



# John

Volunteer Ski Instructor  
Organization: NSCD

## PROFILE SNAPSHOT

**Age:** 55

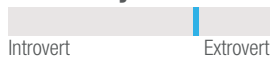
**Location:** Denver, CO

**Occupation:**  
Civil Engineer

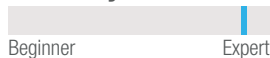
**Motivators:**

- Enjoys skiing
- Desire to give back to the community
- Personal experience

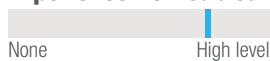
### Personality



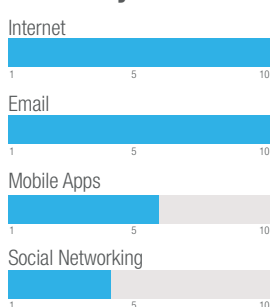
### Ski Ability



### Experience w/Disabled



### Tech Savvy



## DISCOVERY

John is successful and advanced in his career as a Civil Engineer. He is not ready to retire yet, but after many years of focusing on his career he has some flexibility in his schedule. John's children are grown and his wife is happy in her own career. He has a strong desire make a contribution to the community and give back in a tangible way. John has skied for many years, loves to do it and is very good at it. Skiing was a family activity while his children were growing up and he always enjoyed the time they spent together skiing. He begins to think about ways that he might be able to apply his abilities and skills as a skier to help others.

John's 28 year old niece, Joni, was born with spina bifida. This has caused paralysis of her lower limbs and developmental delays in cognition. John knows that Joni participates in and enjoys a skiing program for the disabled with the National Sports Center for the Disabled (NSCD) He know that she looks forward to it every year and that is makes a positive difference in her life. John has been curious about the NSCD program for a while and wondered if there may be a place for him help others enjoy the experience as much as he does. The new flexibility in his schedule lead him investigate the NSCD volunteer program and learned that there is an opportunity for him to volunteer as a ski instructor for the disabled.

## IMMERSION

John's duties as a senior Civil Engineer at his firm are mostly as a project manager, team leader, coach and subject matter expert. He enjoys the mentoring of younger people on his teams and sees himself as a "coach" who brings people together and helps everyone stay on track. The expertise he provides and the manner in which he provides it is usually very well received and he enjoys the respect of subordinates and superiors alike.

The departure of his children for higher education and their own careers left John feeling proud but strangely unsatisfied. He's had a very good life with

his wife, Prudence, but still feels that there is something more he can do. He believed, and taught his children, that each person should make a contribution that makes the world a little bit better.

Prudence is understanding and supportive of John's desire to get involved and make some sort of contribution. She and John have had a nice life for 30 years, and she encourages him to find something in which he would like to participate and be fulfilled.

## CONNECTION

Knowledge and skills are both learning gaps for John. He is excited about the opportunity to volunteer as a ski instructor for the disabled with NSCD. Over the years he has seen some of the specially adapted equipment used by disabled skiers at a number of ski resorts. He understands there will be a learning curve in developing the skills necessary to learn to use new equipment. John has little experience dealing with people who are profoundly disabled. He wonders if this might be more challenging than the actual skiing part of the program.

He is unsure what is required and has many questions about commitment, operations, necessary skills and training. He is internet-savvy so he starts by searching through the NSCD web site. He finds at least basic answers to many questions. What kind and how much training is required of him, what equipment he is expected to provide, if he is required to pay any fees, how often he is expected to volunteer, and if he should have prior experience in working with the disabled. John is a great skier however he is still concerned about the skill gaps he will need to fill regarding levels of disability, dealing with people who are cognitively disabled, as well as the various kinds of equipment used and how you teach.

John is sufficiently motivated and interested by what he has discovered and by the experience of his niece that he attends a perspective volunteer meeting on a Saturday morning in mid October. The program director speaks about the history of the program, the levels of contribution, some of the challenges and the



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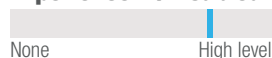
### Personality



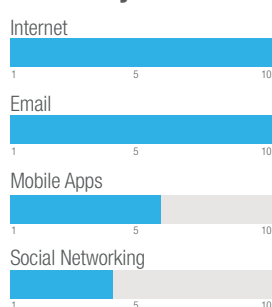
### Ski Ability



### Experience w/Disabled



### Tech Savvy



opportunity. He also meets and speaks with new and long time NSCD volunteers, NSCD program participants, and gets to see some of the devices used by disabled skiers. He likes the program and thinks the skills necessary are things he can learn.

## DETACHMENT

The NSCD web site has good information. The “Volunteer” tab however covers information about many different ways to volunteer, not only skiing, and the information pertaining specifically to becoming a volunteer ski instructor is not identified quickly nor easily. The New Volunteer meeting fills many of this gaps.

Once John decides to volunteer, the ski volunteer trainers must begin an electronic on-boarding process. This should not present a challenge to John, his background and business skills are more than sufficient. Next is the education process, which begins after receiving a user name and log-in to the NSCD Volunteer web site. On the site is scheduling information and dates regarding the four training classes he must complete at the NSCD Winter Park, Colorado facility prior to the first week in January. There is also information about parking, where the classes will be held, what equipment to bring, what to wear, contact information, and what they need to complete before arriving at training. An email will provide necessary links to other information that may be needed prior to training.

To provide clarity, new volunteer ski instructor should have a “first day” checklist to help guide the first day of training. As homework prior to attending each lesson NSCD should a clear set of expectations, learning objectives and what kind of information will be covered. Each lesson should be supported by a brief video clip to model and provide visual cues for the skills and techniques to be learned.

