

Minnesota Nordic Ski Association



2017 Minnesota Nordic Skiing Lifetime Achievement Awards

**2017 Minnesota Nordic Skiing
High School, Collegiate, Biathlon,
and Master Skier Recognitions**

**Sunday, April 9th, 2017
Vasaloppet Nordic Center, Mora, MN**

Minnesota Nordic Skiing Lifetime Achievement Awards Program

1:30pm Social Hour – Appetizers and Beverages
Slide show featuring Lifetime Achievement Award Recipients
Produced by Greg Fangel

2:30pm Welcome – Vasaloppet Board of Directors
Keynote presentation – Chad Salmela

3:30pm Break

3:45pm Welcome - MNSA Board of Directors - Bruce Slinkman
Recognition of current and past MNSA Board Members

2017 Minnesota High School, Collegiate, Biathlon, and Master Skier Recognitions

Minnesota High School Nordic Individual Champions:

Erin Bianco, Xavier Mansfield

Minnesota Based Collegiate High Achievers:

Ellie Evans, Isaac Wieber

Minnesota Biathlon High Achievers:

Siena Ellingson, Jakob Ellingson

Minnesota Master Skiers:

Wanda Arenz, Roy Carlsted

Recognition of past Lifetime Award Recipients

2006 Glen Johnstone
2007 Norm Oakvik
2008 Mike Marciniak, Anne Ryken
2009 Lars Kindem, George Hovland
2010 Bob O'Hara, Pat Lanin
2011 Bjorn Lasserude
2012 Jack Jeffery
2013 John Filander
2014 Emily Lanin, Bill Simpson
2015 Avho Taipale
2016 Bob Montebello

Recognition of Lifetime Legacy Award Recipients

2016 Nikolai Anikin
2016 Robin Baker
2016 Charlie Banks
2016 John Burton
2016 Earle Dickinson
2016 Tim Knopp
2016 Jinny McWethy
2016 Brother Charles Rademacher
2016 Toni St. Pierre
2016 Al Waverek
2016 Don Wolter

2017 Lifetime Achievement Awards - Bonnie Fuller-Kask and Larry Myers
Introduced by Bob O'Hara

Closing Comments

Thank you for your attendance and support of all of our Minnesota Nordic Skiing Lifetime Achievement Award and Recognition Recipients!



PO Box 531 St. Cloud, MN 56302
www.mnnordicski.org

2017 MNSA LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Bonnie Fuller-Kask

Bonnie Fuller-Kask grew up in Golden Valley about a mile from Theodore Wirth Park. She started skiing in the downhill program there in about 3rd grade (1965). She started ski jumping in 5th grade in Selmer Swanson's jumping program on the Wirth ski jumps. Since girls were only allowed to jump but not compete, she was introduced to Norm Oakvik, who taught her to cross country ski and coached her through her high school years. As a female student at Robbinsdale Senior High School, Bonnie was occasionally allowed to ride the boy's team school bus to Theodore Wirth and practice with the team. She was also occasionally allowed to forerun their races if the other coaches agreed. She was not allowed to compete as there was no high school skiing for girls at that time in the early 1970's.



Bonnie skied in the Central Division USSA races and made the Central team to ski in the Junior Nationals for four years (1972-1975). In 1974 at the Junior Nationals in Steamboat Springs she and fellow Minneapolis Ski Club Member, Dave Kask, became "good friends". They married in 1981. In her citizen's racing career Bonnie has won the Mora Vassaloppet five times and had wins in the Minnesota Finlandia 100 km race and the Ely Wilderness Trek. She was the fastest female in the Korteloppet in 1976 as a 19 year old. (The first place award was given to the first women over 21 years old, not the fastest female.) She was also named to the 1980 US Marathon Ski Team. Bonnie started coaching the Robbinsdale High School team in 1977 until the school closed in 1982. She was a Central Division Junior National coach in 1983 and 1984.

