The Spirit

Summer 2022

of the United States Adaptive Recreation Center

New Technology = More Independence



DJ, Emily at the Tetra race with athlete Tim and his crew

USARC had the opportunity to glimpse into the future with the use of the Tetra Ski! One of 13, this spectacular technology assisted ski allows a whole new opportunity to skiing for athletes with high support needs.

The University of Utah Health and Tetradapt have developed a sit ski that allows an athlete to independently control their own turns and speed through the use of either a Joystick or Sip-n-puff technolgy. USARC also had the privilege of participating and competing in the first ever Tetraski/SnowKart race, The Brian McKenna Tetraski Express, Hosted by Powder Mountain, UT, and the amazing team at TRAILS. The first of hopefully many to come with the eventual goals of being added to the Paralympics. USARC sent two instructors and an athlete to partake in this event.

This ski provides a unique opportunity for individuals with high support needs to independently ski alongside and share the passion of skiing with family and friends. After working with about a dozen athletes this season with this ski we can tell you that no two lessons are the same and the impact this experience provides is truly unparalleled. The USARC is sending more instructors to get trained so we can serve more athletes next season.

Grateful for Snow



Jim and Ron taking in the sights at the top of Chair 9

As the weather is warming up it is important to reflect on another great winter season. This past winter had such a lasting impact on all those involved. Between the amazing athletes we were able to work with and our fantastic volunteers that helped make this winter another super successful season, we can't help but be grateful.

With covid restrictions loosening up we were able to see many of our skiers who have not been able to ski with us the past couple of seasons. It was good to see some familiar faces, without masks, once again. Although Mother Nature wasn't the most cooperative, thanks to Bear Mountain's snow making capabilities and grooming, we had enough snow to make it through the season.

This season wrapped up with our Volunteer Recognition Party, which is always a good time. The obstacle course was again the hit of the day, with everyone giving it a go. We can never say it enough, THANK YOU to the all the volunteers, participant's and donors for helping USARC be the best! We will see you on the lake, or sky (chair).

A Note from the Executive Director



Sara Rosell-Gavigan
Executive Director

The 2022 winter season is in the books. Although we didn't get the snowfall we wanted (or needed), we had a great season. Thanks to the Christopher Reeve Foundation we were able to purchase some new equipment for our fleet. We added two new sliders, a new dynamique bi-ski, new outriggers and some cool accessories! This was a huge help in keeping our equipment up to date so that our participants can enjoy the slopes in the safest way.

The USARC got recognized by Assemblymen Thurston "Smitty" Smith as the Non-Profit of the Year for his district. Assemblyman Smith came to USARC to present us with this honor. Shelly will be heading to Sacramento to accept the official plaque at the State Capital in June. This recognition came as a surprise and thank you to Big Bear Lake Mayor Rick Herrick , who nominated us, we are very excited to accept this award.

On a fun note, I am planning on taking some time to travel this summer. First stop will be Mt. Hood to train with the University of Utah on the Tetra Ski. I've never skied on a glacier before so I am looking forward to that first. Next stop I will be heading to Colorado to see my family, and hopefully a moose! I am looking forward to getting out and enjoying the outdoors. I will be joined by my husband Lance, and one year old Gunnar, what an adventure we are about to embark on!



Sara receiving the Non Profit of the Year award from Assembleyman "Smitty" along with DJ, Windy, Shelly, Gunnar, Christina and Mayor Herrick

As always, I would like to personally thank everyone who have continued to support the USARC. This program changes lives and we wouldn't be able to do it without all of you! We are looking forward to the summer and seeing what awaits.

Until then, respectively yours,

United States Adaptive Recreation Center
USARC

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MOVE UNITED MEMBER

SAVE THE DATE!

PEAK TO PEAK 28
BIG BEAR TO MAMMOTH
10.5-9.22

NEW ADVENTURES AWAIT!

This summer, the USARC is expanding it's programming! We are not only doing the usual summer activities on the lake, including waterskiing, tubing, kayaking and stand up paddleboarding but we are adding the popular fishing days, along with the new Snow Summit Adventure Day.



