



Ollie Nam

Courageous. Adaptable. Collaborative.

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RE: Sodergren Scholarship Application

Dear APSI board,

Thank you kindly for considering my application for the Sodergren Scholarship this year. Please see my written response below.

I hope that with this scholarship I can complete my Alpine certification and progress to joining the trainers helping develop the instructors of the winters to come.

Kind Regards

Ollie Nam

Commitment to education, training, and accreditation

Developing my instructing skills has always been a priority for me during the winter seasons. In 2023 whilst training for my Level 4 certification I took every opportunity to learn and practise. I was a reliable regular at the in-house training sessions, for not only my peer group though also other level groups, which I discuss further below. I have diligently progressed through the alpine levels, and regularly take opportunities to attend further workshops (such as NTC days, winter week, etc.) in addition to certification courses and exams. I am a serial note-taker, and often one of the last to leave an exam feedback session after having in-depth conversations about various skills with examiners. I originally commenced my Alpine Level 4 journey in 2019, undertaking both pre-courses. However, at the time I did not feel I was ready for the exam and chose to wait until I had expanded my instructing skillset. I look forward to learning new areas in which I can improve this coming season.

In addition to my snowsport industry qualifications, last year I also completed a Certificate IV in Training and Assessment (TAE40116). This enhanced my knowledge and skills of how adults learn, and how I can make their alpine learning experiences as engaging as possible.



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Professionalism

Throughout my career, both in and out of the industry I have always strived to provide high levels of customer service. One of the other hats I wear over winter is helping the Mt Buller paramedic crew as a first responder – what Ambulance Victoria call an Ambulance Community Officer. When the volume of patients exceeds the capacity of the available paramedics, I am often called to assist. Through treating and transporting the injured from our mountain, I have learned how much of a difference good customer service can make, even when someone is having a really bad day.

On snow, this comes into play by being foremost a host for our guests. Whilst learning skiing skills are valuable, often in our challenging environment those turning up for a lesson need a hand with many other things first. Whether that's helping drop-off the kids to the right group lesson, resolving a ski hire issue, or simply ensuring everyone stays hydrated, I find our guests have a much better time when their experience is put first. Often, I will be asked to do a little bit extra, such as dropping the kids back to the apartment at the end of the lesson or meeting up with other instructors who are teaching their friends. I always happily take the time to accommodate our guests needs so that they have a great experience in our mountain paradise.

Contribution and service provided to the industry

Over the past decade I have shown a continued commitment to the industry. I have worked at multiple resorts, including Hotham and Hanazono. Throughout this time, I have consistently worked through my instructing certifications and constantly strived to improve my customer service skills.

I am a highly adaptable instructor, regularly working in many areas in the snowsports school. On top of a wide variety of private lessons, I often teach kids groups (both young and older), and adult group lessons. Last year at Buller one of our race club instructors was regrettably unavailable at times during the season. Often at short notice I was asked to cover their groups, and despite having conflicting commitments in the community, I found a way to make myself available to assist.

Recently I have really enjoyed helping instructors in their journey working towards the Level 2 and 3 certifications (under a trainer's supervision). I would regularly shadow their in-house training sessions and assist the lead trainer with movement analysis, demonstrations, and feedback. We found it was surprisingly valuable having a second perspective to discuss various technical topics with a diverse instructor group. Outside of formal training clinics, often impromptu chairlift rides with some of these instructors turned into mini technical debates, and I found it really rewarding to see them improve throughout the season.

Future direction and commitment to the industry

Once I achieve my Level 4 Alpine certification, I imagine I will feel very accomplished, though it also feels like just the start of the next chapter in my journey. In 2023 I achieved my first cert in another discipline – Adaptive. The Adaptive Level 1 was particularly eye-opening for how much support we as instructors can give many of our guests in regular programs, in addition to working with physical disabilities. I would really like to follow and promote this pathway, perhaps in future being able to pass this onto other Mt Buller instructors, as we struggle for adaptive trainers down south.

Naturally, with the Alpine full certification that this scholarship will help me attain, I very much look forward to training the next generation of instructors in my favourite activity. The modest amount of training delivery experience I gained in-house last year really made me realise how much I have learned from trainers over the years, and I would enjoy the chance to pass this on. Thus, I look forward to the possibility of progressing through rookie selection should I have the opportunity.