In 1987 Bonnie and Dave moved to Duluth where they have been very active in the ski community. Both of their children, Jason and Bria, have skied since they could walk. Both kids have been members of the Midwest team and competed in the Junior Nationals. They both also skied in college. In 1999 Bonnie became the assistant coach at Duluth East High School, two years later she became the head coach and husband Dave went from "chief volunteer" to assistant coach. In her time as head coach, Duluth East has had five State Team Championships, three Team second place finishes and six Team third place finishes. Duluth East has had one individual state champion, two second place individuals, a third and a fourth place individual. One of Bonnie's highlights is that both her children, Jason and Bria, skied on state championship teams.

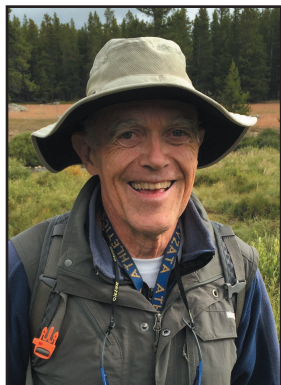
Bonnie has been the Minnesota State High School Nordic Ski Coaches Association Assistant Coach of the Year and Coach of the Year. She is a member of the Mora Vasaloppet Hall of Fame. She has been a Midwest Team Coach at the Junior Nationals in 2005, 2006, 2007, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2017. Bonnie has been leading a West Yellowstone Thanksgiving ski trip since 1999. The trip has grown from a shared bus with the Grand Rapids High School skiers to three coach buses with over 150 high school skiers, coaches and parents from Northern Minnesota.

In addition to cross country skiing, Bonnie has been a competitive rower since her University of Minnesota days. She has two gold medals from the Master's World Championships in the single and pair. During the summer she is the Head Coach at the Duluth Rowing Club where she coaches about 125 junior rowers, many of which are X-C skiers.

For all that Bonnie has done to positively impact the lives of hundreds of Minnesota high school Nordic student skiers and her role modeling of female athletic greatness, Bonnie Fuller-Kask is truly deserving of the Minnesota Nordic Skiing Lifetime Achievement Award.

2017 MNSA LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Larry Myers



Larry Myers was born and raised in Dayton, Ohio. He attended college at the University of Dayton, majoring in biology and chemistry. Larry met and married his wife Deb, started their family, and began his career working for Pillsbury Corporation in Ohio. He has three children: son Michael and his wife Karianne and their son Martin live in Norway, daughter Molly and her husband Steve and their son Corey and daughter Nikki live in Juneau, AK, son Peter lives in New Zealand with daughter Scout, and sons Boone, and Cove.

Very fortunately for Minnesota Nordic skiing, Pillsbury transferred Larry to Minneapolis in 1971 and the family started skiing in 1972 after Larry bought five sets of skis to get the family outside in the winter. The family started racing in 1973 and Larry did his 1st Birkie in 1976. Larry joined the MN National Guard in 1978 and was on the MN National Guard Biathlon team until 1996 as a competitor and team captain. He was also active in the MN Biathlon Association serving as a board member and President. As a result of his Guard's duties, Larry was part of the group that started and ran the Governor's Cup ski race held at Camp Ripley which many skiers enjoyed for many years.

Larry was a certified biathlon official and together with Pat Lanin, they ran the 1st summer biathlon competition in the U.S. in Prior Lake, MN. 1988. He was Assistant Chief of Course for U.S. Biathlon at the pre-Olympic in Salt Lake City, UT. (2001) Larry is a Level 200 certified Nordic Coach and a Technical Delegate.

Larry was lounging in the sauna at Giants Ridge with fellow "Nordic Nuts" Ahvo Taipale and Steve Gaskill in the late 1980's when the idea of starting a ski club was discussed which resulted in the formation of Team Birkie, a very successful ski training club which eventually evolved into the current Loppet Nordic Racing ski club. Larry was on the Team Birkie Board of Directors for several years. He was also an active member of the Minneapolis Ski Club and served in several positions on the club's board.

