
Report to the Community

2022 - 23

Canadian Adaptive Snowsports -
Alberta Association



Report to the Community 2022-23

Vision

Our vision is an inclusive Alberta in which adaptive snowsports are accessible to all.

Mission

CADS Alberta is a volunteer based provincial sport organization whose mission is to provide all Albertans recreational and competitive adaptive snowsport opportunities through a safe, inclusive learning and training environment; supported by strong leadership, advocacy, and partnerships.

Targets

- Individuals with Adaptive Physical, Cognitive and/or Sensory Needs (Long Term Athlete Development LTAD Active Start, Fundamentals)
- LTAD Learn to Train to Train to Compete Competition Stream Alpine Skiing and Snowboard Athletes
- Volunteers
- Partners / Stakeholders

Goals

- Leadership Development
- Volunteer Education
- Long Term Athlete Development (alpine skiing and snowboarding)
- Revenue Generation
- Developing Stakeholder and Partnership Relationships
- Advocacy and Outreach
- Governance

CADS Alberta – 2022/23 Provincial Board

President Becca Neels
Vice President Chris Holoboff
Treasurer Neil Hepburn
Secretary Angela Schornstein
Member at Large Evan Profit
Member at Large Kirk Schornstein
Member at Large Edward Shaw
Member at Large Spencer Allen
Member at Large Kiera Davick
Calgary Zone Rep Chad Hohol
Edmonton Zone Rep Katie Gourlay
Red Deer Zone Rep Adam Karras

CADS Alberta – 2022/23 Provincial Staff

CADS National Rep.
Ozzie Sawicki
Program Director (Staff)
Ozzie Sawicki
Executive Coordinator (Staff)
Sharon Veeneman
Canadian Para Snowsport Training Centre (Staff)
Program Coach Mike Marsh
Program Coach Claudio Berto
Program Coach Sam Lynch

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Key Partners



Cochrane Foundation



CADS Alberta: 2022-23 Highlights

Dear CADS Alberta Member:

The 2022-23 season saw CADS Alberta continue to focus on its four pillars that include:

- Development
- Education
- Equipment
- Competition

These will be expanded upon in this, our 2022-23 Report to the Community, following a review of 2022-23 highlights.

This was also the final year of a four-year quadrennial plan (2020-23), which was hampered considerably due to the impacts of COVID-19, from 2020 to 2021 especially. The 2021-22 season saw a recovery process begin, with the 2022-23 season regaining a normal operational process for most of our CADS Alberta zone programs.

We are excited as our programs move forward and we explore new ideas and initiatives with plans to continue with CADS Alberta program growth opportunities for the 2023-24 season.

Sincerely,



Ozzie Sawicki
Program Director



Becca Neels
President

Several new and returning initiatives have taken place over the 2022-23 season, as CADS Alberta programming normalized post COVID, including:

- The **first annual CADS Alberta Education Workshop**, organized and delivered in partnership with CADS Calgary. The workshop was a three-day event held from December 9 to 11, 2022 in which 44 volunteer instructors from across the province took part in sessions that included on-snow self-improvement sessions, CADS training module sessions, level three course conductor evaluations, and an evening dinner/social so instructors had a chance to mingle and exchange stories and ideas between our many CADS Alberta zone programs.



CADS Alberta President, Rebecca Neels, enjoying her CADS Alberta Education Workshop experience.

- A **CADS National-Division alignment meeting** was hosted by CADS Alberta at the Spray Lake Sawmill Centre in Cochrane, Alberta January 2023. The focus being on presenting clarity of division roles to CADS National staff and Board members with the goal to create a closer alignment of a national strategy in which divisions have input. Representation was present from BC Adaptive Snowsports, CADS Alberta, CADS Ontario, and National Capital Division, in addition to CADS National. These discussions provided the input to become the catalyst for further meetings that would take place at the CADS Festival held at Kimberley, BC in March of 2023.

