continue to fine-tune our teaching skills by attending clinics, ski camps and e-learning courses, possibly with a goal of attaining additional certification. We are working on that one goal that we had in mind that we want to accomplish. The students we instruct help set the pace of the lesson plan and our overall goal of the qualities we want them to leave with. This character that we show helps build trust with our students, and it is the same character we portray within our schools as team members. To quote Dr. Martin Luther King on education, *“We must remember that intelligence is not enough. Intelligence, plus character – that is the goal of true education.”* Our character is what is truly observed in our overall guest experience. This same character can be an asset to facilitate in our goal to develop relationships with industry partners, resort management, school directors, and other instructors.

On the education side, our collaboration with National afforded us the opportunity to bring in Dusty Dyar, Children's D-Team member, to host a North-

ern Intermountain Children's Symposium in January. For those of you that enjoy the experience working with the Children's world of skiing, Dusty provided valuable insight and was an asset to the division. The educational events offered staff and member training at Sun Valley and Bogus Basin during the week of January 22nd-26th. We will definitely hear more about the fantastic outcome.

Please remember another great educational opportunity is the upcoming Spring Symposium on April, 7th and 8th, to be held at Brundage Mountain in McCall, Idaho. Check [psia-ni.org](http://psia-ni.org) for the Northern Intermountain clinic events, and sign up for clinics offered within the different disciplines.

Last, I would like to share with all of you that I lost my mother to cancer in December. She was a very courageous person and had character to the max! Her character is what helped impress her qualities on others and upon me. In turn, every day I teach or mentor, I think about the qualities I would like to impress on students to challenge them to define their own character. Every lesson we teach, we are helping to build character within ourselves and our students. Always remember our character also engages the guest experience to enhance the lesson. In the end, our character is what will define our success as instructors and in our personal lives.

*“You may encounter many defeats, but you must not be defeated. In fact, it may be necessary to encounter the defeats, so you can know who you are, what you can rise from, how you can still come out of it.”* — Maya Angelou

By Fernando Veloz  
 President PSIA-AASI Northern Intermountain Division, Bogus Basin Resort

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**NI News:**

**Snowboard Education Chair Position Filled!**

Northern Intermountain is pleased to announce our newest Snowboard Education Chairperson, Tim Ball. Tim has been a member of Northern Intermountain American Association of Snowboard Instructors for years and is a great addition to our team. Tim resides in the Wood River Valley, teaches snowboarding at Sun Valley Resort, and enjoys all things outdoors. One may find Tim on the rivers and backroads of Idaho's most remote locations in his free time, or climbing wind powered turbines all across the country. In the snow sports realm, Tim is a Snowboard Level 3, as well as NI Divisional Clinician Leader and Examiner, Children's Specialist 2, Adaptive Level 1, Avalanche 1, and much, much more. Tim's fresh perspective on snowboarding is bound to bring new events to our division. Tim has expressed interest in all things snowboarding and really wants to branch out and explore the edges of what our sport offers. In recent seasons, Tim has been working on incorporating backcountry skills and knowledge into educational events and offerings. It is with great privilege and honor to incorporate Tim onto Northern Intermountain's Staff. Welcome!



**PSIA-AASI Northern Intermountain Scholarship Awards**

On behalf of the NI Board, we would like to congratulate Alan Sills from Brundage Mountain and Josh Baker from Tamarack Resort for receiving PSIA-NI scholarships. Alan received a scholarship to help him pay for his Level 2 skiing exam. Josh received a scholarship to help him pay for a clinic and his Level 1 skiing exam. We wish Alan and Josh the best of luck on their exams and look forward to more scholarship applications this season.

Please email Angela Jarvis, [angelabovee@gmail.com](mailto:angelabovee@gmail.com) if you have any scholarship questions.

**Go Green with the New Digital Membership Card**

Your PSIA-AASI digital membership card is now live and ready to use! All members can now view, download, or print a membership card right here at [TheSnowPros.org](http://TheSnowPros.org), under "My Profile". You can also view your membership card on the SnowPros Library app. Below are instructions on how to access the membership card via the website:

1. Log into [www.thesnowpros.org](http://www.thesnowpros.org)
2. Click on "My Profile"
3. Click on the "Membership Card" section. From here, you can download the card as a PDF to print or save.

The same instructions apply for the app, there is a link to the membership card called "Membership Card."

All questions can be answered at: [memberservices@thesnowpros.org](mailto:memberservices@thesnowpros.org) or [303.987.9390](tel:303.987.9390).