The rock wall at Snow Summit



Volunteers Steve and Alex take out some kayakers

The Snow Summit Adventure Day will include rock climbing, zip lining, bungee trampoline, panning for gems, tubing and the sky chair. This will be offered four days throughout the summer as a pilot program. Please note that not all the activities are fully accessible, but we are working on making it fully accessible by next summer. Thank you to the partnership with BBMR we are able to offer this new opportunity. We are looking forward to sharing this new adventure with you.



Nathan showing us how it's done!

We will once again call North Shore Landing our summer home. Thank you to Loren Hafen for welcoming us back. Summer volunteer training will be held June 25. This training is one day, free of charge and gives volunteers the opportunity to get familiar with the roles needed. Volunteers play a crucial role for USARC to keep out participants safe while on the water. Volunteers are utilized as dock help, boat crew, jumpers, and for paddling. Expertise in the water is not required. Volunteers will also be utilized during the Snow Summit Adventure Days and fishing days. For more information please visit, www.usarc.org or call us at 909.584.0269.

2022 Ski-A-Thon $65,000 raised!



The 2022 Ski-A-Thon was another successful day of celebration and skiing. The Apres Ski party made it's comeback with Jerry Gontag entertaining and the pick a prize raffle!



Tim is ready to go!

70 participants came together and raised over $65,000 for USARC and it's programs. In third place was Biana Kean raising $7,905, second place was Caryn Krasne raising $10,150, and in first place, the Queen of Ski-A-Thon, Michelle Jameson raising $16,024! A huge thank you to everyone who participated and we hope to see you next year for the 2023 Ski-A-Thon!

From the Beach to the Mountains
Kimberly Semmelroth

From the moment I began the search for Recreation Therapy internships I knew I wanted to do something in the realm of adventure or outdoor recreation. The difficult part was finding that! The majority of Recreation Therapy internships are in the clinical and community recreation area which makes finding an outdoor based site similar to finding your phone when it drops off the lift into powder, nearly impossible. When I came across United States Adaptive Recreation Center (USARC) I applied within minutes. It was exactly what I was searching for. The ability to work with a broad population of people with disabilities while being active seemed like a dream.



Kim goofin' off (safely) with Sandy and a little bi-skier

When I found out that I had been chosen as one of the interns I was elated! But then the reality of what I was about to do sunk in. It had been nearly ten years since I skied, and by no means was I a good skier back then. I knew that I could do the easy runs, but personally skiing while also helping another person learn to ski was quite daunting.

When I arrived at USARC at the beginning of January they threw me right into a lesson in the first 2 hrs. I remember watching Emily, one of the staff members, ski backwards and corral a student with ease. I was in awe. As the season progressed, I began getting comfortable on more difficult terrain and was eventually able to ski on every run. Not only did this internship help me with my personal skiing, but it helped me learn new tricks and interventions for working with people with disabilities. Every time I was paired with an experienced volunteer or staff member, we were able to problem solve certain situations and find the best solution which only helped me grow even more.



Kim with her fellow intern, Christina

I feel incredibly thankful for each and every participant, staff, and volunteer I had the opportunity to work with. As my internship is drawing to a close, I look back at some of my favorite lessons. I had a participant with a rare muscle disorder which presented with weak muscles and joints. The moment he arrived he looked at the bi-ski we got out for him and he said, "There's no way I'm doing that". I laughed and asked him what he wanted to do and he said he wanted to stand up ski. He was by far one of the most determined participants I had this season. Although he was only able to stand up for one run, I could tell how much he wanted to be independent. He did end up using the bi -ski to ski but I worked hard to allow him to call his own turns and lean into them to turn himself. By the end of the day I was barely holding on. It's lessons like these and many others that constantly rejuvenated my passion for this career that I am going to be entering shortly.

I sadly will not be able to stay for the summer season, but I know that I have made lifelong friendships and connections through USARC and look forward to volunteering in the future.