- CADS Alberta was provided the privilege of awarding five CADS Alberta members, who have demonstrated a lifetime of dedication to volunteer service in their CADS Alberta communities, the **Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Medal**. A selection committee was created, and five deserving CADS Alberta members were selected including:
 - Laura Lee Crook (CADS Calgary)
 - Tony Crook (CADS Calgary)
 - Bill Marshall (CADS Edmonton)
 - Gordon Mackenzie (CADS Red Deer)
 - Darryl Medoruma (CADS Lethbridge)

Laura Lee and Tony Crook receiving their Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Medals



- The introduction of a developmental and performance training hub situated in Cochrane, Alberta was initiated for the 2022-23 season. This became known as the **Canadian Para Snowsport Training Centre (CPSTC)** and was run as a one-year proof of concept to determine the fit of an expanded competition program as part of CADS Alberta's Provincial Sport Organization mandate.

- Sending a CADS Alberta “Team Alberta” Para-Alpine Team to the **2023 Canada Winter Games** hosted at New Brunswick’s Crabbe Mountain February 2023. Results of our three Para-athletes are provided below:

- Para Male Giant Slalom
 - Kalle Eriksson (Cochrane) - Gold
 - Nicholas Tulk (Calgary) – 5th
 - Braddock Karch (Sherwood Park) – DSQ
- Para Male Slalom
 - Nicholas Tulk (Calgary) – 5th
 - Kalle Eriksson (Cochrane) - DNF
 - Braddock Karch (Sherwood Park) – DNF



- **Slide and Ride events returned:** Three events were hosted over the 2022-23 season including CADS zones in Cold Lake (Kinosoo Ridge), Red Deer (Canyon Ski Area), and Westlock (Tawatinaw Valley Ski Area).



Volunteers at the Cold Lake (Kinosoo Ridge) Slide & Ride event

- **Canadian and USA National Championships and CADS Festival – Kimberley, BC March 2023.**
 - Prior to the beginning of the CADS Festival, CADS division representatives spent time with the CADS National staff and Board to review the national strategy document being assembled. As of July 2023, the completed document has not yet been released, but will be a key set of guidelines allowing better communication and collaborative opportunities in which to work towards the common interests of the CADS communities represented by the divisions, in our case, CADS Alberta.
 - The festival itself had a contingent of CADS Alberta members attending, some participating directly, with others in support of members. CADS Alberta hosted an Après Ski afternoon in support of the festival.
 - The festival also saw Alpine Canada run a festival competition training experience for up-and-coming participants, in conjunction with divisions, including CADS Alberta. Following the completion of the festival, both Canadian and USA National Championships were held including Super G, Giant Slalom and Slalom competitions, which also completed the competition season for CADS Alberta (and CPSTC athletes).



Participants at the ACA/CADS Festival Competition Training Kimberley, BC

- CADS Alberta attending the **Canada West Ski Area Association (CWSAA) annual conference** hosted at Whistler, BC for 2023. The decision to attend is in relation to the fact that a key group of partners to CADS Alberta are our snowsport resorts across the province.



Attending allowed CADS Alberta, in collaboration with BC Adaptive Snowsports (BCAS) to raise awareness as to our roles in creating market opportunities for our resort partners and their snowsport schools for potential clients with adaptive requirements. This is the second year in which a presentation was done by the CADS Alberta Program Director to a broad audience at the conference. This also became an opportunity to meet with areas of the province that presently do not have CADS Alberta zone programs, including Fort McMurray and Whitecourt. After discussions at the conference, both locations are in the process of establishing CADS Alberta zone programs. Efforts to be part of the CWSAA Trade Show paid dividends in creating these relationships and have allowed a growing voice in this market community around accessibility and opportunities to be more engaged with our snowsport area partners.

- **CADS Alberta Program Director Ozzie Sawicki** being named the **Don Watts Coach Developer of the Year** as one of eight outstanding Albertans receiving 2022 Alberta Sport Recognition Awards for demonstrating great achievement and contributions to sport.

