

2015/2016 NATIONAL OUTSTANDING AWARDS WINNERS

THE CRÈME DE LA CRÈME
BY CANDACE HORGAN

In the “Purple Power” article in the fall 2016 issue of *Ski Patrol Magazine*, Purple Merit Star winner Joe Ferraro was quoted as follows:

It solidifies an organization when people are honored. People say, “I don’t need this,” and you’d say, “But you deserve it.”

The same could likely be said about the National Ski Patrol’s annual Outstanding Awards. Many of the award winners are often astonished and humbled about being so recognized, but these awards help spotlight how the members of the NSP are ever improving and always striving above the baseline standards to elevate the standards of not only their patrols, but their regions, divisions, and the NSP.

The 2015/2016 award winners and runners-up represent seven of the NSP’s 10 geographic divisions, as well as the Professional Division.

Each division nominates two judges to vote on the awards. The judges view anonymous nominations, and each one is scored by the different judges based on the criteria for the award. Each judge sends a summary of the points they assign to the nominees in each category, and the results are then tallied from the point scores.



Brighton Ski Patrol. Photo by Peter Matheis.

OUTSTANDING LARGE ALPINE PATROL

BRIGHTON SKI PATROL

Division: Intermountain

Year Activated: 1955

Total Lifts: 7

Winning awards seems to come naturally to the Brighton Ski Patrol, at least judging by the number of awards the members of the patrol have been honored with in recent years.

Those numbers include 15 Blue Merit Stars, 10 Yellow Merit Stars, and seven Distinguished Service Awards. Since 2012, members of the patrol have been honored as Intermountain Division Outstanding Administrative Patroller, Intermountain Division Outstanding Alpine Patroller, Intermountain Division Outstanding OEC Instructor (twice), Intermountain Division Outstanding Patroller (twice), and Intermountain Division Outstanding Instructor (twice).

The patrollers have also captured numerous Utah Region awards, including Utah Region Outstanding Ski and Toboggan Instructor, Utah Region Outstanding OEC Instructor, and Utah Region Outstanding Instructor Development Instructor.

Members of the Brighton Ski Patrol have served on the national board of directors, as assistant NSP National Outdoor Emergency Transportation Program director, and on the OEC Refresher Committee, Powderfall Planning Committee, and the NSP 75th Anniversary Planning Committee.

At the division level, members of this patrol have served as Intermountain Division OET supervisor, Intermountain Division Certified supervisor, and Intermountain Division Awards adviser,

and at the region level have served as Utah Region assistant OEC supervisor and Utah Region assistant OET supervisor.

Many members of the patrol are OEC and OET instructors; six patrollers were OEC instructor trainers in 2015, while five were OET instructor trainers. These patrollers also do not shy from spreading their expertise around to the rest of the NSP.

For OEC, the ITs audit classes, including the midterm and the written and practical finals for up to eight patrols within a 2.5-hour radius of the patrol. Three of the OET instructors taught at Powderfall at Canyons Resort in 2015, while in 2014, three instructed at the Nuts and Bolts Clinic at Mount Hood in Oregon (see "Division News: Annual Nuts and Bolts Clinic on Mount Hood," *Ski Patrol Magazine*, vol. 34, issue 1).

The patrol also has three Avalanche instructors, one of whom is an instructor trainer, and four Instructor Development instructors, two of whom are instructor trainers.

These patrollers also do plenty of outreach and work with outside agencies to spread the good word about the NSP. Several of the patrollers participate in local search and rescue teams. Others donate their time to a variety of good causes, including the Multiple Sclerosis Society, Boy Scouts of America and Girl Scouts of America, Camp Fire (formerly Camp Fire Girls), an Alzheimer's support group, and a camp for children with diabetes.

Other outside work includes volunteering emergency care services and logistical support to a local charity 5K run, participating in an annual 150-mile bike ride for multiple sclerosis, and support of the local avalanche center. One member of the patrol developed a website in which he has

presented numerous test results of various avalanche beacons; he then presented these findings at the Technical Rescue Symposium.

Recognizing that the aging of patrollers might present future challenges, the patrol also developed a committee to study the effects of aging on the patrol to determine what changes needed to be made to ensure the patrol's longevity. One result of this study was the institution of a mentoring program for new patrollers to impart the knowledge and experience of the older patrollers to the newer generation. This has also resulted in more camaraderie, both on the hill and in the patrol room.