Larry began coaching Nordic skiing at Wayzata High School in 1998 along with Brad Erickson. He has the head coach title but credits the outstanding success of the Wayzata ski team to the coaching partnership that he has had with Brad Erickson over the past nineteen years. Under Larry and Brad's leadership they have had 23 teams advance to the Minnesota State High School Ski Meet. Three teams have won the state meet, five finished in 2nd place and five finished in 3rd place. Wayzata High School has fielded 22 section and conference winning teams. There have been many top 10 individual finishers, some 2nd place finishers at the state meet, but no state individual winner. (yet!) Larry has been honored by his Nordic high school coaching peers as Coach of the Year.

Larry has been a strong advocate for the interests of the student athletes in high school skiing. He along with fellow high school Nordic coaches Dan Josephson and Brian Abery were the driving force that resulted in the new state high school rule that went into effect 2016 that allows for two teams per section advancing to the state meet instead of one. This increased the size of the state meet from 8 to 16 teams per gender and total skier increased from 120 to 160 per gender.

In terms of his personal Nordic ski racing pursuits, Larry has completed over 30 Mora Vasaloppets and 33 Birkies with two complete hip replacement surgeries in the mix. For all that Larry has given to Minnesota Nordic skiing since Pillsbury, thankfully, transplanted him here in 1971 and especially for the very positive lifelong impact he has had on countless high school student athletes, Larry is fully deserving of the Minnesota Nordic Skiing Lifetime Achievement Award.

2017 MINNESOTA BIATHLON HIGH ACHIEVERS:

Siena Ellingson

Siena Ellingson has been competing in Europe this year for the US Junior Biathlon team representing the Minnesota Biathlon Program. She is 20 and is from Minnetonka and her parents are John and Carrie Ellingson. Siena learned to ski with the Hopkins High School team and her very first time on skis was on the Hopkins soccer field. She started summer training with Piotr Bednarski and the Go! Training program the summer before 8th grade and she was introduced to biathlon when attended a beginners camp at Mt. Itasca prior to the National Championships when she was in eighth grade and caught “Biathlon Fever”. She competed in the Minnesota State High School meet in 8th –10th grade and then focused on biathlon. She graduated from high school in 2015. She has been primarily training at Grand Rapids / Mt. Itasca with Viada and Petra Cervenka, but has been to training camps all over North America. This was her last season in the Juniors age group and will move to the Seniors class next season. Her top finish this year was placing 18th at the Junior worlds in the sprint, shooting 01. At an International Biathlon Union (IBU) race in Poljkjuka, Slovenia she cleaned the race and finished 20th, the next day she finished 30th missing 1. Her goals for next season are to make the US Senior Biathlon Team, be competitive at the IBU cups, and work her way up to the World Cup. Siena notes that although she did not come from a ski family, “It has been really special to see and experience how the ski community really is a big family that is willing to help and share knowledge with others!”



Jakob Ellingson



Jakob Ellingson has been competing in Europe this year for the US Biathlon team representing the Minnesota Biathlon Program. He is from Minnetonka and his parents are John and Carrie Ellingson. Like his sister, Siena, Jakob was involved with both Piotr Bednarski's Go! Training group and the Hopkins High School Nordic Ski Team. Jakob noted that Piotr suggested biathlon to Siena and himself because of their motivation and flexibility for training due to being home schooled. Jakob was the 2013 Minnesota High School Boys Nordic Individual Champion his senior year. He primarily trains in Grand Rapids/Mt. Itasca with Viada Cervenka and has really enjoyed training under him. Jakob qualified to go to all of the International Biathlon Union (IBU) cups with the US team this winter, all though he is not officially on their Xteam, or development team. As a Junior, Jakob finished

21st in the world championships in 2013 and also qualified for World Juniors three years in a row. This season, as a second year Senior, he had one 37th place finish on the IBU Cup and 9 other top 60's throughout the season. He placed 29th in the 30km skate mass start at US Nationals last year. Jakob notes that there is nothing he would be rather doing right now than representing Minnesota on the world biathlon stage. “Training for and competing at this level is so much fun for me!”