## NI Member School Spotlight:

### Tamarack TrailBlazers!

This season at Tamarack, we have continued our TrailBlazers Program and really focused on making it a whole mountain experience. It is a six-week long program that is inclusive to all ability levels and focuses on skill-building as well as fun experiences for the guests. Each week we focus on one of the skiing fundamentals and add a unique twist. From race courses to meeting the patrol staff and learning about safety on the mountain, it is of the utmost importance for us as educators to introduce the younger generations to the entire resort experience. One of the weeks, the students get a snowcat demonstration, as well as the opportunity to sit in one of our snowcats and learn about the grooming that happens overnight to get the mountain ready for our guests. We also have a “super-hero” day where all the students get capes and masks (instructors included) so they can soar around the slopes in super-hero style. And, to finish the program off, we host a race day where all the students get to race a course set up by our veteran staff of race coaches. For the students that are more free-ride inspired, we focus on smart style and terrain park tactics to make sure that students can ride through the parks with confidence and success.

With all of the fun activities we incorporate into the TrailBlazers Program, it is our goal that by the end of the program, students leave with a much better understanding of the multitude of opportunities for fun and exploration that Tamarack Resort offers. Tamarack prides itself on sharing the “Tamitude” and treating everyone that comes to the resort as “Tam-Fam.” We look forward to every day on the mountain and invite all of the Northern Intermountain members to come up and see what Tamarack Resort has to offer. We hope to see everyone out on the slopes!

By Jake Bolin  
NI Snowboard Certification  
& Freestyle Chair, Tamarack  
Resort

*Photos: Heidi Armcoast with group of TrailBlazers on terrain park day, Mac the avalanche dog on Patrol day, and TrailBlazers with Snow-Cat*



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## NI Chair Reports:

### Northern Intermountain Report: National Children's Task Force

**Learning Outcomes:** A large portion of the PSIA-AASI Fall Conference 2017 at A-Basin and Keystone Lodge with the National Children's Task Force was spent with academic program leadership from Penn State University assisting in the formation of Learning Outcomes (LO) and Assessment Criteria (AC). What are those? A Learning Outcome is a statement of expected achievement upon successful completion of a course. Assessment Criteria is clear description of levels of achievement, and what performance is required at each level. The partnership with PSIA-AASI and Penn State is helping to develop an academic structure for some really cool growths in the years to come. The short term is an alignment of the previously established National Standards, with the academic tools used to set out clear outcomes and the criteria with which to evaluate.

After spending hours on the snow and in the conference room, the children's task force developed several LO's and AC's to take back to divisional children's committees and teams to test the language and concepts to verify their veracity.

In order to establish these LO and AC, Pete Allison and Jenn Emigh (our emissaries from PSU) encouraged the group to dig down to the core of what makes a children's instructor a children's instructor. The two main differentiators were determined to be a focus on Child (Human) Development and a facility with the triangle of the Parent/Child/Instructor Partnership.

**National Workbook:** The task force also worked on the goal of a national children's specialist workbook. We asked the questions, "What's important to divisions as individual groups and what can we agree upon as a unified group?" At Fall Conference, we established CS1 core questions, and will look to complete the CS2 core questions by Summer 2018. The agreed upon goal is the National Online Workbook for both CS1 and CS2, by Fall 2018.

**Manual:** The new Children's Instruction Manual was the third topic on the agenda at Fall Conference 2017. Discussions revolved mostly around a general outline for formatting and content. The group received an update on the to-be-released Core Concepts from Ellen Post Foster, in the interest in overlap reduction and an increase in complementary areas. At present, target dates include a manuscript due October 2018, with a release date of June 2019.

**Summary:** The Fall Conference continues to be an invaluable gathering of leaders from around the 8 divisions in the interest of collaboration and cooperation. I'm grateful for the opportunity to make personal and professional connections, while representing Northern Intermountain and our members.

By Christian Luenig  
NI Board of Directors & CDCL, Bogus Basin Resort

### PSIA Cross Country Ski Academy, November 2017

Following Thanksgiving weekend and the Yellowstone Nordic Festival is the PSIA Cross Country Academy hosted by our Nordic Demo Team. This is the second year that I have attended the clinics, and plan on making it a fall tradition. The academy is a three-day long event, but you can choose to participate in as much as you like. Our Nordic Team, led by Head Coach David Lawrence and team members Emily Lovett and Greg Rhodes, offers both Classic and Skate clinics. This year, the academy had 45 attendees from both coasts and in between. The team was joined by past team Coach Scott McGee and special guest clinician Angela Patnode.

