



# Hunter Information & Training Program News

Winter 2024

## Coordinator's Corner-Ginamaria Smith

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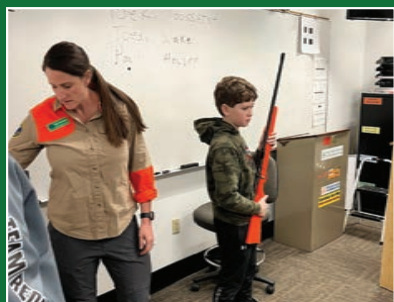
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HIT Program certification courses were taught in **34 different cities and villages** during 2023 and we had **418 active volunteer instructors**.

Class Type	Number of Classes	Certified Students
Hunter Ed	142	1,782
Bowhunter Ed	50	453
Muzzleloader Ed	16	89
Crossbow Ed	10	42
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>2,366</b>

Your **4,430** volunteer hours allowed us to access **\$784,568.40** 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.

Class Type	# of Instructors Who Taught at Least 1 Class	Taught the Most Classes
Hunter Ed	194	Ed Bosco (Anc), Rich Graham (Wasilla), Bill Kubik (Wasilla), and Rick Sterling (Fbks) each taught 10 classes
Bowhunter Ed	76	Melissa Hendrickson (Fbks), Ken Calkins (Salcha), and Alex Hedman (Eagle River) each taught 6 classes
Muzzleloader Ed	20	Bill Sobolesky (Anc) taught 3 classes
Crossbow Ed	15	Paul Ritz (Anc), Paul Keller (Anc), Steve Latz (Kenai), Bob Dragich (Kasilof), and Shane Arnold (Fbks) each taught 2 classes
<b>Multiple Disciplines</b>	232	



### DID YOU KNOW?

In 2023 we certified the following new instructors:

- 42 Hunter Ed Instructors
- 20 Bowhunter Ed Instructors
- 6 Muzzleloader Ed Instructors
- 3 Crossbow Ed Instructors

Region	# of Classes	Students in Class
Region I (Southeast)	31	339
Region II (Anc, Kodiak, & Kenai Pen.)	104	1,141
Region III & V (Interior & Northwest)	44	443
Region IV (Central & Southwest)	40	433



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## Welcome to New Steering Group Members

First, I'd like to thank Jeramy Lemons of Ninilchik, Joe Brewer of Homer, and Ellen Hannan of Craig for playing an instrumental role on the HIT Program Steering Group for the past two years. They gave great feedback on a variety of certification course topics, helped review the online hunter ed and bowhunter ed classes, and represented the instructors in their regions well. The years of teaching experience, expertise, and enthusiasm they brought to the Steering Group greatly assisted the HIT Program in ensuring well thought out course offerings.

The HIT Program's Steering Group has proven to be a great advisory resource in advancing HIT Program goals and objectives. Please join us in welcoming the newest members who will serve a two-year term.

### John Western (Anchorage)



John Western has been with HIT about 6 years, and instructs in all 4 categories. John has helped with range safety officer duties as well. He Volunteers with the Civil Air Patrol as a mission search pilot. You may find John on the North slope, working as an emergency medicine PA too.

"I'm very excited to be part of the steering committee."

### Regg Simon (Palmer)

Having grown up in Minnesota, hunting and fishing were a major part of my life. I moved to Alaska as a young man in August of 1996 and the outdoor recreational opportunities were beyond my expectations. Since then, I have explored nearly every region of Alaska either hunting, fishing,



or hiking & camping. My hunting experiences include successfully harvesting arctic grizzly bear, black bear, caribou, goat, sheep, and moose. My wife and our two dogs are often along for many of these adventures.

I have been involved with HIT since 2015 and have taught courses in the Mat-Su Valley and Anchorage. As a Safety Manager by profession, safety and preparedness are always at the forefront of my mind – especially when it comes to hunting, outdoor recreation and instructing HIT courses. I feel that passing along ethical, responsible and safe hunting practices is one of the best ways to preserve and grow our hunting heritage in Alaska and the United States.

I look forward being a member of the Steering Committee where our volunteer time is spent on the very worthy cause of firearm & hunting safety. I hope to relay my passion to the group and look forward to hearing from all of you on how we can grow the hunting community and serve our fellow instructors & students in the HIT program.

## Additional Class Opportunities

If you are passionate about or have additional outdoor knowledge you'd like to share with students, please contact Maria Bakic (Outreach & Education Coordinator).

She would love to add additional Alaskans Afield or Becoming an Outdoors Woman (BOW) classes to the annual schedule. Possible topic ideas could include survival skills, knife sharpening, wilderness first-aid, bear hunting, trapping, caribou hunting, etc.

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IHEA Instructor Resource Site

<https://www.ihea-usa.org/>

<https://www.expertvoice.com/ihea/>

HIT Program Site

[www.huntereducation.alaska.gov](http://www.huntereducation.alaska.gov)



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## Volunteer Instructor Longevity Pins in 2023

Thank you to these long-time, dedicated volunteer instructors! The first five-year pins have a start date based on the year 2002, which is when hunter ed became mandatory in part of the state.