2017 MINNESOTA MASTER SKIERS:

Wanda Arenz

Seventy seven year old Wanda Arenz's biggest gripe about Minnesota Nordic skiing is that there are so few women her age out on the trails and participating in ski events. Since she hit her 70's, to her dismay, Wanda discovered that very often she was one of only a few, if not the only, female skier in her age class. And she regularly found her self in the spotlight as being recognized as the oldest female skier in the event. Wanda has skied the American Birkibiener only once. In 2013, at the age of 73, she decided to finally "experience the Birkie" and skied the Korte Skate. Shortly after the event she received a package from Wis. with a certificate honoring her as the "Matriarch of the Birkie" for being the oldest female skier that year. Wanda's response was, again, of dismay.



Born and raised in snowy Hull, Iowa, Wanda had to go to Germany as an adult to discover her husband, John, and cross country skiing. They were both teachers in the 1970's at an international school in Germany that had an intro to Nordic skiing program...and they got married...and they got into Nordic skiing! After moving to Belgium and then to Scotland, Wanda and John returned stateside in 1979 to Cass Lake, MN with two little boys in tow, Devin and Brett. Wanda and John got the boys on skis before age four and now the Arenz name is always in the top tier of results in Minnesota Nordic ski races. Starting with the 100 km Minnesota Finlandia in 1981, Wanda has been a year after year participant in all of the Bemidji area cross country ski events and beyond. She started skiing, and winning her age class, in the Mora Vasaloppet in 2005 collecting seven Dala horse trophies to date. Cross country skiing has been a tremendous asset in Wanda's life and her Nordic mission is to encourage and motivate more women to "keep on skiing!"

Roy Carlsted



Roy Carlsted, currently a mere 93 years young, and very affectionately known in the Minnesota Nordic Ski community as "Gramps", is the true embodiment of the Nordic mantra that cross-country skiing is a lifelong sport. Roy lives in St. Paul near Como Park where he still skis regularly in the winter if there is snow, otherwise he drives to man-made snow trails. When he was younger, Roy was an avid runner and he still bikes regularly. He was married to his wife Nathalie for 60 years, who passed away three years ago. Roy has four children, four grandchildren, and five great-grandchildren. Born in 1923, he got his start in skiing on his family's farm in Dassel, MN, west of the twin cities. This is

where he made his first pair of skis, most likely out of ash. He was formally introduced to cross-country skiing in 1969 by "Mother North Star" Jinny McWethy. Roy's vocation was a professional electrician, but his passion has proven to be Nordic Skiing. He has competed in countless ski races and marathons over the years including over 30 American Birkebeiner and Mora Vasaloppet races, often winning his age class and many times being the oldest skier in the event. Roy successfully recovered from triple bypass heart surgery in 2007 and attributes staying involved with skiing as central to his recovery. Roy acknowledges that he has slowed down a bit these past few years in terms of competitive racing. He last skied the full 54 km Classic American Birkebeiner race with his daughter Kim in 2009 at age 85. However, this past winter "Gramps" reports that he skied an average of four times a week at Hyland Lake Park Reserve in Bloomington, demonstrating that Minnesota Nordic skiing is not at all age limited! It is lifelong!

2017 MINNESOTA HIGH SCHOOL NORDIC INDIVIDUAL PURSUIT CHAMPIONS:

Erin Bianco

Erin Bianco's 2017 Minnesota Nordic skiing story is the story of a very small town girl on a fired-up and focused very small high school (Ely) Nordic ski team who, by virtue of her hard work, determination, Nordic skill, grit, and perhaps a bit of skiers good luck, prevailed over 158 other "bigger city" girls to capture the 2017 Minnesota State High School Girls Individual Pursuit title. Erin totally surprised herself with her very best, and last, Nordic race. Her previous best state meet finish was 17th. "My goal this year was to get top 10", Erin said, I never thought I'd do this!" However, it all came together perfectly for her, "Everything was like perfect, my skis were fast, the snow was fast and I just felt super good!"

Erin's first place individual finish also sealed the team deal for her teammates as the Ely Girls won the state championship over 15 other "bigger" school teams.