Athlete Profile- Adam "Can Do" Bremen



DJ, Adam, and David ready for first run

We would like to introduce you to our athlete highlight from winter, Adam Bremen. Adam was our first participant to ski the Tetraski this winter. We loved his willingness to try our newest ski and loved his grateful spirit and "Can Do" attitude throughout the day. Here is a little bit more from Adam:

The Spirit (TS): How did you find out about USARC?
Adam Bremen (AB): It all started with a simple google search to see if adaptive sports were even an option in Big Bear.
TS: That's great! What other adaptive sports have you participated in?
AB: Surfing via an amazing organization called Life Rolls On. I have also begun tennis and boxing.
TS: Have you ever skied before?
AB: Yes, and my previous experience was not a pleasant one. The equipment was extremely uncomfortable and unenjoyable.
TS: How was your experience in the Tetraski?
AB: My experience was absolutely incredible! Due to my previous experience with skiing my expectations were very low. The seat was not only secure and comfortable but I was blown away that there was a joy stick to navigate similar to my power chair. The staff was so knowledgeable and dedicated to ensure that my experience was not only memorable in a positive way but also as safe as possible. I am so grateful for DJ and the entire team. I would encourage anyone who is thinking of trying it to just do it. You CanDo baby!



Great shot of the joy stick being used

TS: So glad you enjoyed your experience. What do you like to do in your spare time?
AB: I enjoy experiencing new things, traveling and food. But ultimately spending quality time with family and friends.
TS: Explain the importance of recreation to you.
AB: Recreation is an important part of everyone's life especially someone who is dealing with a disability it allows you to feel like everyone else and connect with people and the environment.
TS: Very true! Tell us a little bit about what you do.
AB: I am the founder of the CanDo company, makers of Keto Krisp protein snack bars.
TS: Tell us about your motto "Can Do."
AB: Life is about what you Can Do and not what you can't. We do, instead of dream. We live the way we want and we know you do too. We're here to power you in your journey to being your best and healthiest self every single day.
TS: That's such a great outlook! Thank you for taking the time to talk with us!

Volunteer of the Year- Dan Brown

If you do not already know him, we would like to introduce you to him!



Dan having some fun on the snow with Dexter

Dan not only volunteers in the winter, but summer and this past year volunteered on Peak to Peak. He is a jack of all trades and can do just about anything asked of him. Dan has also been rookie of the year, making him the first volunteer in USARC history to win rookie of the year and volunteer of the year! Here is a little bit more from Dan himself.



Dan helping Dawn stay balanced in the water

The Spirit (TS): What was your reaction to being volunteer of the year, especially after being rookie of the year in the past?
Dan Brown (DB): Absolutely surprised! Having been on staff in the past, I thought that it was not a thing but the USARC gods prevailed. It is always an honor to be recognized by one's peers!

TS: What is your favorite part about being a USARC volunteer?
DB: The fact that every day is awesome. There are literally no bad days at USARC. I always leave feeling good.

TS: What do you do in your spare time?
DB: I help raise my 11-year-old. I also like to go off-roading, garden, and am a swim team dad!

TS: That sounds like it keeps you busy! What advice would you give to some of our newer volunteers?
DB: Keep creating smiles. Push for personal skill improvement and keep trying to learn all that you can!
TS: Do you plan on volunteering with USARC this summer?
DB: Every day that I can!

TS: What is a fun fact about yourself?
DB: I am only as good as the people around me!

TS: Thanks Dan! We really appreciate all you have done for USARC over the years!



Dan's Rookie Year!

We couldn't do it without YOU!
Thank you to these amazing volunteers that help make USARC the best!*
2022 Winter Volunteers

Underline=Taught 10+ days
***Italics*=PSIA Certified**

30+ YEARS
John Alderete
Gilbert Cortez
Bob Lombard
Bill Yaeger

25+ YEARS
Tim Guebert
Ray Locascio
Karen Mora
Tom Pollard
Will Rahill
Andy Templeton
Paul Zamoyta

20+ YEARS
Bob Knight
Kam Lawrence
Kim McRae

15+ YEARS
Steve Betance
Mary Kay Chirico
Jeff Mills
Jim Ortiz
Sandy Pappas
Tom Perez
Neil Slate
Carol Sorensen
Roger Sorensen
Josef Szigeti

10+YEARS
Scott Adler
Valerie Bagget
Steve Barker
Richard Beynon
Tom Delgado
Kay Kobayashi
Soo Jeong Lee
Kimberly Light
Bill Shamhart
Holly Shelton
Paul Van Wig
Tracy Walton

5+ YEARS
Daniel Brown
Marilyn Capel
Alex Fabbro
Rodney Hsueh
B.A. Laris
Reed Leong
Susan Mason
Andrew McAllon
Josh Miner
Don Schroeder
Kathleen Snow
Bill Wandner