Conditions were less than optimal, but as professionals, we can't always dictate what we ski on. Our second day brought rain, and our leaders switched gears, secured a conference room, and we had a morning session which showed how you can turn lemons into lemonade. It was truly a participatory event led by Emily Lovett where we explored not only warm-up and group introduction games, but used drills to connect motor learning to actual ski actions. Muffy Ritz shared a "get to know you" game where participants are in a circle, and a ball is tossed to another participant and you call their name. That person calls a name as they toss the ball. The catch is, you throw the ball to the same person you threw it too the first time, and around you go, faster and faster. We all felt like little kids. We also explored ways to turn our fundamentals into drills, and even delved into the proper body positions using Coach David's favorite two exercises: body weight squats and planks. In addition, with the use of props (rope ladder, cones, and each other), we moved simulating quick foot movements, side to side emulating ski push off, and falling into one another's hands to feel that strong athletic position every skier strives for. There was even a sing along to help develop rhythm. Despite being indoors, we covered and learned a great deal throughout the day!





The whole atmosphere of the academy is one of sharing and camaraderie. About one third of the group shared a house where all were invited for an evening meal and presentation by team members. Angela spoke of her experience of healing the body with her mind. She told her truly remarkable story after which she led the group of 30 through a positive mental attitude exercise. I skied with her the following day, and we put it to use and I must say I skied better. The use of the power of positive thinking makes a difference. Angela had us come up with a three-word mantra: mine was smooth, powerful, faster. We repeated our mantra aloud as we skied and I was able to ski smoother, more powerfully, and hence faster.

Greg Rhodes, who is also a college professor and doctoral exercise physiologist, spoke to the benefits and predictive nature of the Functional Movement Screening. With a test score from the screening, one can find weaknesses in their movement patterns, and he gave us some prescriptions to strengthen our deficiencies. His words to live by were “move well and move often.” Our divisional Nordic community may be small, but on a national scale we learned that there are nearly as many cross country skiers as there are snowboarders. At these gatherings, we have intimate access to our team members, and it’s one of the things that makes the Nordic world such a special place.

This was a great way to start the season. For many of us, it was our first time on snow this year. I enjoyed the clinics and camaraderie so much; I hope to finish the season with the National Academy in Big Sky, Montana which will take place April 20-22, where there will be a Telemark Academy held in conjunction with the Alpine events.

By Steve Haims  
NI Nordic/Cross Country Chair, Sun Valley Resort



### Northern Intermountain Children’s Symposium

Thanks to the work of our wonderful and dedicated Children’s Chair, Jani Sutherland, the Northern Intermountain members were treated, from January 22<sup>nd</sup> through January 26<sup>th</sup>, to a visit by National Team member, Dusty Dyar. During his visit, Dusty shared his time leading clinics with members from all over the division, our Children’s Education Team, and the NI Education Staff, at large.

Dusty’s role and purpose for visiting were multi-faceted; however, his primary focus was bringing his wealth of knowledge and experience in developing and delivering top-notch children’s specific education to the members of Northern Intermountain.

We are grateful that with his collaboration, we in NI are able to confirm that our enthusiastic education staff is committed to providing both current and forward looking children’s specific education. A big thank you goes out to Dusty and his family for visiting us in Idaho, and we hope to see all of you again soon!

By Christian Luening  
NI Board of Directors & CDCL, Bogus Basin Resort



### Congratulations, Christian!

Christian Luening has successfully completed the pathway to PSIA/AASI Northern Intermountain Children’s Specialist Trainer, becoming NI’s first candidate to go through the tryout process. On behalf of the NI Board of Directors and Committee Chairs, we welcome you as a NI Children’s Divisional Clinic Leader!

*Photo: Ruke Dyar, Christian Luening, Charlie Spengler*

## ARTICLES FROM THE EXPERTS:

### A Twist on Drills to Blending Skiing Fundamentals

Modern skiing takes place in a myriad of snow conditions from ice to mank, from deep powder and crud to pristine groomers. We ski a wide variety of slopes from the bunny hill to as steep as we can stand. The one thing skiing each of these conditions and locations has in common is we all want to be better skiers in those situations. An instructor needs to have a bag of tricks, or a full tool box to teach the required skills effectively. We have each learned/mastered several drills which enable us to highlight a specific skill a client or perhaps a fellow instructor may need to enhance their skiing ability. There are inherent drawbacks to this approach. Drills tend to isolate a skill to the point that one skill may become very dominant at the expense of other skills required for good skiing. Another drawback concerns the client. Many take a lesson for just an hour or two. They want to **learn to ski** and don't want to **waste time** learning drills to do it. Last season I got a heavy dose of this concern about drills. Many of my clients didn't want to spend time learning new drills, they just wanted to ski! With the powder we had last season who could blame them? A more efficient collection of drills for the instructors' bag of tricks would be those which enhance a blending of skills rather than the isolation of skills. With that realization, I cleaned up some old drills and exercise lines out of my bag of tricks, so I could include a variety of drills to implement blending and which lead the student into skiing varied terrain and conditions. I had to come up with an adventure to keep the clients' interest up while addressing their issues.