RUNNER-UP: Boyne Highlands Ski Patrol, of the Central Division, received a Silver Unit Citation as the runner-up for Outstanding Large Alpine Patrol.

Side Note: This patrol has partnered with a local medical school to enable the school's third-year and fourth-year students who are on clinical rotations to get their mandatory hours in a rural/field setting observing the first stages of medical care in the field. The medical students spend time in the patrol's first aid room not only observing, but assisting with first aid care. They also ski with the patrollers to observe patient treatment skills on the hill.

OUTSTANDING SMALL ALPINE PATROL

HOMWOOD VOLUNTEER SKI PATROL

Division: Far West

Year Activated: 1970

Total Lifts: 8

One thing that is most impressive about the Homewood Volunteer Ski Patrol is how it has built its member base back up after numerous people retired. It is all the more impressive when one looks at the training new candidates go through.

In a three-year period from 2008-11, patrol membership declined by 40 percent, as many people from the patrol retired after

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Homewood Volunteer Ski Patrol. Photo by Bill Gibson.

20 years of service. Nearly 50 percent of the remaining patrollers had less than six year' experience, but the patrol regrouped to target programs that met the mountain's needs and created a well-trained patrol.

With 15 resorts within a 15-mile radius of this patrol's mountain, recruitment can be a challenging endeavor. However, the patrol met it with gusto, proactively seeking out candidate patrollers who would prefer to work on a smaller patrol that has extensive training and mentoring. The patrol used a web-based gateway program that enabled prospective candidates to ask questions of the patrol. Each member of the patrol also carries business cards with the contact info that they give out to prospective skiers and boarders on the hill.

After prospective candidates express their interest, it is reinforced by having the candidates spend an entire day on the hill shadowing a patroller, starting with the morning safety meeting and ending with the sweep. This ensures the candidate understands the full commitment involved. This shadow day is often coordinated so that prospective candidates can meet each other and socialize. Since starting this program, the patrol has added three to six

candidates per year, and the candidates have a 100 percent pass rate.

Since 2013, members of this patrol have received extensive recognition in the form of awards, including one Gold Merit Star, two Purple Merit Stars, five Blue Merit Stars, one Yellow Merit Star, and one Distinguished Service Award. Patrollers have also been honored as Far West Division Outstanding Young Adult Patroller, NSP National Outstanding Young Adult Patroller, and Far West Division Outstanding Administrative Patroller.

Members of the patrol have also served in a variety of leadership roles, including Eastern Sierra Region recruiting adviser (alumni), Eastern Sierra Region medical adviser (alumni), Eastern Sierra Region director, Eastern Sierra Region community college adviser, Eastern Sierra Region OET instructor trainer, and Far West Division assistant director.

The patrol has also been very active in supporting OEC in the region, sending at least four patrollers to serve as patients and five to serve as evaluators at every OEC exam. Patrollers have also served as instructor trainers at numerous OEC



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exams in the region.

Outside the patrol, one member of the patrol recently gave a talk to 50 kindergarten students about patrolling and snow safety, including a demonstration of the first aid gear carried by that patroller, the importance of wearing a helmet while skiing or riding, and Your Responsibility Code.

Given the retirement of many members of this patrol with long service, it is no surprise that the patrol has an active alumni program, with 22 formally registered as alumni with the NSP. One alumni member participates in a middle school career day each year, speaking to up to 100 students about careers and volunteer opportunities with the patrol, planting that next generation recruitment seed early. An alumni member has also filmed six public service announcements for a local TV station on snow safety and managing traumatic events.

Other activities of the patrol include providing support for endurance races that attract up to 10,000 participants and 20,000 spectators, as well as support for a four-day bicycle race. The patrol has also hosted three high school students for their community service project.

RUNNER-UP: Fairbanks Ski Patrol, of the Alaska Division, received a Silver Unit Citation as the runner-up for Outstanding Small Alpine Patrol.

Side Note: In 2014, this patrol served as the host patrol for the Arctic Winter Games; athletes from nine countries that surrounded the polar region competed. In 2015, the patrol helped establish a Nordic patrol in the region after 20 years of inactivity on that front.

OUTSTANDING ADMINISTRATIVE PATROLLER

KEVIN QUALSETH

Patrol: China Peak
Division: Far West

When he first joined the NSP as a patroller in 2000, few would have anticipated that Kevin Qualseth would have become the leader he is today. He was noted as being very shy and averse to speaking in front of

his peers.