Erin also won the Section 7 individual title, that, along, with her state individual win and the team championship are all firsts for small town and small school Ely! Very, Very, Cool!

Erin grew up in Ely. Her parents are Joe and Mary Bianco. She first got involved in skiing through the Minnesota Youth Ski League in Ely when she was about three years old. When she became a high school skier Erin noted that she has had the pleasure of helping out with the ski league and teaching young kids to ski. Her favorite part of being involved in high school Nordic skiing is her team and the coaches. "We taught each other to never give up and reach our full potential!" Erin's first place winning race at the state meet was her last Nordic race. She will be attending St. Olaf College next year and is trading her ski boots in for track and cross country running shoes.



Xavier Mansfield



Xavier Mansfield capped his very successful high school Nordic racing career with a come behind victory on the final classical leg of the individual pursuit to win the boys individual title at the Minnesota High School Nordic State Meet. Xavier had two skiers and 20 seconds ahead of him at the start of the classical leg. "I knew it would be hard, but I had the confidence going in that I could catch them and hopefully just stay ahead on the downhill", Xavier reflected after the race. Xavier was able to catch and pass two of his Loppet Nordic Racing partners on the last downhill and hang on for the win. "Sometimes it comes down to whoever has the fast skis coming down the hill, no matter how hard you work at going up," Xavier noted. Fortunately, Xavier was wearing those faster skis!

Xavier was born in Minneapolis, and attended Minneapolis Public Schools his whole life, until his family moved near St. Anthony Village his sophomore year. His mother and step-dad are Tatiana and Jeff Allen. In sixth grade, attending Anwatin middle school, he was an avid biker, biking to school most days. He was approached by the middle school Nordic ski coach and was invited to try cross country skiing because of his passion for biking. The rest is, as they say, history! Xavier was very fortunate, because Loppet Nordic Racing was heavily involved with Anwatin at the time, and it was not long before coach Piotr Bednarski took him under his wing. Xavier has participated in Junior Nationals for four years now, and he owes his successes to his high school coaches and to Loppet Nordic Racing. He will be attending Northern Michigan University this fall, and will continue his pursuit of Nordic skiing excellence in the winter.

2017 MINNESOTA BASED COLLEGIATE HIGH ACHIEVERS:

Ellie Evans

Ellie Evans was the highest ranked female Minnesota high school based Nordic skier competing on a Minnesota NCAA Nordic ski team this year. She skis for St. Scholastica. Elli is from New Hope and her parents are Kerry and Terry Evans. She joined the Robbinsdale Cooper High School Nordic Ski Team as a 9th grader and skied for four years as a high school skier. She also was involved with the Sisu/Endurance United club training program while in high school. Ellie has competed for 4 years for St. Scholastica. Chad Salmela was her head coach the first three years followed by Marie Stuber this past year. She is most proud of her 10th place finish in the 2016 Classic Mass start in Ishpeming, MI. Her favorite collegiate ski experiences include attending thanksgiving break training camp in Canmore, Canada as freshman and the 2015 Mayors Challenge race at Theodore Wirth where the St. Scholastica women's team only lost to Northern Michigan by a few points as Ellie and her teammates all had great races! Ellie will graduate this spring with a major in biology and minor in psychology and she planning to attend Northern Michigan University next year to complete a masters program in Exercise Science.



Isaac Wieber



Isaac Wieber was the highest ranked male Minnesota high school based Nordic skier competing on a Minnesota NCAA Nordic ski team this year. He is 20 years old and skis for St. Scholastica and is finishing his sophomore year there. Isaac is from St. Cloud and his parents are Kate Rolstad and Steve Wieber. His first skiing experiences were with his parents on local trails and with the St. Cloud Minnesota Youth Ski League. He skied for six years for St. Cloud Technical High School. Isaac placed 9th at the Minnesota State High School Nordic Ski Meet in 2015 his senior year. He also participated with Endurance United for club training. This year, as a college sophomore, Isaac placed 14th overall in the Central Collegiate Ski Association and has earned all-academic honors for both his freshman and sophomore

years. Chad Salmela was his head coach last year at St. Scholastica and this year he skied under Maria Stuber. Isaac's goal for his next two years of collegiate skiing is to qualify for the NCAA Nordic Ski Championships. Isaac is currently an exercise physiology major, with the intention to broaden into physical therapy. He also coaches for the Minneapolis Ski Club.

