



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Media Contact:**

Adrienne Saia Isaac  
Director of Marketing & Communications  
National Ski Areas Association  
720.963.4217 (office)  
[aisaac@nsaa.org](mailto:aisaac@nsaa.org)

**NSAA LAUNCHES MOUNTAIN FOUNDATION 501C3**

***Ski industry trade association non-profit will support educational opportunities for the next generation of industry leaders***

LAKEWOOD, Colo. – April 30, 2019 – The National Ski Areas Association (NSAA) announced today the launch of the [Mountain Foundation](#), a 501c3 non-profit dedicated to providing educational opportunities to the next generation of snowsports industry leaders. The foundation will award grants to ski industry employees so they can experience educational opportunities with the goal of furthering their careers.

“Empowering our staff to get out and meet their peers at conferences and seminars is crucial to developing their careers,” said Kelly Pawlak, NSAA president and CEO. “What better way for our future leaders to spend time with industry experts who can teach, mentor, and inspire them than at these educational events?”

The creation of the foundation was spearheaded by Blaise Carrig, former Chair of the NSAA Board of Directors and long-time ski industry visionary. Carrig was a member of the NSAA Board and senior advisor for the Vail Resorts Mountain Division when he shared a story of how attending an NSAA educational event early in his career opened the door to possibilities in the industry. His experience there was influential in solidifying his career path.

“I was lucky someone gave me the opportunity to attend the NSAA annual conference when I was just getting started in the ski business,” Carrig said. “I made personal connections that were inspirational to my career and leadership journey.”

“Leslie and I want to give back to the industry by helping provide other ‘up-and-comers’ the opportunity to education and events to help them grow into the future leaders of snowsports,” he said.

Carrig and wife, Leslie, have laid the groundwork for the Mountain Foundation by pledging \$50,000 to kick start the fund. The Carrigs’ generous donation will allow NSAA to begin awarding applicants with grants as early as summer 2019. NSAA is grateful for Blaise’s continued stewardship to the ski industry by developing its future leaders. To make a donation to the Mountain Foundation, please visit [themountainfoundation.org](http://themountainfoundation.org).

Starting May 1, employees of NSAA’s ski area, affiliate and associate members will be able to apply to attend educational events including the NSAA National Convention and winter conferences, lift and vehicle maintenance conferences, and select regional ski association events. An application form and a full list of approved events, application deadlines, and disbursement information can be found on the [NSAA website](#).

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***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](http://NSAA.ORG).***