

Hunter Information & Training Program News



Winter 2021

Instructor Notes

Comments from 2020 Student Surveys

What did you like most about the course?

“Shooting someone else’s ammo.”

“It was fun!”

“I passed!!”

“The professionalism of the instructors.”

“Blaze orange is very bright compared to everything!”



Additional comments?

“I’d still highly recommend the course. It didn’t feel like a boring government course.”

“It is very cool to see kids and parents together in the course.”

“Instructors were nice and respectful. Enjoyed their dad jokes.”

“I knew nothing about hunting or real firearms before this class, and now I feel I can safely handle a firearm.”

THANK YOU!!



The Taku River Sportsmen Association stepped up in a huge way this year, purchasing 290 codes for students to complete the online hunter education course. Students from Floyd Dryden and Dzantik’i Heeni middle schools in Juneau will attend in-person field days this spring to receive their hunter education certifications.

Instructor Discount Opportunity

Sitka Gear gives a discount for volunteer hunter ed instructors. They don’t advertise it, you have to call and ask for it (877-748-5247). They lump instructors in with the government employees since you are volunteering for ADF&G. They will email you a link to sign up on their website. There is a yearly fee of \$25 to join the website, but its gets you a 40% discount on Sitka Gear and lots of other brands! Thanks Laura Huling for sharing this info with other instructors!

HIT Staff Contact Information

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Daniel Gutierrez 465-4345



Congratulations to Ginamaria Smith for receiving the 2020 Director’s Achievement Award for Public Service for her implementation of the in-kind hours cost-saving program and continued support of the department’s mission.



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Coordinator’s Corner-Ginamaria Smith

Even with classes canceled for a few months throughout the year, the HIT Program still managed to certify and assist Alaskan families in getting out to enjoy Alaska’s natural resources safely. This was only 917 students less than in 2019.

Class Type	Number of Classes	Certified Students
Hunter Ed	113	1,327
Bowhunter Ed	34	300
Muzzleloader Ed	13	51
Crossbow Ed	12	68
Totals:	172	1,746

HIT Program certification courses were taught in **22 different cities and villages** during 2020 and we had **474 active volunteer instructors**.

Class Type	# of Instructors Who Taught at Least 1 Class	Taught the Most Classes
Hunter Ed	136	Cordell Gray (Fairbanks) taught 13 classes
Bowhunter Ed	53	Lyle Shelnut (Fairbanks) taught 4 classes
Muzzleloader Ed	13	Ed Bosco (Anchorage) taught 3 classes
Crossbow Ed	18	Ed Bosco (Anchorage) taught 2 classes
Multiple Disciplines	171	Ed Bosco (Anchorage) taught 17 classes

Your volunteer hours allowed us to access **\$465,643.24** in P-R Federal-Aid funds! These funds are used for HIT Program administration and to purchase class supplies, rent facilities, and pay for travel. Thank you for all of your volunteer hours.

Region	# of Classes	Students in Class
Region I (Southeast)	18	220
Region II (Anc, Kodiak, & Kenai Pen.)	89	915
Region III & V (Interior & Northwest)	34	247
Region IV (Central & Southwest)	31	347

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DID YOU KNOW?

More people hunt each year than play:

- Soccer-14.3 million
- Tennis-13.6 million
- Baseball-12.1 million
- Hunters-18.2 million

Source: NSSF.org



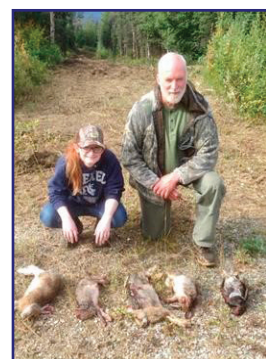


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2020 Instructor of the Year Awards

Volunteer instructors are the backbone of the HIT Program. As a group, volunteer instructors possess a vast wealth of information which has proven to be invaluable in passing on the knowledge and skills of the outdoors. The HIT Program would like to recognize the following volunteer instructors for making a significant contribution to the HIT Program and considerably advancing the cause of safe/ethical hunting.



Lifetime Achievement Award-Somerset Jones of Chugiak

Somerset has been a hunter ed instructor since 2009 and a muzzleloader ed instructor since 2010, instructing 120 classes and certifying 1,859 students. Somerset can always be counted on to be early to set-up for a class and will stay until everything is cleaned

up, plus his enthusiasm for teaching never fades. He's become a key instructor in both Anchorage and the Mat-Su, including instructing 9 classes in 2020. Somerset brings a wealth of shooting and hunting knowledge into his classes and his love of passing on our hunting heritage to the next generation is readily apparent.



