

**WATERVILLE VALLEY BLACK AND BLUE TRAIL SMASHERS SKI EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION
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**WATERVILLE VALLEY BLACK AND BLUE TRAIL SMASHERS
SKI EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION RECEIVES PRESTIGIOUS USSA AWARDS**

Waterville Valley Black and Blue Trail Smashers Ski Educational Foundation (WVBBTS) was honored with three prestigious awards at the United States Ski and Snowboard Association National Congress in Park City, Utah this past weekend.

- **USSA Competition Club of the Year**-WVBBTS
- **USSA Snowboard Club of the Year**-WVBBTS
- **Russell Wilder Award**-Nick Preston, Director of WVBBTS Freestyle Program

USSA is the national governing body for Olympic Skiing and Snowboarding in the United States. According to WVBBTS CEO and Executive Director Peter Stokloza, "this recognition from USSA helps validate that WVBBTS is on the right course to achieving its vision *"to be the best snowsports training and competition organization in the United States by fielding the most successful competitors at local, regional and national team levels, and by giving young athletes the strong values and rich experiences that will guide them in their adult lives"*."

The **USSA Club of the Year Award** is presented to a USSA Competition Club which has distinguished itself in providing direction to young athletes through high-level competition programs resulting in athletic success. Past winners of this award include such nationally known organizations as Steamboat Springs Winter Sports Club, Sun Valley Ski Education Foundation and Park City Ski Education Foundation.

The **USSA Sports Club of the Year Award** is presented to a USSA Competition Club in each sport which has distinguished itself in providing direction to young athletes through high-level competition programs resulting in athletic success. WVBBTS won the USSA Snowboard Club of the Year award.

The **Russell Wilder Award** is presented annually to recognize the most outstanding effort in focusing the interests of American youth on the sports of skiing or snowboard. Under Nick Preston's long term leadership, the WVBBTS Freestyle Program was named USSA Freestyle Club of the Year in 1999 and 2004.

WVBBTS operates Waterville Valley Academy, a five month full time academic and snowsports training academy, and the BBTS Ski Club, a season long weekend training program for alpine, freestyle and snowboard athletes. WVBBTS has the quaint mountain village of Waterville Valley as its "campus" and Waterville Valley Ski Area as its home training venue.

"Every WVBBTS athlete, parent, coach, teacher, member and volunteer should take great pride in these awards" stated Peter Stokloza, "as this level of recognition can only be attained by those that are truly operating as a team pursuing a common vision. We thought it could not get any better this past year than several WVBBTS alumni earning the right to compete in the 2006 Winter Olympics in Torino, to WVBBTS athletes/alumni being named to the US alpine, freestyle and snowboard teams to athletes/alumni competing and oftentimes medaling at state and regional, national, international and world championships. But these USSA awards truly encompass what WVBBTS and its staff are all about-creating an environment where individual athletes from ages 5 through 70+ can achieve their personal bests."

For more information about Waterville Valley Academy or the BBTS Ski Club please contact Sharon Schmidt, Director of Development and Communications, at sschmidt@wvbbts.org or by calling her at 603-236-4612 or visiting the WVBBTS web site at www.wvbbts.org.