An excellent example of such a drill is Pivot Slips. This is a good drill for many applications. It primarily highlights turning the feet and twisting the legs beneath a stable upper body. However, it also incorporates and blends the five fundamentals of skiing. They are maintaining the Center of Mass (CoM) over the Base of Support (BoS) along the length of the ski, shifts one's balance from one outside ski to the other, tilting the feet and legs to maintain edge angles conducive to pivoting and slipping, all the while managing the pressures caused by snow-to-ski interface. Pivot Slips can be used to enhance short radius turns to help produce more efficient turns in the bumps to skiing steep terrain and powder conditions. If you want to enhance your client's rotary awareness try Pivot Slips with edged skis or pivot on just the inside ski. The Falling Leaf and other drills that have obvious skill blending characteristics should also be incorporated into one's new bag of tricks.

My solution to come up with a blending drill was to hit the videos. JF Beaulieu's YouTube video 23 shows him doing a warmup which he says, "helps him actuate his leg muscles." With a few additions, I developed the following drill for blending balance, edging, rotary, and pressure (the skills in the skills concept.) More specifically, for blending the five fundamentals of skiing as mentioned above. I call this the Straight Line (SL) drill and introduce it during warm ups at the beginning of a lesson so the client doesn't realize it is a drill. I referred to this earlier as taking clients on an adventure. The SL drill fits the bill--it has a few progressive elements, but mostly because the SL drill

is flexible enough that it can be started or stopped at any of its phases. There are three phases to the drill and each phase may be used by itself or with any of the other two phases. It is designed to ski from point A to point B and uses all the ski fundamentals at each phase of the drill. The SL drill requires a knowledge of the alphabet, an imagination, visualization, actualization, coordination, rhythm, a bit of hard work, and a **LOT OF FUN**.

Before starting with the SL drill, review a good athletic stance and then proceed to green or easy blue terrain. The SL drill starts at point A on the hill with intention of getting to Point B. I said you would need knowledge of the alphabet. Imagine a straight line between the two points. Use poles or not. Start down the line in a good athletic stance parallel or a slight wedge. Begin the drill by backpedaling either the right or left hand. Back pedaling is a fluid, simultaneous movement of alternating arms just like pedaling a bike; however, so the inside half is in an appropriate position, don't let your back pedal cause the inside elbow to go behind your chest (that would cause over rotation of the upper half of the body.) Try to turn the hands slightly outward with the thumbs pointing a bit downward. While back pedaling one hand or the other, activate your core to draw the hips forward. As the downward portion of the backpedal occurs, (for ease here use the right half first), release the core and concentrate on extending the right ankle, knee and hips within the stance to pressure the right ski. Your left half should feel light and ready to initiate the left-hand backpedal. The pressured ski will become slightly edged. As before, activate your core to draw the hips forward (notice this is a very minute movement). Release the core tightness and extend the left ankle, knee and hips to pressure the left ski. (*See photo 1 below.*)



With practice one will be able to feel and visualize where in the turns pressure builds and then dampens as the transition nears. This portion of the drill actuates rhythm and timing and is good for warming up the abs and leg muscles. One can easily feel that this phase of the SL drill accentuates moving one's balance from one outside foot to the other. Turns will happen at this



point so keep the torso facing downhill toward point B on the straight line. You should also feel at the activation and release of the core that you have moved the CoM over your BoS along the length of the ski. All the while you managed the snow-to-ski interface and pressure with the amount of intensity applied with ankle and knee flexion and extension. There is turning of the feet, and angles are built but those will be discussed in subsequent phases of the exercise line. The point is we blended the fundamentals of skiing and skied in the process.

During the next phase of the SL drill, you will ski even more. Use terrain you are comfortable with to continue the adventure. Again, visualize the straight line. This time close your eyes and SEE where your feet will cross the imaginary line. Start down the straight line using the base portion of the drill (hands backpedaling and transferring balance from outside foot to outside foot.) Back to the alphabet! DRAW C's with your feet so they cross the straight line where you visualized them crossing. It is important to turn the feet and twist the legs independent of your upper body to create separation, so the feet cross the line at the appropriate points. Skis should be moderately edged just after transition to minimize skidding. Immediate feedback is available—when stopped, look at the tracks laid down in the turn. The turns should be round shaped and consistently spaced. (See photo 2 below.)



If you feel stagnant in the upper body, try a pole touch at the end of each backpedal. Right for the right turn and left for the left turn. This technique will produce a fluid rhythm to keep you moving down the straight line. As you succeed with this phase, move to more challenging terrain or conditions. You will experience a marked improvement in your overall skiing. And, you will have skied to do it!