However, he overcame that fear by joining Toastmasters International to work on his public speaking and leadership skills. Now, as the Far West Division OEC supervisor, after previously being a region OEC adviser, he leads a group that includes over 300 instructors, 50 instructor trainers, 40 OEC Senior trainer/evaluators, and five region OEC advisers. He helps oversee 30 yearly OEC classes.

His leadership really came to the fore with the changes to the Senior Emergency Management Module (now called the OEC Module of the Senior Program). He has attended the OEC Program supervisors meeting in Lakewood, Colorado, for several years to help institute the new program in the Far West Division. Rather than supervise from on high, he followed that up by instructing at 10 OEC Module of the Senior Program clinics over a four-year stretch.

Outside of NSP, Qualseth coordinated volunteer patrollers to provide OEC first aid for a local bike event fundraiser in support of the Team in Training. He has also taught layperson CPR in his local school district to over 400 people.

He earned a National Appointment Number for his efforts, and was also previously named the Mother Lode Region Outstanding Administrative Patroller and Far West Division Outstanding



Kevin Qualseth

Administrative Patroller.

RUNNER-UP: Marty Silverman, of the Hidden Valley Ski Patrol in the Eastern Division, received a Silver Merit Star as the runner-up for Outstanding Administrative Patroller.

Side Note: Silverman helped re-energize stagnant programs in his region, creating an initiative that led to OET clinics being held at all 10 alpine resorts in the region, and then setting up a Patroller School and regional women's clinic. He also appointed a new region awards adviser to help get recognition for those patrollers whose outstanding efforts were not being singled out.

OUTSTANDING ALPINE PATROLLER

DAVID NELSON

Patrol: Big Bear
Division: Far West

Perhaps what makes David Nelson's accomplishments as a patroller so remarkable isn't just the time spent doing things outside the patrol, such as lobbying state officials regarding ski safety legislation, promoting ski safety and patrol recruitment at venues such as retail stores, and keeping a patrol website updated with information on candidate training and current events, but that he accomplishes it all while getting up early every Monday to commute to his day job via airplane and is out of town till Thursday evening or Friday every week, then is up on the hill throwing all his energies into patrolling.

Nelson has been a patroller for 15 years. He is an OEC instructor, OET instructor, and has also been the instructor of record for numerous Introduction to Ski Patrolling classes. He has planned, organized, and instructed the candidate patroller program, which involves a mammoth effort of coordinating over 15 instructors for OEC, OET, lift evacuation, and mentoring, and trains 15-20 candidates each year.

As part of his candidate training program, Nelson has partnered with Professional Ski Instructors of America instructors to provide instruction and evaluation of the candidates' skiing, which has assisted 70



David Nelson

candidates in five years.

One of Nelson's important contributions has been his work organizing and managing his patrol's "Ski with a Patroller Day." This is an annual event that is the patrol's primary recruiting tool, and requires working with multiple departments at the resort for a day-long event that attracts up to 30 participants.

In addition to recruitment efforts for his local patrol, Nelson has tirelessly worked to recruit his peers in the region to become instructors and mentors.

Nelson has been instrumental in his patrol's fundraising efforts, setting up a Square point of sale account so that the patrol can raise funds at local and regional events, and established an account so that eBay members can donate a portion of

auction proceeds directly to the patrol. He built a relationship that allows the patrol to receive funds in exchange for hours Microsoft employees volunteer with the patrol.

He advocated in support of ski safety legislation to state legislators and administrative staff, including the secretary of both the California Natural Resources Agency and the California State Transportation Agency. He also advised lawmakers on the pros and cons of a piece of ski safety legislation.

Outside of NSP, he has worked to promote adaptive skiing programs to local youth. He has previously been honored with the patrol's awards for Outstanding Candidate Trainer, Outstanding Administrative Patroller, and an Award for Excellence.

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RUNNER-UP: Steve Achelis, of the Brighton Ski Patrol in the Intermountain Division, received a Silver Merit Star as the runner-up for Outstanding Alpine Patroller.