1+ YEARS
Thomas Ahola
Justin Barnette
James Benson
Haylee Beynon
Taylor Brown
Tim Conklin
Lee Cuthbert
Adam De Angelis
David De Graw
Louis Demeo
David Eskridge
Michael Greene
Sarah Greene
Dennis Matavisko
Richard McCollom
Flynn Morrison
Brooke Moultrie
Stephanie Nava
Ted Oden
Chuck Orozco
Rob Outwater
Pat Patterson
Riley Pratt
Colette Pfiffer
Randy Richards
Hannah Rinard
Leslie Rubinar
Jason Schetter
Magali Stein
Oliver Stein
Michael Stoll
Lisa Marie Vath
Fritz Ward
Kim Wolmerath

*For any discrepancies or omissions, please accept our apologies and contact us so we can

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USARC's events and programs succeed thanks to the generous in-kind donors of goods and services from the 2020 calendar year. Please remember them with your patronage when possible.

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Memorials and Tributes

The USARC is honored to have received donations in the name of someone held close to the heart of the donor and/or their family and friends. We are proud to see that many of the names listed below are current or former members of the USARC family, all of whom have contributed to the success of the program. Thank you all.

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Joanne Apodaca in memory of
Julian Apodaca
Scott Ellenson in memory of
Brook Ellenson
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Leann Levine

How can I help USARC?

In reply to this oft-asked question, your options are numerous. In addition to volunteering, there are many ways to financially support the USARC!

DONATE ONLINE IN YOUR NAME OR AS A TRIBUTE TO A LOVED ONE

Clicking here https://www.givedirect.org/donate/?cid=1433 or via the Get Involved option on the USARC website at www.usarc.org, will take you to a secure, reliable website where you can use your credit card to make a one-time or recurring tax deductible donation in your name or in recognition of another.

PARTICIPATE IN THE ANNUAL SKI-A-THON OR PEAK TO PEAK PEDAL

Under the Event tab at www.usarc.org are the web pages for these respective special events. Held annually in March and October, respectively, these unique and fun events allow you to support the USARC while engaging in activities you love, be it snow sports or cycling!

SHOPPING PARTNERSHIPS

The USARC can be named as a partner when you shop at numerous retailers, either online or at "brick and mortar" stores. Amazon's charitable arm, http://smile.amazon.com. Other online retailers at www.igive.com or www.escrip.com, allow you to select the USARC as a beneficiary of your shopping forays. RALPHS grocery shoppers can register at www.ralphs.com/topic/community-contribution-2 and designate the USARC to receive a portion of your purchases.

PLANNED GIVING IN YOUR WILL OR TRUST

The USARC can be named as a beneficiary in your estate planning, enabling you to support the important and life-changing programs of the USARC well into the future. Consult your tax and legal professionals or call the USARC and we can put in you in touch with somebody to guide you through the process.

DONATE YOUR OLD CAR, BOAT, RV ETC.

Cars, trucks, motorcycles, boats, trailers and RVs donated in the name of USARC at https://careasy.org/nonprofit/USARC are sold, with the proceeds defraying USARC's operating costs and you receive a tax deduction! Please call 855-500-7433 or click on the link to get started.

What's ahead at USARC?

MAY

24 Summer Reservations Open

JUNE

14 Fish and Paddle
15 Snow Summit Adventure Day
25 Summer Volunteer Training
28 Fish and Paddle
29 Snow Summit Adventure Day

JULY

6,7 Water Skiing and Paddle Day
12 Fish and Paddle
13,14 Water Skiing and Paddle Day
16 P2P27 Reunion and Slideshow
19 Snow Summit Adventure Day
20,21 Water Skiing and Paddle Day
24-26 Overnight Session #1
27-29 Overnight Session #2

AUGUST

2 Fish and Paddle
3,4 Water Skiing and Paddle Day
9 Snow Summit Adventure Day
10,11 Waterskiing and Paddle Day
17,18 Waterskiing and Paddle Day

OCTOBER

5-9 28th Annual Peak to Peak Pedal

Seeking Corporate Sponsors!

As you know this year has been a challenge and we need to find revenue where ever we can. Please reach out to your company or any corporation you're involved with and ask them if they are interested in sponsoring USARC. Please contact us if you have any questions (909) 584-0269.