During spring training last season, the group I was in used phase II of the SL drill in some very tough conditions. It was snowing like crazy and winds were in the high 60's. The terrain was covered with a mixture of drifts of knee deep powder and wind scoured hard packed snow. Each member of the group visualized their line and where their feet should cross that line. Proceeding down the line, each person, despite the conditions, found they could shape round turns and keep their movement

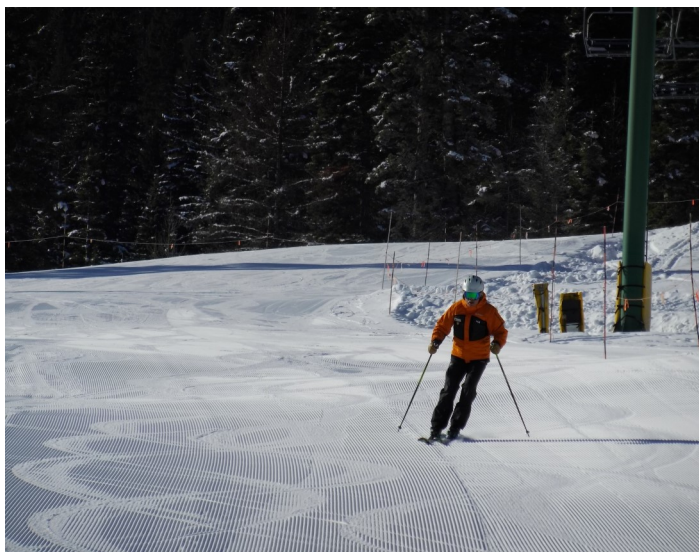
going down the hill. Each person felt comfortable and that their skiing had gone up a notch.

The third and final phase of the SL drill will enable you to make your skiing more dynamic. Transitioning from phase II to phase III of the SL drill is simple. Phase III is the same setup. However, in Phase III, you will enhance turning of your feet to DRAW C's by extending your legs more (especially the new outside leg), moving into the top and middle third of the turn. Skis will travel a bit farther across the straight line more with each try. Don't let yourself be on too high an edge angle going past the straight line; remember what you learned during the previous two Phases. While extending the new outside leg, use your ankles and knees to de-edge and turn the skis and take pressure off the new inside ski. You will also be lessening angulation; the hips can be appropriately moved toward the inside of the turn. This transition will produce more inclination of the legs to get your feet farther away from your torso and create more hip angles and more ski-to-snow angles. These turns will be much more dynamic than previous phases, and you will notice a definite bending of the ski, so managing the snow-to-ski force is important. (See photo 3 on next page.)

Built up snow-to-ski pressure will be easier to manage and the acceleration of the skis will be easier to apply to the next turn. It is easy to let your torso follow your ski tips the first few times you try Phase III of the SL drill. Do not build a bad habit. A little verbal prodding to keep the torso pointed down the straight line never hurts to keep a bad habit from forming. As during Phase II of the SL drill, the rhythm produced by back pedaling the hands to a pole touch will quickly dampen the effects if you have issues with your torso following the ski tips or getting stagnant. Getting your feet farther away from your torso is a giant step in skiing, so be patient. Phase III of the SL drill may take all day or even several sessions. Use a wider range of terrain choices so you can feel what you have learned. Hopefully you will feel you are progressing simply because you have been improving while you were skiing.

There are times, however, when drills to enhance a specific skill are required. Use them judiciously and on appropriate terrain. One area which lends itself to a skill-specific drill is when a person doesn't understand the mechanics of blending one fundamental with another. For example, if a person ends each turn on the inside ski he doesn't understand keeping the CoM over the BoS along the length of the ski blending with transferring balance from outside foot to outside foot and turning the feet and legs under a stable upper body. A good drill to do in this case is one-footed turns so the ends of the turns are completed on the outside foot. This will lead the student to understand the how and why of blending fundamentals. However, isolation like this may lead to an over-dominance of the enhanced skill. It may be more appropriate to introduce a drill which will ski a person into understanding the blending necessary to accomplish the desired outcome.

The SL drill is a good fit for the instructor's new bag of tricks. Teaching skiing allows us to use our talents to think creatively to provide our clients with a safe, fun learning experience. Just as important, we become better instructors by keeping ourselves current and forward thinking. Many instructors preparing themselves for certification tend to develop exercise line using drills for a specific skill outcome without developing the understanding of why that exercise line works for that outcome. By



### Slipping, Sliding, and Skidding into Adaptive

We all came into the adaptive snow sports world for various reasons. However, regardless of what brought us to adaptive, I can safely say we have evolved for the same reason. Seeing a student achieve what was thought to be impossible, being there when goals are not only met, but lives are changed. It's rewarding.