Side Note: An OEC instructor and instructor trainer, CPR instructor, lift evacuation instructor, and board member of the local avalanche center, Achelis is an associate instructor at a local university teaching avalanche and rope rescue courses. He has also moved much of his knowledge to online platforms, hosting an EMS decision-making website, rope rescue procedures website, and producing an electronic map for local backcountry rescue.

OUTSTANDING PATROLLER

BARBARA RAZO

Patrol: Snow Summit

Division: Far West

You might say that patrolling runs in Barbara Razo's blood, and the blood of her family. Her mother was a patroller, and now Razo's daughter has followed in the footsteps of her mother and grandmother, recently completing OEC and her candidate year.

Razo is a patrol room lead at her hill, a task she was given after just a few years of patrol experience, where she guides and coordinates the care of injured and ill guests. She also mentors new patrollers and new leads in the aid room, teaching them skills for report writing, room procedures, ambulance protocols, guest relations, and the interface with the paid staff. She has assisted in coaching and evaluating OEC students at local courses in the Southern California Region, and has also assisted at evaluations of OEC finals.

She is the electronic data manager for her patrol, collecting and organizing personnel documents for two patrols as required by her area management and using an electronic system she devised to track the records for both patrols. She also helped develop a computerized duty day scheduling and tracking program and trained the patrol's room leads on how to use the system.



Barbara Razo

When Bear Mountain and Snow Summit consolidated into one patrol, Razo helped with the relocation of the patrol's aid room, spending several weekends setting up the new aid room.

Area management has also authorized her to review incident reports, which has significantly assisted the paid staff in report review turnaround and enables patrollers to return to on-hill duties faster.

She has previously been named Southern California Region Outstanding Patroller and Far West Division Outstanding Patroller, and was runner-up for NSP National Outstanding Patroller in 2008.

RUNNER-UP: Dennis Comfort, of the Crystal Mountain Ski Patrol in the Pacific Northwest Division, received a Silver Merit Star as the runner-up for Outstanding Patroller.

Side Note: Prior to joining the ski patrol, Comfort worked on his hill's safety patrol, which assists the ski patrol with guest services, and he assisted the OEC instructor in processing paperwork, then helped teach OEC classes and provide a training venue. This led to him becoming a patroller, OEC instructor, and CPR instructor. In 2012, he became his patrol's training director, coordinating the OEC Program for his patrol.

OUTSTANDING PAID PATROLLER

JOSHUA ENDSLEY

Patrol: Big Bear

Division: Professional Division

— Far West Region

Joshua Endsley's dedication to patrolling and leadership is something that revealed itself early in his patrol career. After only four years of patrolling, he was named his patrol's assistant director, and in 2016, he was elevated to patrol director. He oversees the patrols for two separate mountains, a combined 250 patrollers, both professional and volunteer, that operate in both winter and summer.

Endsley instructs lift evacuation, OET, risk management, avalanche rescue, and CPR/AED recertifications for his patrol. He supports the Certified Program by teaching three different modules and encouraging patrollers to pursue the Certified Program.

Endsley built an over-the-side toboggan equipped with low angle rescue gear, and established a training program for the paid staff for low angle and high angle rescue using that toboggan.

He has worked with the National Ski Areas Association to develop terrain park signage, and collected data on the building and use of features in terrain parks. He also worked with Snow Park Technologies on the development of terrain parks that were used by the company nationally.

Endsley was instrumental in helping Bear Mountain reestablish summer operations, working closely with the safety and design team that developed a mountain bike park for summer operations and then assisting with the building of mountain bike trails.

Prior awards won by this patroller include a Southern California Region Service Recognition Award in both 2013 and 2015 for his support and contributions to region training programs.

Endsley, a former Eagle Scout, naturally strives to give back to Scouting, as he coordinates a Scout Day, getting other patrollers to work with local Boy Scouts to



Joshua Endsley

get them their snow sports merit badges.

RUNNER-UP: Dale Eldredge, of the Soldier Mountain Ski Patrol in the Professional Division — Pacific Northwest Region, received a Silver Merit Star as the runner-up for Outstanding Paid Patroller.

Side Note: Eldredge, who was awarded a Purple Merit Star in 2010, took the lead recently at his mountain with the establishment of a cat skiing operation next to the resort, establishing protocols and procedures for toboggan routes in case of a medical emergency with a guest and safety routes in case of an avalanche. He also worked with local helicopter services to establish landing zones for helicopter response.

