



VOLUNTEER WALL OF FAME

Andrea Bundon, BC



1. What type of organizations do you volunteer for?

My chief interest is in developing and promoting para-nordic ski programs. I'm the British Columbia representative on CCC's Para-Nordic Development Committee and I am one of the volunteer organizers and coaches for the Nordic Racers Ski Club's (Vancouver) para-nordic program. This year, I'll also be guiding Paralympian Margarita Gorbounova as she pursues a spot on the team for Sochi. I work with athletes at all levels - from those skiing for the first time to those racing at the highest level.

2. What is the most rewarding part about volunteering?

I love watching the programs grow. When the Nordic Racers first started their para-nordic committee, I could have named every athlete in our programs. Now I go skiing on a Saturday and I see that the accessible parking spots are full, the sit-ski course is groomed, the para-nordic race team is out training, skiers with visual impairments are out skiing with their guides... It feels like there is some momentum now and I think (hope) there are more opportunities than ever before for people with disabilities to ski in the Vancouver area - both in formal programs and more casually with friends and family.

3. What do you have to say about all the volunteers who make events possible?

The reason we don't pay volunteers is not because they are worthless but because they are priceless. I am constantly amazed and humbled by how much time and energy people are willing to give to our programs. Our days are really long - we hop on a bus from Vancouver to Whistler and we spend all day hauling gear, helping new skiers get on snow and giving lessons and then we load everything back up. On the bus ride home, it's not uncommon to see participants and volunteers alike sleeping - they are totally exhausted. But the next day they are already emailing me to sign up for the next clinic...

4. Finish this sentence: I volunteer because...

Because it was volunteers that made it possible for me to ski. I come from a club that was entirely run by volunteers. They made it very clear that they were happy to support me and my teammates during our competitive careers but that at some point we would be expected to pay it forward. At one point I remember my dad calculating how many 'recreational' members and club volunteers it takes to support one racer... the ratio was astounding. Now my goal is to provide others with the same opportunities that I had.