As for myself, I entered the adaptive snowsports world as a participant. As a child, I was diagnosed with severe epilepsy and mild Cerebral Palsy. Most sports were very hard for me. School was very taxing on me as well. My attendance at school was very limited due to nighttime seizures. Then, I discovered skiing. I could ski down just as fast as everyone else, then sit down on the ski lift and rest before my next run. It quickly became my life. Soon my skills surpassed the volunteers and I started teaching. Once I turned 18, I obtained a job with the alpine children's ski school. It was a paid job! I realized that my dream to become the best ski instructor on the mountain was actually going to be real. Years later, I moved to Steamboat Springs, Colorado to pursue my dream job.

Now, I am one of the highest ranking adaptive snowsports instructors in the United States and have been a travelling trainer educating volunteers, instructors, coaches, and athletes. Adaptive snowsports is life-changing. That is why we stay involved.

Skiing has been around for over 100 years. Over the years, only one thing has changed and that is technology. From leather boots and straps on long straight skis, to modern ski design and plastic boots, and skis with metal edges. The ski itself hasn't changed much and neither has the body. The ski is turned, tipped and bent or pulled by body movements. As humans, we have been around longer than 100 years. Over this time, our bodies haven't changed in movement.

*Slipping- travels along the width of the ski sideways,  
Sliding- travels along the length of the tip to tail, or vice-versa,  
Skidding- a combination of slipping and sliding.*

learning and understanding that blending the skiing fundamentals in their exercise lines is the real desired outcome they will not only be prepared for exams, they will also be better day to day instructors. Blending skiing fundamentals more than the isolation of skills also allows us to better accommodate today's clients' wants, needs, and time constraints.

By Loren Livermore  
NI Alpine DCL, Tamarack Resort

*Many thanks to Robin Barnes and Mike Erlebach for their input and proofing this article!*

The body creates the effect of the skis on the snow through flexing and extending the leg joints, twisting the whole body, or isolating parts and tipping movements. In general, we want the movements the body is making to be as close to the snow as possible. This creates the fastest ski-to-snow reaction. Movements become efficient. These are all alpine concepts.

In the adaptive world, we are constantly trying to be as close to general alpine skiers as possible. Inclusion, right? How does adaptive fit in? A skier who utilizes adaptive services has the same body movements as general skiers. Their body still flexes, turns, extends, and tips. The range of motion, intensity and origin may differ, but can still affect the ski-to-snow interaction. Adaptive skiers sometimes utilize equipment such as bi-skis, mono-skis, outriggers, and other assistive equipment. All of this equipment has or is designed to imitate ski-to-snow performance, comparable to general skiers.

Everyone can be a skier. I ski because I love it. I share my passion with others and hopefully, they will love it also. Adaptive skiing changed my life. Maybe it will change yours or someone close to you. **Just Point It!**

By Charley Phelan  
RM Adaptive Examiner 1 and Education Staff, Steamboat Springs, CO





### It's a Family Affair



Growing up, skiing was our lives. If there was snow on the ground, we were in the mountains. My earliest memories are in the Bogus Basin Mouse House, eating Skittles off the floor and watching Jimmy Neutron on repeat. My diet consisted of chicken fingers and chairlift candy. I wouldn't have had it any other way.

That all changed as I outgrew the Mouse House. Skiing became a chore. It was the thing my brother and I were forced to do on the weekends. Sometimes we would go to Tamarack and play in the park and trees, crash into snowbanks on purpose, and catch air off the jumps in the park. As long as the day ended in pizza and Fresca, we were happy. But under all the grease and bubbles and snow-packed helmets, I always felt like I was being judged. There was this overwhelming sense that I wasn't skiing well enough for my parents' skill set. It wasn't ever stated, and they always tried to be constructive, but I took "Taylor, try this" or "can I give you something to work on" as indicators that I wasn't good enough. The overwhelming feeling that I wasn't living up to some unstated expectation resulted in a desire to be anywhere but skiing with my mom and dad.

Thankfully, with the opportunity to be a chair-rider, all of that began to change. I had the opportunity to see my parents in a whole new light. The long car rides to the mountain and microwave lunches led to a desire to surpass the unstated expectation. An expectation that I would be a skier worthy of my parents' ability.

As I transitioned from a chair-rider into an instructor, Bogus's Sunday night clinics became the first place my mom and I could talk about skiing without argument. Well, at least without the unconstructive kind. I had this drive that I'd never felt before. I had a passion that I wanted endlessly to fill; the desire to be more than *just* Rich and Martha's daughter, more than *just* the child of a Demo Team member and divisional education staff examiner, filled me with the drive to train, and train hard for certification.

Our house became a constant, ever-churning pool of ski knowledge. My connection to my mom and dad became a priceless resource as I fought to form coherent thoughts that related to what I would be teaching in exams. I felt like I finally knew where I belonged. I had my own place in the instructor's room, not just a stolen sliver of my mom's spot.