OUTSTANDING NORDIC PATROL

WEST MICHIGAN NORDIC SKI PATROL

Division: Central

Year Activated: 1969

This small patrol covers a lot of ground, up to 2,000 miles per season to patrol activities related to Nordic skiing. The patrol lacks a patrol room, instead operating as a travel patrol that assists at outdoor events and Nordic races. The patrol has been in operation for 40 years.

Though the patrol is small, with only 19 members (including secondary registrants), it is experienced, with four Senior patrolers. Two of the patrolers have National Appointment Numbers or Leadership Commendation Appointment Numbers. Three members are Nordic instructor trainers, four are OEC instructor trainers, one is

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West Michigan Nordic Ski Patrol

a PSIA Level II Nordic instructor, and the patrol also has three CPR instructors.

The patrol has previously been awarded Western Michigan Region Outstanding Nordic Patrol (2014-15). That year, the patrol was also the runner-up for Central Division Outstanding Nordic Patrol.

Members of the patrol have served as Western Michigan Region Mountain Travel and Rescue adviser, Avalanche adviser, and Nordic adviser, as well as Section 2 CPR adviser and Section 2 section chief.

In 2015, the patrol created a new pack system to carry warming supplies, first aid supplies, and communications. This came on the heels of a 2014 communications system upgrade. Prior to that upgrade, members of this patrol relied on cell phones for communications; however, the patrol purchased a radio communications system in 2014, and in 2016, the patrol added an extended antenna system.

These upgrades enabled the patrollers to change from a two-pack system for each team of at least two patrollers, where one patroller would carry a red pack with first aid and communications, and another patroller carried a yellow pack with warming items for cold-weather injuries.

Planned future upgrades include expanding

the first aid packs with more outdoor survival gear and increasing the number of warming supplies.

The patrol has also consolidated overnight stays to reduce hotel costs, instead reserving housing for the entire patrol at events the patrol covers.

RUNNER-UP: Mt. Pinos Nordic Ski Patrol, of the Far West Division, received a Silver Unit Citation as the runner-up for Outstanding Nordic Patrol.



Peter Cappola

Side Note: This patrol works terrain that sits in two counties, so the patrol gets an opportunity to work with two highly trained county search and rescue teams, with which strong bonds and working relationships have been created. The two teams now regularly train in the patrol's area and invite the patrollers to participate. Members of the patrol often accompany these SAR teams into the backcountry as avalanche guides.

OUTSTANDING NORDIC PATROLLER

PETER CAPPOLA

Patrol: Summit at Snoqualmie — Central Division: Pacific Northwest

Peter Cappola is such a devoted supporter of Nordic patrolling that he can often be found trying to convert alpine patrollers to Nordic patrolling by inviting them to experience backcountry travel, including traveling on a backcountry trail followed by a potluck and a fire in a wood-burning stove at a trail warming hut.

Cappola registered with a patrol that supports alpine, Nordic, and patroller status, and achieved Senior in the latter two. He is an OEC instructor, and the instructor of record for multiple Nordic skills courses, teaching about land navigation, Nordic skiing, improvised toboggan construction, rope rescue, and emergency shelters.

From 2012-15, he assisted in teaching 95 percent of OEC candidate classes. In 2012, he was the instructor of record for an OEC refresher, and in 2014 and 2015, he trained eight Nordic Senior candidates for over 10 different training sessions; all eight candidates passed their Senior.

The training preceding the exam was in many ways even more impressive, as Cappola sought out patches of snow during a record low snow year when many areas had closed and found patches where the candidates could train.

Cappola tries to make his Nordic lessons unique. For instance, often during lunch breaks on the trail, he will give a little Nordic history lesson to the Senior candidates so they can learn more about the venerable history of Nordic skiing and patrolling.



Linda Barthel at the Central Division Meeting with her Outstanding Instructor Award.

In 2012, he was named the local Outstanding OEC Instructor, and in 2012-13 and 2013-14, he was named local Outstanding Nordic Patroller. He has served on a multi-patrol OEC advisory committee, as a local Nordic adviser, and as his patrol's

first aid room supervisor and duty patrol leader. As local Nordic adviser, he interacts with two Nordic patrols that work on U.S. Forest Service land.

Outside of NSP, he is a member of a search and rescue unit for the local sheriff's office. He also is the equipment chair, working to maintain rescue equipment for use during training and rescue missions.

