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NSAA ANNOUNCES CHANGES TO LEARN TO SKI AND SNOWBOARD MONTH
Updated initiative will encourage growth in snowsports through the season

LAKEWOOD, Colo. – April 4, 2019 – The National Ski Areas Association (NSAA) announced today that it would continue to lead the charge on growing the sports of skiing and snowboarding by updating its Learn to Ski and Snowboard initiative for the 2019/20 ski and ride season. Changes include bringing the program in-house, focusing on a season-long approach, and broadening the scope of growth to include different skier segments.

The biggest change to the program will be the departure of long-time ski industry professional and tireless advocate for trial and growth, Mary Jo “MJ” Tarallo. Mary Jo is soon to be involved with a new project called Sun and Snow Adventures and shifting locations to Rehoboth Beach, DE. MJ’s tenure as the champion for Learn to Ski and Snowboard Month has been marked by many successes, including reaching 1 million lessons over the course of the program.

“Mary Jo is one of those people who does the work because she wholeheartedly believes in the cause,” said Kelly Pawlak, NSAA President and CEO. “Her dedication to introducing new people to winter sports is unequalled.”

The Learn to Ski and Snowboard program will be transformed as it is incorporated with NSAA’s overall strategy for growing the number of snowsports participants. Started in 2009, Learn to Ski and Snowboard Month was introduced as the “trial component” of the Growth Model. It served a two-fold approach: encouraging ski areas and suppliers to offer special deals to new skiers or snowboarders in the month of January; and assisting these new skiers via tips and information on its guest-facing website.

In the coming months, both the resort-facing and guest-facing sides of the program will be updated, including revamped content and an increased digital presence. Trial and conversion will continue to be emphasized. Additionally, programs designed to reach other segments of skiers and riders, like the core and lapsed cohorts, will be included in the overall model. Most notably, the Learn to Ski and Snowboard initiative will extend throughout the season, which allows individual ski areas to design “learn-to” programs that work within their operational considerations. Extending the duration of the initiative also encourages people to learn earlier or later in the season when the days are longer and the temperatures are warmer and more inviting to newcomers.

“Designating January as Learn to Ski and Snowboard Month brought unprecedented national attention to snow sports and gave our industry the shot in the arm it needed to bring new people into the sport,” said Raelene Davis, chairperson of the LSSM initiative. “As we transition and modernize the initiative, I look forward to growing our sport to sustain it for decades to come,” added Davis.

NSAA aims to grow participation in skiing and snowboarding to 3 percent of the U.S. population (approximately 60MM skiers) by the 2025/26 season. The association's growth initiative includes the commencement of a 20-member Growth Committee composed of ski industry visionaries from ski areas, suppliers and associations. This collaborative group will support NSAA as they transition the program to its new iteration for the 2019/20 ski and ride season.

THE NATIONAL SKI AREAS ASSOCIATION (NSAA) IS A TRADE ASSOCIATION REPRESENTING THE INTERESTS OF 317 SKI AREAS, THEIR OPERATORS, AND INDUSTRY SUPPLIERS. FORMED IN 1962, NSAA DESIGNS AND SUPPORTS SKI INDUSTRY INITIATIVES AND PROGRAMS, INCLUDING GROWTH, SAFETY, AND SUSTAINABILITY, FROM ITS LAKEWOOD, COLO. HEADQUARTERS. LEARN MORE ABOUT NSAA'S MISSION AND PROGRAMS AT NSAA.ORG.

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