Before I knew it, I had my Level 2. Three years of late nights on the hill, skiing with whatever experience I could get my hands on, eating lodge food and pocket gummy bears. This became my life again. Skiing is where my family was and where I knew I belonged. Along with my Level 2, came my senior year. The discussions began as to where the best place would be to go to college. Or in other words, the best place to go teach skiing.

Snowbird was my answer. When trying to decide where to go, I remembered my dad's greatest regret when it came to his ski career—the wish that he had worked at a major ski resort. That sealed the deal for me, the desire to take advantage of an experience that would be unique to me, one that included ski professionals that my parents looked up to.

My experience in Utah helped me fall even more in love with the sport. Training with people who didn't automatically know my family background gave me a sense of ownership, and I grew into my own person. I finally felt like I was great at my job, not because I was born into it, but because I worked hard and earned the respect of my peers and superiors. With this new sense of self also came a deep illness: homesickness. I realized that the family I have here in Idaho, both biological and not, is the greatest resource a person can have. A family that is willing to support me through my trials and errors as a young instructor, a family I could not wait to get back to.

My parents, my family, is the reason I am where I am today. Skiing has given us the space to know each other. It has not been easy, by any means, but I have loved it every step of the way. Now as a Level 3, with my sights set higher still, our relationship has transformed into one of collaboration and cooperation; one that has allowed my family and me the ability to spend Sunday mornings unraveling the inner workings of skiing.

This is the life we live as a PSIA family. We fight, we teach, and we ski.

By Taylor Caballero  
NI Alpine Level 3, Bogus Basin Resort

## Start `Em Sideways

For as long as I have been teaching snowboarding it has been said over and over that you cannot teach young kids to snowboard. The two to six years-old demographics has been steered towards skiing. This age group has been told they do not have the fine motor skills that are needed to ride and that skiing is much easier. How can this be true? Snowboarding is an activity that is built around the idea of self-expression and inclusion. Why are we as a culture and a business excluding the future of riding? Is this a matter of our bar of success being too high? Is it that the majority of equipment that is available is for skiers? Or is it that the expectations of our clients are unreachable?

First and foremost, I believe this has been an issue of what equipment we have had available, coupled with our idea of what successful riding is. Burton has been at the forefront of leading the charge in regards to equipment for this demographic. Boards have become much smaller, tow leashes are being attached, and the boots and bindings are actually made for small feet. The boards are also made to be more forgiving in regards to edge catch. This new equipment, in conjunction with terrain-based learning, has given our young clients a chance to begin sideways.

How can we as snowboard instructors change our attitudes about success and progression? I believe we need to go back to our own initial days of learning to ride; catching an edge over and over again, falling while getting off the lift, and those cold soggy clothes. Why did we keep returning to inflict this kind of pain on ourselves? Chances are *we were having fun*. After five days of riding we were probably still rated at a level 1 on the AASI 1-6 scale. With the younger riders we still need to focus on safety and definitely need to keep it fun, but we need to change our teaching progressions and why we are doing them.

Yes, this age group is limited in some of the things they can do. They cannot be expected to skate or move around. The stomp area is just too small and generally cannot fit a boot. They can, however, balance. Once we are ready to get them moving, we will want to get them strapped in with both feet and move in to some assisted gliding maneuvers. This is where the tow leash comes in handy. At that point, moving in to some small gravity-assisted glides gets much easier. Visual targets are the key to success here. I prefer to set my board upside down in the snow with the nose and tail across the hill. I dig one edge of my board into the hill and create a small ramp. This ramp does a few things. First it saves me from having to chase a wayward groom down. Second it gives the rider a visual target to hit, and third it gives the rider a goal of riding up and over my board. After doing this maneuver straight, I move the target slightly to the left or right. This allows the rider to have a new view and helps to create turning motions. I am not worried about maintaining a perfect stance or creating textbook angles.

When I feel my young client is ready for longer runs, I move into areas that facilitate that. At my home mountain, I have a series of two surface lifts in the beginner area that are great for this progression. When moving to bigger terrain, I am behind my rider, generally with some fingers pinching the back of their jacket. Once more comfort is established, I can then create targets to aim for. My only concerns at this point are safety and fun. If I return my client back to their parents with a huge smile on their face and them begging for more, then I have done my job well.

The downsides of having to slow our progression down and changing how we teach is that some of our clients' parents may not be into it. I always explain what my expectations are before the lesson and how I plan on moving in the time we have. Making sure the parents expectations are on the same level will set you up for success. Sadly, these lessons don't always return for more. My guess is the cost of hiring a private instructor for one hour of teaching a toddler doesn't create the payout that is expected in a short enough timeline compared to the same age group on skis. Suggesting non-snow activities that create balance and body awareness will keep the fire burning within while they are away from the snow.