RUNNER-UP: Robert Winter, of the Highland Forest Nordic Ski Patrol in the Eastern Division, received a Silver Merit Star as the runner-up for Outstanding Nordic Patroller.

Side Note: Winter has dual membership as an alpine patroller with the Toggenburg Ski Patrol, and has achieved Senior in all three categories of patroller, Nordic, and alpine. He instructs Mountain Travel and Rescue Level 1, OEC, and American Heart Association Basic Life Support courses. He recently spoke at a medical school's Wilderness Conference for Emergency Department Staff on "National Ski Patrol: Prehospital Care on Trails and Slopes."

OUTSTANDING INSTRUCTOR

LINDA BARTHEL

Patrol: Mt. Brighton

Division: Central

While many patrollers know Linda Barthel as the NSP Women's Program adviser, her instructing skills are perhaps what most people in her region and division know her for. A Level III PSIA instructor, Barthel brings her ski instructing skills to NSP candidates as part of the on-hill training process.

In her region, Barthel has served as a Toboggan Enhancement Seminar instructor, Ski Trainer's Workshop instructor, and OET instructor trainer. She has also instructed a Ski Enhancement Seminar and Toboggan Enhancement Seminar in a neighboring region.

She has led clinics for Ski Trainer's Workshops in the Central Division, and also led the Central Division Women's Toboggan Enhancement Seminar and Women's Ski Enhancement Seminar.

Barthel works extensively in the Certified Program as an alpine skiing examiner,



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OET examiner, and Certified Emergency Management candidate trainer and examiner.

At the national level, Barthel has been a clinic leader for Women's Program events at the Patroller Education Conference and at Powderfall. She recruited members of the Central Division NSP-C Snowsports School to assist in launching the Women's Program in another division, and organized NSP-sponsored ski clinics with a member of the PSIA National Alpine Team.

Barthel's instructing resume is extensive. Since 2012, she has instructed annual lift evacuation classes, CPR for the Professional Rescuer, Introduction to Ski Patrolling, OET, and served as an OEC Module of the Senior Program examiner. She is an OEC instructor and instructor trainer, OET instructor and instructor trainer, the Senior Program adviser for her patrol, and was the Certified adviser

for the Eastern Michigan Region in 2014-15. She is a current member of the NSP Planning Committee and previously served as a member of the NSP Education Committee.

Barthel is also working to extend her instructor capabilities as a PSIA Level III instructor by adding the adaptive skiing certification. She serves as a liaison with the local adaptive snow sports program and implemented a new adaptive sports station for her patrol's lift evacuation refresher. She also volunteers with a statewide adaptive sports program in Michigan through the local area ski school program.

Outside of NSP, she has instructed CPR, including to a Cub Scout troop, and was involved with a Wounded Warrior Family Ski Week, skiing with a wounded veteran. She is a member of the local animal therapy program in which they visit local



David Stepner

hospitals and assisted care residences with a therapy dog. She is also an instructor with the Sierra Club.

Barthel is also an enthusiastic supporter of the PSIA Women's Summit in California, and has helped coordinate NSP participation in the annual event (see "Stellar Summit," *Ski Patrol Magazine*, vol. 33, issue 3).

RUNNER-UP: Rene Perez, of the Bear Mountain Ski Patrol in the Far West Division, received a Silver Merit Star as the runner-up for Outstanding Instructor.

Side Note: Perez has taught OET classes at five resorts, and created a Facebook page so that he can keep patrollers in his area updated on training, events, and information, and also answer OET questions. Though he is not yet an OEC instructor, he helps teach at summer OEC classes to build relationships with candidate patrollers and ease the transition to when they become toboggan students in the winter.

OUTSTANDING OEC INSTRUCTOR

DAVID STEPNER

**Patrol: Squaw Valley
Division: Far West**

David Stepner exemplifies what makes someone a good instructor. Though he teaches OEC and CPR as the instructor of record for

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an annual candidate class, he often comments that he learns more from his students than they do from him.

Over the previous nine years, Stepner taught nine OEC classes, often staying well after the class to work on practice scenarios or to clarify things for his students. He constantly works to fine-tune his presentations, and his instructor reputation is such that his classes fill up quickly. Each class accepts 20 students, yet there is often a wait list for his two-week intensive OEC class, which boasts a nearly 100 percent pass rate.