Lifetime Achievement Award-Tom Kron of Anchorage

Tom has been a hunter ed instructor since 1996 and a bowhunter ed instructor since 2002, instructing 87 classes and certifying 1,699 students. He was the first Instructor of the Year Awardee in 2004 and has served on the Steering Group for two terms. His passion for

teaching and sharing his knowledge is evident to every student in a class. He's a confident instructor and eagerly assists with mentoring new instructors.



Hunter Education Instructor of the Year-Paul Houser of Palmer

Paul has been a hunter ed instructor since 2012 and a bowhunter ed instructor since 2015. He's taught 92 classes, certifying 1,438 students, including 12 hunter ed classes in 2020. Paul can always be counted on to step in when a class is short on instructors and his love for

hunting and the outdoors shines through in his welcoming smile and classroom demeanor.

Outstanding Educator of the Year-Ed Buyarski of Juneau

Ed has taught hunter ed since 2005. He's taught 47 classes, certifying 2,746 students. Ed can always be counted on to help instruct the 100+ student middle school classes, instructing at the school and on the firing line. He's also taught classes in Haines and Sitka too. He's a



huge advocate for the HIT Program and continually invites people from all walks of life to become instructors. He's a perfect example of someone who educates in the classroom, field, and in everyday life encounters.



Apprentice Instructor of the Year-Rachel Mitchell

Rachel became an instructor for hunter ed in February 2020 and bowhunter ed in October 2020. Her enthusiasm for hunting, the outdoors, and teaching

people to be safe is evident to instructors and students alike. She's done a great job taking advice from longtime instructors and putting it to use in the classroom. We look forward to seeing what the future brings for Rachel as part of the HIT Program.

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Volunteer Instructor Pins in 2020

The HIT Program awards 500 and 1,000 hour pins to instructors who have volunteered that much time for the HIT Program. Five-year pins are also awarded in increments when a volunteer instructor has remained active with the HIT Program for a five-year period. The first five-year pins have a start date based on the year 2002, which is when hunter education became mandatory in part of the state. Thank you to these dedicated volunteer instructors!



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|-------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Milo Burcham-Cordova | Jachin Jacobs-Palmer | Andrew Morse-Cordova |
| Scott Cunfer-Anchorage | Jeff Jemison-Juneau | Steven Perrins-Anchorage |
| Lauren Divine-Anchorage | Clifford Kaltreider-Wasilla | Regg Simon-Palmer |
| Richard Gardner-Wasilla | Russell Landers-Tok | Margaret Stang-Nome |
| Ardy Hanson-Cordova | Scott Lanier-Fairbanks | William Tyra-Anchorage |
| John Henshaw-Anchorage | Aaron Lestenkof-St Paul Island | Sabino Vasquez-Kenai |
| Jason Herreman-Homer | Travis Lons-King Salmon | Meghan Wake-Palmer |
| Aidan Hunter-Fairbanks | Stefan Martusheff-Homer | |



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|-----------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| Stephen Bethune-Sitka | James Knopke-Two Rivers | Thomas Rothe-Eagle River |
| Kevin Blanchette-Nome | John Krieg-North Pole | Clint Shultz-Ketchikan |
| Joel Burns-Soldotna | Jon Lavelle-Bethel | Sarah Stallone-Anchorage |
| Christine Cunningham-Kenai | Steven Meyer-Kenai | Robert Taylor-Fairbanks |
| Dane Gilmore-Soldotna | Douglas Moore-Talkeetna | Joseph Williams-Soldotna |
| Robert Hicks-Wasilla | Meghan Nedwick-Girdwood | |
| Douglas Johnson-Eagle River | James Parkin-Angoon | |



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|------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Debra Adamson-Wasilla | Steven Hildebrand-Juneau | Ryan Scott-Juneau |
| David Armstrong-Valdez | Julian Mason-Anchorage | James Sheridan-Anchorage |
| Edward Buyarski-Juneau | Sondra Meredith-Juneau | Mark Somerville-Copper Center |
| George Campbell-Haines | Ernst Mueller-Juneau | Lance Westing-Cordova |
| Phillip Carpenter-Dillingham | Tim Peltier-Eagle River | Charlotte Westing-Cordova |
| Marc Cloward-Cordova | Bernard Punzalan-Anchorage | |



- 1,000 hours**
Ed Bosco-Anchorage
Rich Graham-Wasilla
Rick Sterling-Fairbanks

In 2020 we certified the following new instructors:

- 35 Hunter Ed Instructors
- 8 Bowhunter Ed Instructors
- 5 Muzzleloader Ed Instructors
- 9 Crossbow Ed Instructors

IHEA Instructor Resource Site
www.ihea.com

HIT Program Site
www.huntereducation.alaska.gov



HIT Steering Group

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