Ryan Adam-North Pole  
Maria Bakic-Anchorage  
William Carter-Kotzebue  
Carmen Daggett-Utqiugvik  
Bob Dragich-Kasilof  
Kevin Dugan-Juneau  
Jonathan Enlow-North Pole  
Clayton Gellerman-Anchorage

Scott Gellerman-Anchorage  
Dane Happ-Fairbanks  
Bryan Kirby-Willow  
Kevin Knowlton-Nome  
Bill Kubik-Wasilla  
Devan Leon-Fairbanks  
Ryan Lorimer-Wasilla  
Julia Mahler-Fort Yukon

Shilo McManus-Kasilof  
Keith Oster-Bethel  
Lewis Pagel-Valdez  
Amy Pinney-Juneau  
Kevin Reeve-Anchorage  
Derek Thompson-Dillingham  
Tom Weske-Juneau



Shane Arnold-Fairbanks  
Jesse Bjorkman-Nikiski  
Alexandra Brown-Anchorage  
Melba Cooke-Anchorage  
Ken Felchle-Soldotna  
Branden Forst-Juneau

Bob Gingue-Tok  
Jonathan Halfacre-Wasilla  
Dylan Hooper-Kenai  
Kateri Houser-Palmer  
Keith Kalke-Homer  
Cody Litster-Petersburg

David Lorrington-Soldotna  
Jason Okuly-Homer  
Tom Pattie-Anchorage  
Greg Shepard-Palmer  
Darren Snyder-Douglas  
Vicki Taylor-Fairbanks



Andy Aderman-Dillingham  
Emily Binnian-Anchorage  
Steve Bolan-Anchorage  
Orin Carpenter-Anchorage

Michael Cresswell-Cordova  
Timothy Hall-Sitka  
Brian Horner-Anchorage  
Jesse Kiehl-Juneau

Dean Kitson-Sterling  
Neal Lacy-Wasilla  
Bryan Reed-Dillingham  
Woody Woodgate-Valdez



Dan Dunaway-Dillingham  
Carl Edmiston-Anchorage  
Mike Goodwin-Anchorage  
Tony Kavalok-Palmer  
Doug Larsen-Juneau  
Brian Marvin-Nome

David McLane-Chugiak  
Dan McMahon-Petersburg  
Brock Meredith-Juneau  
George Pearson-North Pole  
Jim Plosay-Juneau  
Becky Schwanke-Glennallen

Philip Shoemaker-Wasilla  
Rick Sterling-Fairbanks  
Glenn Taylor-Soldotna



## HIT Program Steering Group

Melissa Hendrickson (Interior)  
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# Hunter Information & Training Program News



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## Instructor Notes

### Welcome to Our New Volunteer Instructors

We wish to extend a warm welcome to all new volunteer instructors who have joined us since the publication of our last newsletter. Congratulations and welcome aboard!

#### **Hunter Education:**

Anchorage: Christopher Aeschliman, Ashley Fregly, Luke Metherell, Heather Thomas, Rebecca Toussaint, Richard Toussaint

Aniak: Samuel Thorvilson

Bethel: Dylan Brooks

Cantwell: Noah Belt

Eagle: Nathan Becker

Eagle River: Anthony Severson

Fairbanks: Erik Burns, Mykenzie Robertson

Ft Wainwright: Michael Burch

Galena: Louis Garvin

King Salmon: Amy Vande Voort

Koyuk: Jah Burns

Manokotak: Jared Garlick

Ninilchik: Rylee Lemons

Nome: Kevin Busk

Palmer: Kevin Blessing

Seward: Seth Kollman

Wasilla: Donald Fancher, Joseph Gelatt, Carl Hanson

#### **Bowhunter Education:**

Anchorage: Luke Metherell, Heather Thomas

Fairbanks: Andrew George, James Haselberger, Daniel McAllister, Kelsey Snell

Ft Wainwright: Michael Burch

North Pole: Caleb Gulley

Palmer: Justin Patterson

Tok: Brent Jamison

### Above & Beyond Recipients

We'd like to recognize the following instructors for going "above and beyond" during the second half of 2023.

- Andrew George (Fairbanks) taught 6 hunter ed classes
- Caleb Gulley (North Pole) taught 5 hunter ed classes
- Alex Hedman (Eagle River) taught 5 bowhunter ed classes
- Melissa Hendrickson (Fairbanks) taught 5 bowhunter ed classes
- Ralf Lysdahl (Wasilla) taught 5 hunter ed classes
- Jeff Shoemaker (Ketchikan) taught 1 bowhunter ed and 2 hunter ed classes

Thanks to the Alaska Wild Sheep Foundation for providing Cabela's gift certificates to help us recognize our Above & Beyond recipients. We'll continue to recognize 1-4 extraordinary volunteer instructors each quarter, so please keep an eye out for co-instructors who go "above and beyond" in the next few months and send HIT Program staff an email.



### HIT Program Staff Contact Information

#### Anchorage:

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Luke Metherell 267-2241

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Anna Petersen 267-2187

#### Fairbanks:

Tom Halverson 459-7211

Mykenzie Robertson  
459-7242

#### Juneau:

Daniel Gutierrez 465-4345

Dan Palicka 586-4101



A successful hunter  
ed field day at Houston  
High School