He is also of great assistance to the paid patrol staff at his mountain. He puts in 40-50 volunteer days a year, and the paid patrol director has requested that he run remedial OEC classes for the paid staff so that those patrollers can learn about new protocols or fine-tune their techniques. The paid patrol director often asks him to fill in for injured or ill paid patrollers at the mountain.

He regularly consults with the patrol's medical director to work to deliver best practices on behalf of the patrol. He is also a regular contributor to the Senior Program.

His efforts were recognized at the patrol level with a Volunteer Patroller of the Year Award from his local patrol. He received a Meritorious Service Award in 2015.

Stepner has served as the Eastern Sierra Region OEC adviser for six years, and was of great assistance during the rollout of the *Outdoor Emergency Care Fifth Edition*, reading the text and creating a detailed list of the new procedures as a bridge.

Outside the patrol, Stepner teaches wilderness first aid to local hiking and riding clubs. He is an EMT and often volunteers his services as an EMT and/or OEC responder at area events, such as concerts, bike races, Tough Mudders, and AIDS races.

RUNNER-UP: Skip Mudge, of the Mount Southington Ski Patrol in the Eastern Division, received a Silver Merit Star as the runner-up for Outstanding OEC Instructor.

Side Note: Mudge joined his patrol after having already been an EMT, and that background enabled him to become an OEC instructor after only a year. He became an

OEC Senior trainer/evaluator in 2008, and in 2013 became Connecticut Region OEC administrator. In addition to his patrol work, Mudge teaches EMT classes locally, and also teaches EMR and CPR classes to middle school students in his town.

OUTSTANDING PATROL REPRESENTATIVE

JUDITH KAY-MONAGHAN

Patrol: Wintergreen

Division: Southern

A patroller for nearly 30 years, Judith Kay-Monaghan has held many leadership positions, including serving on the Southern Division board of directors for four years. She has her Senior in both alpine and patroller categories.

She has been an OEC instructor since 1988, an instructor trainer since 1990, is an Instructor Development instructor and instructor trainer,



Judith Kay-Monaghan

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NATIONAL SKI PATROL

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and has instructed many courses in each. She also recognized the importance of the OET refresher program, and further helped it by teaching toboggan sessions.

She has earned a National Appointment Number, Meritorious Service Award, two Yellow Merit Stars, and a Patroller's Cross.

When Kay-Monaghan took over as patrol representative of the Wintergreen Ski Patrol, she faced two major issues: an aging patrol, and trouble with coverage of patrol shifts. To address both, she made a concerted effort to recruit younger patrollers. She considered membership background and the distance the candidate was from the mountain to enhance the recruitment.

Among the recruiting initiatives were inviting candidates to a summer picnic, coordinating them with her area's "Ski with a Patroller Day,"

and having existing patrollers follow up by staying in contact with potential candidates. She reached out to the EMS community for potential candidates by attending her state's EMS educational conference and hosting a booth at the conference job fair that promoted patrolling as a career opportunity. The recruitment has paid dividends, as the patrol grew in membership by 25 percent. She also worked to increase the size of the young adult patrol, providing a feeder program through the OEC class.

Kay-Monaghan became an early adopter of the hybrid OEC refresher program for her patrol, getting her patrollers to embrace the online component. She used other modern technology as well, using Constant Contact to create an email communications platform for the patrol and rebuilding the patrol website to use a scheduling component, further increasing

coverage on duty days.

To keep rookie patrollers better engaged, Kay-Monaghan instituted a mentorship program, partnering the rookie patrollers with a more experienced patroller who could act as a mentor while working a shift.

Outside of NSP, Kay-Monaghan earned her EMT certification and volunteers with the local EMS rescue squad, and teaches CPR and AED through the American Heart Association. She has also coordinated an annual ski swap.

RUNNER-UP: Steven Devine, of the High Point Nordic Ski Patrol in the Eastern Division, received a Silver Merit Star as the runner-up for Outstanding Patrol Representative.

Side Note: Devine, who has his Senior in both alpine and Nordic, and who also achieved the Nordic Master in 2013, has worked with state parks to organize Nordic patrols for coverage. He also reached out to adventure races and mountain bike events, then created a bike patrol whose members later were called upon to work search and rescue in their community, and then formed a search and rescue affiliate team.

