

Snowsports Builder Award

The FWSA Snowsports Builder Award is given to individuals who have made an indelible positive impact on snowsports. The builders may be honored for achievements in athletics, the press, publishers, historians, industry, humanitarian work, area development, or technology. In short, they honor those who have made significant contributions to snowsports. Two awards are being presented in 2023. Brad Wilson's story is below. Genia Fuller-Crews is our convention keynote speaker and her story is on page 15.

Brad Wilson

Building Upon a Community's Passion for Snowsports and Year-Round Recreation Area

By Barbara Bryant, Bogus Basin Ski Club

Brad Wilson, the current General Manager of the Bogus Basin Mountain Recreation Area, Idaho, has more than 30 years of experience in management, marketing, sales, and master planning within the ski and hospitality industry. He took the reins at Bogus Basin in November of 2015.

Brad is truly a snowsports builder - creating, expanding, and improving programs since his college years. He first worked in a ski shop until he graduated from Fresno State University in California. Next, he worked as a professional ski patrolman, then a ski shop owner.

His former positions held include GM of Diamond Peak Ski Resort at Lake Tahoe, and has also worked as president and COO of Catalina Island Resort Services, Director of Marketing at Alpine Meadows, Director of Sales at Heavenly Valley and Assistant GM at Mountain High Resort. He has also served in lead marketing roles at Sugarbush, Bear Mountain, and Brian Head resorts.

In addition to skiing, Brad is an avid mountain biker, which is part of what enticed him to Boise. Bogus Basin is the largest non-profit ski area in the U.S., and the Bogus Basin Recreation Association (BBRA), located on private and leased land in the Boise National Forest, operates Bogus. Being a 501(c)(3) enables Bogus Basin to reinvest all profits into the recreational resort.

Since he was hired as General Manager of Bogus Basin, Brad subsequently steered BBRA into a booming year-round recreation area. He helped build upon the community's passion for skiing, mountain biking and outdoor recreating. He serves as the president of the

Idaho Ski Areas Association and is on the board of the BBRA. He is also on the board of the National Ski Areas Association.

From the beginning of his tenure as General Manager, Brad envisioned a family friendly, affordable and accessible outdoor recreational opportunity for all. In 2017 he jumpstarted a 10-year Master Plan that has been completed in five years. Brad's Master plan consisted of three parts: 1) Summer Business Plan; 2) Snowmaking; and 3) Chair Lifts.

The "Bogus Basin Project," as it came to be called, needed seed money in order to begin to execute the plan, so Brad appealed to the community to contribute. Brad's appeal raised \$6 million to move forward, due to donations by large corporations and thousands of small donations.

He has expanded night skiing terrain through affordable lift tickets and passes. In addition, during Brad's time at the helm, the cross country ski area bought new trail making machines. Slashing daily lift tickets and season pass prices have provided accessibility for new skiers and more people, especially younger generations, with winter participants numbering 350,000 this season.

Brad has demonstrated his commitment to attracting younger snowsports enthusiasts.

One of his goals is to provide the possibility for every youngster in the Treasure Valley to participate in snowsports. This season BBRA fully subsidized students from a Title I school with transportation, ski lessons, and equipment. The addition of terrain parks continues to attract a younger



demographic of snowsports enthusiasts. He launched the "Chair Rider" program that employs 50-60 high school aged youngsters to ride the chair lifts with youngsters enrolled in ski school.

In his future plans, Brad is looking for ways to adapt to the major increase in the population of Treasure Valley. His next Master plan will include: developing 600 acres of terrain expansion into the Clear Creek drainage accessed by one new chair lift (now waiting for approval from the Forest Service), replacement of two aging double chair lifts with quad chairs, replacement and updating of the three mountain lodges, addition of elevators for more accessibility for visitors in the lodges, and a focus on providing living wages to employees.

Brad Wilson continues to be a boon to the Bogus Basin Mountain Recreation Area with his enthusiasm, his commitment to the improvement of BBRA, and his vision for the future, making an indelible impact on snowsports.