



**For Immediate Release**

**July 5, 2017**

**The Vermont Alpine Racing Association proudly announces its Honorees for the**

## **2017 Vermont Ski Racing Gala and Hall of Fame Induction**

**Sugarbush Resort, Vermont**

**October 14, 2017**

### **Kelly Brush**

#### **2017 VARA Hall of Fame Inductee**



Kelly Brush has been an icon of Vermont Ski Racing since she returned to the skiing scene following her recovery from a life altering ski racing accident in 2006. Her accident and injury left her paralyzed from the chest down, but her voice, leadership, inspiration and vision of a safer sport has driven immense change in the way ski racing is delivered in Vermont and throughout the ski racing community. Her foundation, The Kelly Brush Foundation (KBF), is in its 12<sup>th</sup> year. Kelly's Foundation raises and spends hundreds of thousands of dollars each year to help Clubs and athletes fit their programs with equipment and to provide education on improving the safety of the sport. Her Foundation also provides adaptive sports equipment directly to people living with paralysis.

Kelly is a Vermont native from Charlotte and grew up racing in the Northern Vermont Council. She attended Green Mountain Valley School and was a member of the Middlebury Ski Team. She was injured in her sophomore year while at Middlebury. She went on to graduate on time from Middlebury and in January of 2009 Kelly was honored with the NCAA Inspiration Award. Kelly worked for ESPN for a year upon graduation prior to moving to Boston for nursing school. Currently Kelly is a Pediatric Nurse Practitioner, President of the KBF Board and mom of Dylan. Her husband, Zeke Davisson, is the Executive Director of The KBF. They live in the Burlington, VT area.

VARA is proud to recognize Kelly Brush and her achievements in inspiring all of the Vermont Ski Racing community with her presence, by promoting ski racing safety, and in helping Clubs and athletes understand, pursue and meet the modern demands of the sport.

### **Igor Vanovac - Mount Mansfield Ski Club**

#### **Alpine Official of the Year**

Igor Vanovac is entering his 12<sup>th</sup> year as Program Director of the Mount Mansfield Ski Club Program which enrolls 240 winter sports athletes of all ages. In November of 2016, Igor and several other ski racing leaders from around Vermont suspended their work at their home clubs to provide support for Killington's production and execution of the first World Cup to come to Vermont in over 25 years. Igor was assigned as Assistant Chief of Course and by all accounts was an incredibly important influence in his contribution to the production of the event. Igor's European heritage was essential in assisting attending Europeans and in collaborating with the various officials, in turn, delivering excellence in the shape of a first class World Cup race experience for all of the visiting athletes. Igor is very active in supporting



Vermont racing, and in officiating many championship events not only for Vermont but also for USSA and FIS. MMSC hosts on average 40 events per year. Igor is level 4 Chief of Race and level 3 Chief of Course.



## **Peter Davis - Stowe Mountain Resort**

### **VARA Volunteer of the Year**



Peter Davis is the Specialized Recreation Manager at Stowe Mountain Resort, race and event announcer, former professional ski racer, UVM graduate and a well-known voice at Vermont Ski Racing venues. For the past 4 years, Peter has served as VARA's emcee at the Hall of Fame Induction and Gala event each fall where he has elevated VARA's recognition presentation to the highest level of excellence. Peter's volunteer involvement with VARA was expanded in November of 2016 when he took on and executed the role of Parade Marshall for the VARA Athlete Parade at the Killington World Cup, where over 1000 VARA athletes from all 22 Clubs marched together into the World Cup venue before the opening day race. Peter's role in carrying out this great spectacle and display of Vermont's ski racing heritage was exemplary and we are very proud to honor him as our VARA Volunteer of the Year for 2017.

## **Tim Curran – Green Mountain Valley School**

### **VARA Development Coach of the Year**

Tim Curran is the GMVS Head Coach for U16 Boys. Tim grew up ski racing in the Mad River Valley for the Northern Vermont Council. He had a long ski racing career, racing with the USST from 1985-88 and with UVM earning all-American status in 1988 and 92. Before starting at GMVS Tim worked for Dynastar Skis and coached for UVM and KMS. He has been a member of the GMVS coaching team for over 5 years. Members of Tim's team saw remarkable success in the past two seasons. Tim believes in developing ski racers who have a balance of strong free skiing skills as well as technical and tactical skills. He has been an integral part in the continuing coaches' education program, and his expertise on the National Team and NCAA level brings invaluable skill and knowledge to VARA's coaching community and to his athletes. VARA is proud to acknowledge Tim Curran as the 2017 Development Coach of the Year.



## **Naga Kusumi – Stratton Mountain School**

### **VARA Junior Development Coach of the Year**



Naga Kusumi has been the Head U14 Coach at SMS for the past five seasons. His athletes have frequently realized a high level of success. Although Naga's athletes' successes have been exceptional they do not begin to tell the story of "Coach Naga". His philosophy focuses on his racers' growth both as athletes and as individuals. His emphasis is on teaching the kids how to work hard, how to be respectful and good citizens who show a high level of sportsmanship. He teaches them responsibility to one's self, one's parents, and to the club which they represent. Naga believes in building a foundation for the long term and winning races down the road. He is

a teacher of many lessons which have far reaching implications in ski racing and in life. Naga has long been an active participant in VARA and USSA sponsored events such as coaching at the various VARA Youth Projects and the VT/NY Projects. He is a sought after course setter for State, Eastern, and Can Am events. Naga is respected by his peers and athletes. VARA is proud to recognize Naga Kusumi as the 2017 Junior Development Coach of the Year.