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OUTSTANDING YOUNG PATROLLER

CHRISTINA BUSCHE

Patrol: Powder Ridge

Division: Central

Christina Busche was first exposed to patrolling through her mother and older sister, both patrollers. Even before coming of age to join the young adult patrol and take OEC, she had joined her hill's junior patrol, which exposes young people to patrolling and gets them to assist with some tasks that don't require patrol certification, such as preparing ice packs and checking radios. She did this for three years before becoming eligible to take OEC and join the young adult patrol. She was recognized as Junior Patroller of the Year twice.

She excelled in the OEC class, as she is an exceptional student who was inducted into the National Honor Society in 2015. She has since been an OEC evaluator, and also assists with OET training sessions under the supervision of OET instructors. She even served as a mock patient for an OET exam.

She has assisted her patrol with its annual ski



Christina Busche. Photo by Brady Hughs Photography.

and adventure swap for fundraising, as well as the annual spring patrol banquet. When her church group visits her hill, she helps them get ready and orients them to the hill. She does the

same with her classmates when the high school students come up on Mondays, and helps them get rentals and lift tickets while refreshing them on Your Responsibility Code.

Outside of NSP, Busche, a four-year member of her school's cross country team and now team captain, has been designated as a first responder for the track and field and cross country teams. She provides medical care to her school's athletes at training and competitions. She has also assisted with American Red Cross blood drives.

Busche's drive is manifested not only in her patrolling, but in her academic achievements. She received her school's Foreign Language Department Excellence Award in 2015, and has been an honor roll member in all her years of high school. She is the captain of her school's Math Club and the varsity speech team; her competition in events with the latter earned her all-conference champion, for which she qualified for state level competition and then

the Stanford National Invitational Speech and Debate Tournament.

Outside of school, she has taught business and economics to elementary schoolchildren and served as a mentor with a mentoring program for middle school students with troubled home lives.

RUNNER-UP: Michael Marx, of the Mountain Creek Ski Patrol in the Eastern Division, received a Silver Merit Star as the runner-up for Outstanding Young Patroller.

Side Note: Marx joined his area's pre-YAP patroller program first, and once he was of age joined the young adult patrol. He now is a member of two patrols, and attends both sets of refreshers and clinics. After another young adult patroller he met at a YAP conference was severely injured in a school stabbing, Marx organized a blood drive and fundraiser to assist his injured fellow young adult patroller and the family. +

YELLOW MERIT STARS FOR DIVISION AWARDS

OUTSTANDING LARGE ALPINE PATROL

Gore Mountain Ski Patrol — Eastern
 Mt. Baker Ski Patrol — Pacific Northwest
 Appalachian Ski Patrol — Southern

OUTSTANDING SMALL ALPINE PATROL

Big Rock Ski Patrol — Eastern
 Schuss Mountain Ski Patrol — Central

OUTSTANDING ADMINISTRATIVE PATROLLER

Daren Lukes — Central
 Scott Campbell — Southern

OUTSTANDING ALPINE PATROLLER

Heidi Strader — Alaska
 Mark Klein — Central
 Patrick Cusick — Eastern
 Scott Eckroth — Northern
 Andrea Naviaux — Pacific Northwest
 Stephanie Otteni — Southern

OUTSTANDING PATROLLER

Kelly Hurlbut — Eastern
 Kameron Tucker — Southern

OUTSTANDING PAID PATROLLER

Elizabeth Bolton — Professional Division —
 Eastern Region
 George Myers — Professional Division —
 Southern Region

OUTSTANDING NORDIC PATROL

Highland Forest Nordic Ski Patrol — Eastern

OUTSTANDING NORDIC PATROLLER

Gwynne Pugh — Far West

OUTSTANDING INSTRUCTOR

Eric Speedy — Eastern
 Marie Ando — Northern
 Mark Langley — Pacific Northwest
 Cathy LaMarre — Southern

OUTSTANDING OEC INSTRUCTOR

Meghan Walls — Central
 Kathryn Taylor — Intermountain
 Cheryl Thompson — Northern
 Matt Kurjanowicz — Pacific Northwest
 Cathy Ballard — Southern

OUTSTANDING PATROL REPRESENTATIVE

Jay Van Zeeland — Central
 Stephen Sealy — Far West
 Dave Koenig — Intermountain
 Craig Martens — Northern

OUTSTANDING YOUNG ADULT PATROLLER

Nick Malisani — Northern
 Henry Lancaster — Southern