MINNESOTA NORDIC SKI ASSOCIATION

Having formed in 2001 as a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting and advancing the sport of cross country skiing in Minnesota, the Minnesota Nordic Ski Association (MNSA) is now one year past our 15th anniversary which we celebrated last year here. MNSA's founding focus and a primary focus throughout its history is to serve as the liaison organization between the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Grant-In-Aid (GIA) Ski Pass program and ski clubs, trail organizations, cities, counties, and state parks that rely on GIA funding to maintain, improve, and groom the 93 public ski trails in the ski pass system. MNSA's accomplishments in advocating for ski GIA issues over the past 16 years include: successfully proposing and lobbying to the Minnesota legislature for two increases in ski pass rates, thus increasing GIA program revenues, partnering with DNR to establish an accurate state-wide ski trail inventory, advocating for DNR financial response to ski trail damage by ATVs, advocating with the DNR for local and statewide enforcement of the ski pass, partnering with the DNR to improve the ski GIA system through structural changes and enhancements. MNSA was also the umbrella organization for the Minnesota Skinnyski Series, state-wide citizen race series, from 2006 - 2011. MNSA has also advocated for many other Nordic related issues on a state level as well as local levels. Finally, as per the occasion of today's gathering, in 2006 MNSA established the annual Minnesota Nordic Skiing Lifetime Achievement award to recognize individuals who have contributed significantly to the advancement of cross country skiing in Minnesota. Individuals, ski clubs, trail and race organizations and ski retail interests are all invited to join MNSA to help further the advancement of Nordic skiing in Minnesota.

Current Ski Club / Ski Organization Membership in MNSA

- Bemidji Area Cross Country Ski Club
- Brainerd Nordic Ski Club
- Itasca (Park Rapids)
- Nordic Ski Club of Central Minnesota (St. Cloud)
- Norpine Trail Association
- Northern Lights Nordic Ski Club (Grand Rapids)
- North Star Ski Touring Club
- Sugarbush Trail Association (Tofte)
- Vasa USA
- woodenskis.com

MNSA 15th Anniversary Celebration

MNSA Lifetime Awards Program April 9th, 2016



MNSA Board Members

and 2016 Keynote Speaker Jessie Diggins

From left: Gary Strandemo, Tolly Vollen, Roger Landers, Darby Nelson, Bruce Slinkman, Bob O'Hara, Jessie Diggins, Greg Fangel, Greg "Boomer" Moritko, Roger Landers

Current MNSA Board

Roger Landers, Tolly Vollen, Gary Strandemo, Bob O'Hara, Greg Fangel, Darby Nelson, Bruce Slinkman, Greg "Boomer" Moritko

Past Minnesota MNSA Board Members

John Baker, Bill Blank, Ed Bouffard, Deb Diggins, Rolf Forslund, Rich Hoeg, Terry Holm, Dave Johnson, Pat Lanin, John Munger, Buni Slinkman, Keith Sjoquist, Janie Weiderman, LeRoy Youngbloom

2017 MNSA Lifetime Awards Program Committee

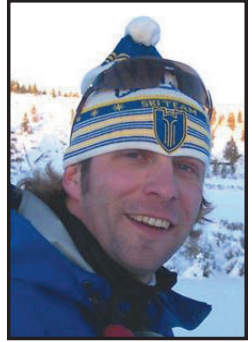
Bob O'Hara and Bruce Slinkman - Co-chairs
Roger Landers, Greg Fangel, Gary Strandemo

Chad Salmela

Keynote Presentation for 2017 Minnesota Nordic Skiing Lifetime Achievement Awards Program

Chad Salmela has made a huge impact in Nordic skiing locally here in Minnesota and nationally and internationally in many ways over the years as a competitor, coach, athlete mentor and advocate, athletic program developer, event manager, and television color commentator for both cross country and biathlon.

