

Greetings Connecticut Ski Council Members,

My name is Don Haringa, and I am the Director of Education and Programs for PSIA-AASI Eastern Division. I was recently chatting with one of your members, Dave England, about the CSC, and about how taking ski or snowboard lessons can add a great deal of enjoyment to these sports we love. He then asked me if I had an article that explained a little bit about who we are and what we do. Luckily, there is an article on our website that does just that! What follows is an updated version of that article. I also added an invitation for you to take a short E-Learning course on some of the basics of ski and snowboard instruction. I hope you enjoy the article, and I encourage you to take the E-Learning course. Additionally, please feel free to browse our website, [www.psia-e.org](http://www.psia-e.org) as well as the National PSIA-AASI website, [www.thesnowpros.org](http://www.thesnowpros.org)

## **An Introduction to PSIA-AASI Eastern Division**

### **Who We Are**

They say flying is the ultimate freedom. While snowsports may not “officially” qualify as flying, your spirit, mind and body can all “take flight” by learning to ride and slide with the help of a professional snowsports instructor.

Whether gliding through a forest of pines on Nordic skis, carving sweeping alpine turns down a groomed white carpet, challenging a field of bumps, catching a little air with big style in the terrain park, – learning to ski and ride is one of the healthiest and most rewarding outdoor activities for you and your family.

If you’re already an accomplished skier or rider, you’ll soar to new heights of fun and fulfillment by sharing your passion for snowsports with others and becoming a member of our organization.

With more than 10,200 members, the Eastern Division of the Professional Ski Instructors of America and the American Association of Snowboard Instructors (PSIA-AASI Eastern Division) is the largest of the eight divisions that make up the American Snowsports Education Association (ASEA, the national umbrella organizations of PSIA and AASI).

PSIA-AASI Eastern Division members represent a little more than 32% of the more than 32,800 that make up the national ASEA membership. Our members live and work in seven regions up and down the East Coast, teaching for more than 250 snowsports schools. PSIA-AASI Eastern Division members represent a cross section of the East Coast population ranging from full-time snowsports instructors to professionals such as business executives, doctors, lawyers, and academic teachers. The majority are part time instructors who come from many different backgrounds, geographic areas, age groups and income brackets. We have more than 200 Educational Staff members who conduct our clinics and exams for other members.

Of these, approximately 110 serve as the Board of Examiners for all disciplines and the balance specialize in a variety of roles in all snowsport disciplines. Our “BOE” are often described as the

“Ph.D.’s” of snowsports education, and each member of this dedicated group has committed more than six years to advanced educational training. Our members play the roles of coach, trainer, facilitator and guide. Whether you are an aspiring teacher or inspired participant, they are here for you!

### **What We Do**

We provide training and education as well as certification opportunities for our members – educators of alpine, nordic, snowboarding and adaptive snowsports. We offer three levels of certification in alpine, snowboarding, nordic and adaptive teaching. We conduct over 500 educational and certification events a year, ranging in size from less than ten to five hundred attendees. Dozens of topics are offered in all disciplines in such diverse areas as teaching methods, personal skill improvement, new products, sports science, communications, customer service, gender & age related issues and much more. In addition to our primary disciplines, we offer specialized programs for children’s educators, seniors and racing enthusiasts.

As part of our educational focus, we are constantly evolving *The American Teaching System* (ATS) which is one of the most respected and progressive teaching systems in the world. Its various components, concepts, and materials are used by snowsports schools throughout the country. We conduct ongoing research and development in all aspects of the sport and its instruction, and publish educational materials for the use of our members. We promote the growth of snowsports as lifetime activities through fun and fulfilling educational experiences.

### **Eastern Division Mission Statement:**

To promote and support our member snowsports educators by providing excellence in educational programs, certification and member benefits. To provide opportunities for professional growth and recognition via promotion of our members, our brands and the value they bring to customers, resort management and the snowsports industry.

### **National and Vision Statement:**

Create lifelong adventures through education.

### **Eastern Division members of PSIA & AASI do an incredible job of helping people of all ages to learn and enjoy skiing and riding.**

The time, energy, devotion and enthusiasm our members commit to their own personal development as a teacher and as a skier or rider is commendable and impressive; their dedication to sharing that knowledge with others is unmatched.

### **A note to snowsports enthusiasts who just want to ski and ride...**

Our member teachers can help make your skiing or riding experience more exciting and worthwhile. Whether your preference is alpine, snowboard, cross country, or telemark; whether you’re into racing, freestyle, moguls, or just looking good; whether you are just getting started, have special physical or developmental challenges, or are a seasoned expert, we can make a difference. No matter how skilled you are, you can always improve. A PSIA or AASI professional can help make the process faster, easier and safer, adding up to more fun and enjoyment.

If you have an interest in becoming a PSIA-AASI instructor, or if you are just starting out as one, or even if you just want a little taste of what we do, we would like to invite you to take the PSIA-AASI New Instructor Course e-learning module. It's free and you'll learn some valuable things about teaching skiing or snowboarding.

First - go to [www.thesnowpros.org](http://www.thesnowpros.org)

Then- Hover the cursor over *Education*

Once the menu drops down, click on *E-Learning*

The first thing that comes up is the *New Instructor Course*

Follow the instructions, which are found just under the picture, and enjoy the course! It doesn't take very long to complete, and we think you'll enjoy learning a little more about being a snowsports instructor!

If you have any questions, you are welcome to contact me.

I hope you have a great winter on the slopes!

Don Haringa

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**EASTERN  
DIVISION**