

EDUCATION

Students get hands on introduction to ski industry occupations

■Former business teacher is shaping the next generation of ski industry professionals with The Pipeline Project.

By Jillian Armstrong
Special to the Union Leader

Former business teacher Tiffany Whitcomb is shaping the next generation of ski industry professionals with The Pipeline Project, a unique initiative exposing Career & Technical Education (CTE) students from across the state to hands-on careers in the ski and mountain resort industry.

“I knew CTE did not know what the ski career pathways were, and then I identified that the ski industry did not know the full capabilities of CTE,” Whitcomb shared in a recent interview. “And having a strong background and network in both, that’s where I said, ‘I’m going to fill this gap.’”

Hence the pipeline, which bridges tech programs in construction, welding and even business to professional careers in lift mechanics, snowmaking, resort management and more. In essence, Whitcomb has created a fun way for young adults to experience the work that goes on behind the scenes at ski areas.

The project’s first-ever Ski Career Exploration Event, held at Pats Peak Ski Area in October, brought students and teachers together with representatives from resorts and major manufacturers, like Prio-noth and Leitner-Poma of



Students sit in a snowcat to learn about the logistics of snow grooming.

JILL ARMSTRONG PHOTO

America — two global leaders in mountain technology — exposing them to a wide-range of careers in the industry that many may have never considered before.

Nine schools attended the event, which was broken down into 45-minute learning blocks, a hands-on, interactive approach that Whitcomb has championed. Students toured the resort, getting an inside look at the pump house (where large volumes of water are stored for snowmaking) and the mountain operations building. They were able to sit in a snowcat and learn about the logistics of snow grooming and Whitcomb even held a mock job in-

terview to prepare students for the real-world transition after high school.

Perhaps the most notable session was an introduction to ski lift electrical led by Tim Smith, the general manager of Waterville Valley Resort. Using a low-voltage science kit, Smith showed students how to create a circuit board, a skill relevant to lift mechanics.

“I was absolutely shocked with how knowledgeable they were with electronics,” Smith shared. “It was very, very telling that they had great training, and they already had some basics that they’ll need to go into the workplace, which was really encouraging to me

knowing that we have this kind of a future.”

Smith’s technical knowledge grew and evolved throughout his career. But because technologies are becoming increasingly complex, students are expected to enter the workforce with a more specialized knowledge base today, which, for industry professionals like Smith, highlights the importance of early exposure to these skills in CTE programs.

“I haven’t seen this in other states,” Smith added. “The Pipeline Project is really something special and will hopefully make our state even stronger from a ski standpoint.”

In a survey collected at the end of the event, 67% of students indicated that they were somewhat or definitely interested in exploring more about ski careers while 88% of students felt that this event helped them learn something new. This is why, for Whitcomb, the influence of The Pipeline Project must extend beyond this singular experience.

“If we don’t tell the teachers and the students what the next steps are, that energy is just going to die,” she said. “We’re hanging on to those students, and giving them that roadmap so that they can understand more of what this industry

“I haven’t seen this in other states. The Pipeline Project is really something special and will hopefully make our state even stronger from a ski standpoint.”

TIM SMITH
general manager,
Waterville Valley Resort

is all about.”

Several students from Spark Academy who attended the event at Pats Peak will continue their ski industry education next semester by taking an online lift mechanics program through a local college. Another student applied to work at McIntyre Ski Area for the season, inspired by Whitcomb’s enthusiasm.

“She created the excitement,” shared John Tuttle, the principal of Spark Academy. “It closes those gaps and makes things possible when the students don’t really know what’s out there.”

“There are tons of kids who love to ski,” Tuttle continued. “Could you imagine if that was your job? She’s showing them that a job doesn’t always have to be something that you have to do. It can be something you love to do.”

For more information, visit www.thepipelineproject.ski or connect with Whitcomb at tiffany@thepipelineproject.ski

Give us the business! Send your business news to biznews@unionleader.com

"SHE SAVED MY LIFE"

Concord resident Dawn R. had been experiencing the painful side effects of Peripheral Neuropathy, "My feet and legs were extremely painful and my doctor told me there was nothing they could do. That I would have to take Gabapentin for the rest of my life. Then she met Concord’s very own Dr. Kristen Markwith, Licensed Acupuncturist.

Peripheral Neuropathy is the pain, discomfort and numbness caused by nerve damage of the peripheral nervous system. Dawn explained that daily tasks like opening doors and using the bathroom were overwhelmingly painful. “How can you live for the next 30 years when you don’t even want to get out of bed and do simple things?”

She was experiencing the burning, numbness, tingling and sharp pains that those suffering with neuropathy often describe. “The way I would describe it, it’s equivalent to walking on glass.” Dawn hadn’t worn socks in five years and was wearing shoes two sizes too big so that nothing would ‘touch’ her feet.

Unfortunately, Dawn’s story is all too familiar for the over 3 million people in the U.S. suffering from Peripheral Neuropathy.

If you’re unfortunate enough to be facing the same disheartening prognosis, you’re not sleeping at night because of the burning in your feet. You have difficulty walking, shopping or doing any activity for more than 30 minutes because of the pain. You’re struggling with balance and living in fear that you might fall. Your doctor told you to, ‘just live with the pain’ and you’re taking medications that aren’t working or have uncomfortable side effects.

Fortunately, four months ago Dawn read an article about Dr. Kristen Markwith and the work she was doing to treat those suffering from Peripheral Neuropathy, without invasive surgeries or medications.

Dr. Kristen Markwith, founder of Trend Acupuncture and Integrative Medicine in

Concord, NH. is using the time tested science of Acupuncture and a technology originally developed by NASA that assists in increasing blood flow and expediting recovery and healing to treat the debilitating disease.

“Now when I go to bed at night I don’t have those shooting pains. I don’t have that burning sensation. I don’t have pain coming up my legs,” Dawn enthusiastically describes life after receiving Dr. Kristen’s treatments. “I can wear socks and shoes!”

Dawn and his sister now operate a successful dog walking business, sometimes covering up to 5 miles a day.

“It’s life altering. As far as I’m concerned Dr. Kristen saved my life!”

Dr. Kristen Markwith has been helping the senior community for over 10 years using the most cutting edge innovative integrative medicine. Specializing in chronic pain cases, specifically those that have been deemed ‘hopeless’ or ‘untreatable,’ she consistently generates unparalleled results.

What was once a missing link in senior healthcare is now easily accessible to the residents of Concord.

If you’ve missed too many tee times because of pain or you passed on taking that walk down on Main Street because you are afraid of falling, it's time to call Dr. Kristen Markwith and the staff at Trend.

It’s time you let your golden years be GOLDEN!

Dr. Kristen Markwith once again accepting new patients but only for a limited time. In an effort to protect her patients, both current and future, she has made the difficult decision to limit the number of patients seen in her clinic.

Call (603) 456-8294 now to schedule a consultation.



PERIPHERAL NEUROPATHY?
Call (603) 456-8294
to schedule a consultation!

163 Manchester Street, Unit 2 Concord, NH.
www.trendacupuncture.com