I've snowboarded with my son now multiple times and he started when he was two. My personal expectations were very simple. If we made it 15 minutes on the snow, we were successful. We would go get fries and beers, hang with the boys, and call it a day. My son surpassed my expectations. We made it almost an hour with the majority of that time being spent on the lower surface lift. We (actually it was mostly me, he was too busy gnawing down fries) celebrated in the lodge and he fell asleep in the car as soon as we hit the road. Yes, he had some advantages. I am his dad and I had been priming him for this day since he could walk. We play on my skateboard, he jumps non-stop on a mini trampoline in the house and he has his own Burton Riglet board that he had strapped into and been towed around the house in many times. The next two times on the mountain his skills improved. He was more comfortable with speed, he was able to scoot start himself after getting set up and he started destroying some small turns. Can he skate? Can he load or unload a lift on his own? Can he stop on his own? Obviously, no, he cannot do any of those things and he doesn't need to right now. Is he successful? Does he smile and squeal the whole time he is riding? Is he a snowboarder? Yes, a million times over. Changing how we define success creates more opportunities for more people. Start `em sideways!

By Brian Galbreath  
Snowboard Level 3, Brundage Mountain Resort

Photos: Harrison Galbreath







# SPRING SYMPOSIUM

April 7 and 8, 2018  
Brundage Mountain Resort

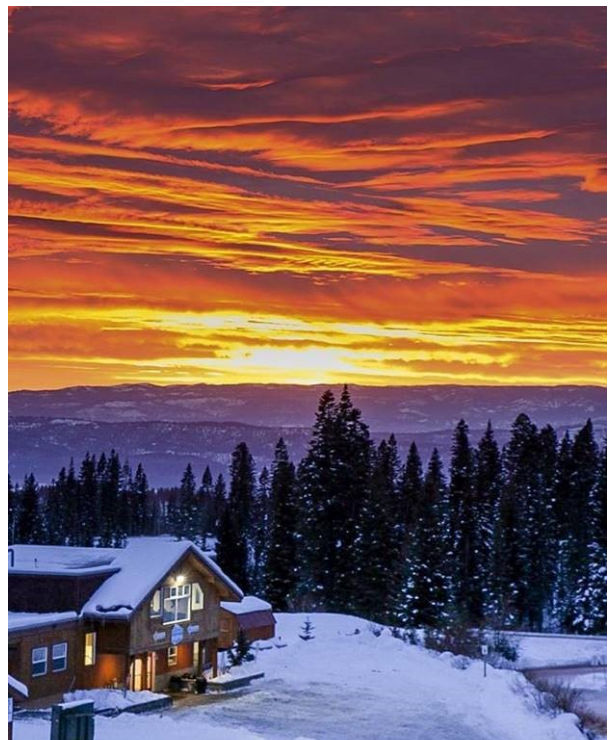
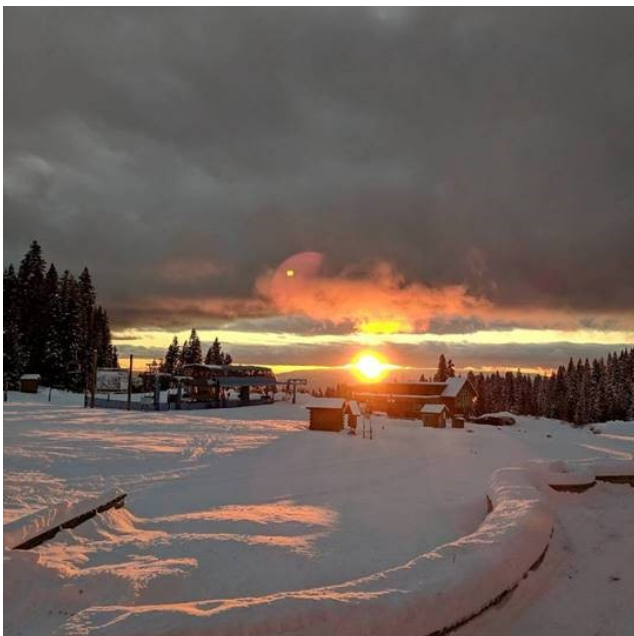


*Save the Date! Brundage Mountain Resort will be hosting the annual PSIA/AASI Northern Intermountain Spring Symposium this year in McCall, ID April 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>.*

Come celebrate the end of another great season with your fellow PSIA-AASI members. This is a two-day education event that will offer fun exciting clinics for Alpine, Snowboard, Adaptive, and Nordic Disciplines, and include a chance to ski with one of our Nation Alpine Team members!

Lodging information, ticket information, specific clinic offerings, and registration will be made available soon on Facebook and PSIA/AASI NI website: [psia-ni.org](http://psia-ni.org).

Looking forward to seeing you there!



# Carve' Diem

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