Since most training occurs on the mountain, prior to getting on skis volunteers should review, discuss, ask questions and be quizzed on the homework information and previous weeks learning. Homework offers

a good preview to what’s to come, set expectations and prepares volunteers for their training sessions. Preparation, defined objectives and visual cues will make volunteers feel more confident with regard to expectations and progress. The videos can also serve as tool for any volunteers who may be having a difficulty or would like a visual review of what they do accomplish.





# Cathy

Volunteer Staff Ski Instructor/Trainer  
 Organization: NSCD

## PROFILE SNAPSHOT

**Age:** 45

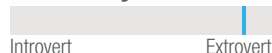
**Location:** Denver, CO

**Occupation:**  
 Nurse

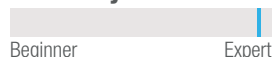
### Motivators:

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- To improve/update the training program
- Share her knowledge about various disabilities to aid in training

### Personality



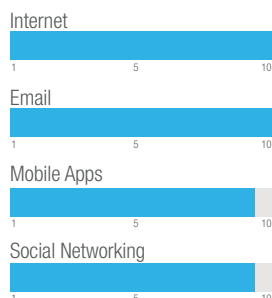
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## DISCOVERY

Professionally, Cathy is a RN with over 20 years experience in a variety of medical specialties. This is her 4th season as a part time NSCD Staff Ski Instructor. NSCD Staff Ski Instructors not only work with disabled participants but also are charged with the training and development of new volunteer ski instructors. She has been skiing most of her life and started as a volunteer instructor. After 5 seasons as a volunteer ski instructor, she decided she wanted to do more, and added to her role by also becoming a trainer. She has a strong connection to and passion for the NSCD. Her employer, a large health care system, is supportive of her volunteering.

Cathy realized after a couple seasons volunteering, that her experience and grasp on how to interact with disabled people of varying types (cognitive and physical) was a very significant part of her success as a volunteer. All volunteers learn how to use the adaptive ski equipment and develop skills over time. Cathy's realization that her 20 years of work experience in nursing has been a great advantage in interacting with diverse disability and personality types, and that she has skills and knowledge that she can pass on to others. She can easily see how to adapt her experiences to help new volunteer ski instructors understand where people are coming from, and how to handle a variety of challenging situations. She believes this should improve the experience of a disabled participant and ability of the new ski instructor.

Motivated to make a more substantial contribution and recognizing a part of the NSCD training area where she could add depth and experience, she became a trainer for the ski program. Cathy is determined to educate and motivate ski instructor volunteers effectively so that they continue working with the program after the season is over, and changing lives for the better. Cathy has been training volunteers for one winter season and is entering her second winter season.

## IMMERSION

Cathy is motivated to educate and train volunteer ski instructor volunteers more effectively so that they provide a better experience for the participants and continue working with the program long term. Her long term experience with NSCD has provided exceptional insight as to what areas of volunteer education and training can and should be improved.

Although NSCD has had a successful volunteer ski instructor program for over 20 years, the underlying training and education of new and continuing volunteer ski instructors has changed very little in the past decade. The educational director is not an education or teaching professional but someone who went through the program 20 years ago, and resistant to changing what they think already works.

Cathy and many of her peers feel there are more effective techniques and technologies that could be utilized to increase knowledge, improve skills, make a better use of time and help motivate new volunteers. Some of these ideas have been implemented successfully by NSCD Training Staff on an individual basis.

## CONNECTION

Cathy enjoys her role at NSCD but is somewhat frustrated because she knows there are simple changes that can improve the overall program performance. Part of her frustration is environmental. Evolving the training curriculum to produce a consistently better training outcome and better over-all participant experience is an organizational change, and she knows change can be hard even if it is not difficult. She is comfortable raising the issue in Staff meetings and knows there is a broad base of Training Staff support for ideas such as:

- Using the internet to prepare new volunteers prior to each training session
- Revising the scheduling so participants have the same instructor whenever possible to build relationships



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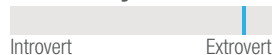
**Location:** Denver, CO

**Occupation:**  
Nurse

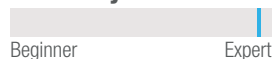
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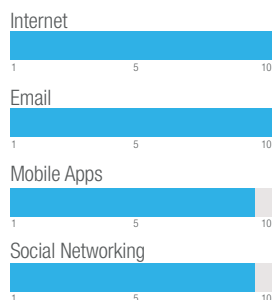
### Ski Ability



### Experience w/Disabled



### Tech Savvy



- Creating and using short video clips to model techniques and skill used in handling the various ski assist devices
- Using the internet to help learn NSCD processes and develop preparation checklists
- Showing how different disabilities manifest themselves
- Creating more internet based information on what situational challenges can arise and how to handle them

## DETACHMENT

Cathy and NSCD Staff Trainers have many of the resources to aid in the development of these areas at no cost to NSCD. In addition Cathy has already determined there are NSCD volunteers who have expertise in video production, web development and instructional design.

To encourage and embrace some or all of the suggested improvements, it is appropriate for Cathy and the NSCD Training Staff to develop a design document. This will cover the individual changes proposed, how this change will be implemented, and the program benefits associated. There is an enormous amount of NSCD Training Staff anecdotal support for all the changes and these can be used to personalize and add impact to each change item.

Training Staff meetings and NSCD ski events represent opportunities to promote the concept of evolving education and training within the organization. NSCD also has many other winter and summer programs serving the disabled and any interaction with management, executives and/or major donors can address the greater opportunity educational and training evolution can play in producing better outcomes across the entire organization.