Chad grew up on the Iron Range in Mountain Iron. He learned to ski with his father and older brother, Cory. He received some early Nordic skiing guidance from Peter Graves, John Filander, Gary Larson, and Ahvo Taipale, but mostly he and Cory did “the ski thing” themselves as kids. Chad did not participate in high school skiing. He did cross country running and placed All-State for Mountain Iron in 1990. He raced USSA and was one of the top Central Division juniors from 1987 to 1990. At age 19 Chad switched to the sport of biathlon. After eight years of competing nationally and internationally as a member of the United States Biathlon Team, he moved directly into the assistant coach position for the U.S. Biathlon Team in 1998, while finishing his college degree at Middlebury College in Vermont.



After college graduation, Chad built and coached a national junior development program for biathlon, managed the 2002 Olympic Games biathlon competitions in Salt Lake City, served as assistant coach and wax technician for the U.S. junior world championship biathlon team, coached cross country running at the Marshall School in Duluth, and announced ski events across the country and on television. At the Salt Lake 2002 Olympics, Chad was the in-stadium color commentator for all Biathlon competitions as well as for the Women’s 30km cross country skiing event. Chad was the biathlon color commentator for NBC’s coverage of 2006 Torino Olympics and added cross country skiing and Nordic combined to his duties at the 2010 Vancouver Olympics. At the 2014 Sochi Olympics he was the analyst of the cross country ski events, biathlon and the cross country skiing portion of the Nordic combined. Chad became a household name for his exciting calls of the action.

In the summer of 2006, Chad became the first head coach for Nordic skiing at the College of St. Scholastica, in Duluth, building the program from nothing. The College of St. Scholastica is an NCAA Division III athletics program. In its first season, the Saints ski team nearly qualified two males to the NCAA Skiing Championships. In 10 seasons coaching CSS skiers, Chad led both the men and the women to CCSA Championships in 2015, despite annually competing against scholarship programs Northern Michigan University, University of Alaska-Fairbanks, and Michigan Tech University. In total, under his tutelage, the Saints had 12 NCAA qualifiers in his 10 seasons, including 10 since 2012.

In 2016 the head cross country running coaching position at St. Scholastica became available and Chad made the very difficult decision to let go of the reigns of the Nordic program in exchange for the reigns of the cross country program. It is no coincidence that the two collegiate skiers, Ellie Evans and Isaac Wieber, who are being recognized here today, were recruited and initially coached by Chad.

Chad is married to Ira “Mimmu” Salmela, former UMD women’s assistant hockey coach. They have two children, son Taavi who is eight and daughter Iita who is six. Before children, Chad was the lead singer and guitarist for the Duluth based rock n’ roll band AM Herculis. He is currently in negotiations with NBC Universal on a contract for Pyeong Chang 2018 Olympic Winter Games and Olympic Channel programming.

Welcome to the Vasaloppet Nordic Center Complex

The Vasaloppet and Mora community is very proud of this facility, which was built exclusively with private donations. Construction of this three-building complex began in 1999 with the building of the Nordic Center. The Nordic Center features a wax room, changing and shower areas as well as saunas. The Center also has a small kitchen and plenty of room upstairs and downstairs for events. After that building was completed, the “Garage” building was constructed and today serves as a garage for the Vasaloppet grooming equipment during the snow season and as a social facility for Vasaloppet events. The third building of the complex is a storage and maintenance building for Vasaloppet groomers and equipment. The Nordic Center serves as the focal point of over 10 kilometers of ski trails, which also includes three kilometers of lighted trail. There is currently no cost for skiers to use the Center, which is maintained through Vasaloppet funds and volunteer labor. Thank you for attending this afternoon and we hope to see you next winter on the trails here at the Nordic Center or at the northern ski loops. -Mora Vasaloppet USA