

## PSIA-AASI Executive Summary

### Summer 2016 Survey Wave 3

#### “PROFESSIONAL ISSUES” SURVEY

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- 1. Professional identity:** Similar to past waves of the survey conducted in November 2015 and March 2016, most members consider snowsports instruction to be a hobby, job that earns them extra money, or a secondary career (70%). Fewer consider it to be a primary career (21%). Additionally, most identify their job as instructors as a part-time position (52%). Almost all find their job to be very or somewhat rewarding (99%), and a strong majority are optimistic about the state of snowsports today (76%).
- 2. On the job – satisfaction continues to lag in areas of fulfillment and recognition.** As in previous waves of the Professional Issues survey, satisfaction continues to lag in compensation from lessons, recognition, and opportunity for growth (48%, 17%, and 16% are dissatisfied, respectively). However, instructors are generally satisfied with other aspects of their jobs, including the level of joy and meaning they find in their work (85%), relationship with co-workers (84%), their clients/customers (79%), personal safety (70%), their job overall (70%), work/life balance (59%), and the amount of authority they have in their jobs (56%).
- 3. Members view expanding skills as greatest challenge for the future.** When asked about the greatest challenges they would face over the next 3-5 years, most members identified expanding their teaching skills/level of expertise (55%), expanding their skiing/riding skills (52%), and personal considerations, such as work-life balance, family commitments, etc. (41%). Members also frequently listed the need to maintain or build their reputation as an instructor (33%) and keeping up to date with new developments and trends in snowsports (30%).

Consistent with these findings, most members identified belonging to PSIA-AASI in order to enhance their teaching skills (38%), enhance skiing or riding skills (37%) and to maintain PSIA-AASI certification (35%). Notably, these primary reasons for belonging to the association have been listed as top choices in each of the previous waves of the Professional Issues survey, which underscores the importance of learning and skills building among members.

- 4. Suggestions from members:** PSIA-AASI members were asked to name resources that would be most helpful in addressing the challenges they face. Not surprisingly, their responses reflect a bias towards enhancing their skills. Many submitted comments that requested more clinics and training.



look



learn



plan



deliver

For instance, one respondent suggested they would like to see “*more diverse training opportunities for higher level training as well as educational resources and collaborative working groups that glean from other professional education arenas.*” Another offered “*my primary means of gathering information has been attending clinics. In-house training has become nonexistent as a cost cutting measure. With the cost of membership, clinics, and the low pay, buying manuals is unfortunately a limited option.*”

5. **Satisfaction with PSIA-AASI benefits:** As in previous waves of the survey, satisfaction is highest with *32 Degrees Magazine* (71%), *Pro Deals* (66%), the *Accessories Catalog* (55%), and face-to-face educational offerings (54%). They have the least amount of satisfaction with promotion to the public about PSIA-AASI members (17%), promotion to resort management about PSIA-AASI members (20%), social media (26%), and online education offerings (38%).
6. **Member profile:** Most member respondents have worked in snowsports for over 10 years (64%) and are between the ages of 50 – 69 (58%). They have a 4 year degree (43%) or Masters Degree (28%). Membership is less diverse than the country as a whole - most are Caucasian/White (85%) and males (72%). Twenty-nine percent (29%) hold a household income of over \$100,000. They generally instruct in alpine (86%), while significant proportions also instruct snowboarding (37%), and adaptive (30%). Notably, these demographic characteristics trend very closely with past iterations of the Professional Issues surveys.

## NEW MEMBER SURVEY

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1. **Word-of-mouth as a driver of membership:** Similar to findings from past waves of the New Member survey conducted in November 2015 and March 2016, word-of-mouth is how the majority (85%) of new members find out about PSIA-AASI. This includes through another instructor in their organization (63%), from a family member or friend (13%), a PSIA-AASI Board or staff member (6%), or an instructor outside of their organization (3%). Direct promotions, exposure to events or web searches account for only 4% of respondent exposure to PSIA-AASI.
2. **Reasons joined – new members are primarily interested in building skills and obtaining certification.** The majority of new members indicated joining to enhance their teaching skills (59%), to obtain PSIA-AASI certification (51%) or enhance skiing or riding skills (44%). These findings match closely with past waves of the New Member survey. They also connect closely with the primary reasons existing members belong to PSIA-AASI. New members also cited joining to enhance their professional profile (21%) and to receive members-only discounts (17%).



3. **Participation with PSIA-AASI:** Similar to previous waves of the survey, new members plan to participate in certification (87%), use manuals, guides and videos (80%), and use member discounts (79%). Additionally, many new members anticipate reading *32 Degrees Magazine* (60%), participating in conferences, workshops and academies (49%), using PSIA-AASI's *Accessories Catalog* (43%), and participating in a Division meeting or event (39%).
4. **Most new members feel the value of membership is equal (55%) or greater (16%) than the cost of membership.** However, 29% believe that the cost of membership outweighs its value. When asked to provide text comments about what they might consider to be a successful membership experience, responses included a focus on skills advancement (e.g., *"The ability to grow as an instructor and have access to other experience skiers and snowboarders to improve my overall abilities"*), certification (*"certification will mark success for my participation"*), and affiliation (*"Being a part of a culture of other ski instructors who enjoy teaching as much as I do"*).
5. **Interacting with other professionals:** When asked to select their top choices for interaction, most new members prefer to connect with other professionals in the field through local / Division educational events (84%), followed by national education events (20%), and through an online community (20%). Most preferred content to be available and delivered through electronic formats that can be saved offline (65%), through the website or an online resource (48%) or through a mobile device application or "app" (29%).