Ozzie has been a significant contributor for many years to sport development at the local, provincial, national, and international levels. Ozzie embodies the qualities of this award; he is diligent in his approach to facilitating top quality learning experiences and goes the “extra mile” to ensure everyone feels supported.



CADS Alberta: Strategic Goals

We continue to follow our core goals which include:

- Leadership Development
- Volunteer Education
- Long Term Athlete Development (alpine skiing and snowboarding)
- Revenue Generation
- Developing Stakeholder and Partnership Relationships
- Advocacy and Outreach
- Governance

This year's Report to the Community, will focus in on our four pillars of activity, which include:

- Development
- Education
- Equipment
- Competition

Core Goals and Season Outcomes 2022-23

These goals remain the focus of our reporting to our CADS Alberta Membership as an indicator of the health and progression of the organization.

Development

CADS Alberta programs certainly demonstrated increased member numbers for the 2022-23 season, with the challenges being to provide enough trained volunteer instructors to support our participant members in the various CADS Alberta zone programs. With many volunteers having retired or simply not having returned following the COVID period for other reasons, ensuring that we can support our participant community remains our focus as an organization.

Following the 2021-22 season, we continue to see a new group of young volunteers committing to CADS Alberta zone programs, but we continue to determine strategies to recruit a larger and qualified instructional pool to ensure that all participants can be accommodated in our programs. There is recognition that waiting lists do exist, and this will be a consideration in our growth plans moving forward.

Continued program support from all our zones remains essential to the success of CADS Alberta. Thank you to our zone leads who are the communication contacts for their programs.

Continued plans to run Slide & Ride come try it events took place in 2022-23, with three events being hosted in Cold Lake, Red Deer and Westlock. All three events were highly successful, with thanks to the local coordinators and volunteers who made these events a success.

Education

CADS has an education and certification pathway which CADS Alberta implements with its Zone programs. The goal of which is to annually provide a CADS training block early season to prepare both returning instructors (refresher training or to take advancement levels of training) and new instructors (base training) followed by end of season evaluations that lead to level 1 and 2 certifications of instructors (for those who wish to pursue this).

The education requirement is focused on the safety of our participants. The CADS training and certification process provides training on the various ability areas (physical, sensory, and neurodiverse), preparing instructors to understand the nature of the ability first, followed by applying knowledge around the equipment being used (sit-skis, outriggers, etc.).

Every Zone is expected to participate in a training process early season. The larger Zones such as Calgary, Edmonton, Lethbridge, and Red Deer have created their own internal training schedule, while smaller Zones such as Cold Lake, Tawatinaw Valley (Westlock), etc. rely on CADS Alberta to provide a course conductor that comes to their Zone to deliver the CADS training and evaluation education process. CADS Alberta generally supports the small Zones in covering the cost of this training, as it is in the best interest of our PSO to ensure a level of expected quality of education delivery.

A new education event that was introduced for the 2022-23 season was the CADS Alberta Education Workshop, hosted in partnership with CADS Calgary at WinSport (COP). The workshop, described earlier in our highlights section, was a successful delivery, with a huge thank you to CADS Calgary knowledge leaders who ensured the event ran smoothly. Survey feedback and word-of-mouth through conversations with attendees really conveyed how important this type of collaborative provincial workshop was. Plans are already underway to run the second annual CADS Alberta Education Workshop December 2023.

We will also explore additional strategies to support our volunteer instructors, who are so important to our programs. This includes offering opportunities for access to CSIA, CASI and ACA coaching courses to further advance knowledge in areas such as pedagogy and self-improvement on-snow.

A final area of education for all our CADS Alberta members will be that of Safe Sport, and strategies to providing both an online education pathway as well as a structure in which any safe sport allegations can be managed in a secure and unbiased setting. Details of the CADS Alberta Safe Sport strategy will be presented entering the 2023-24 season.

Equipment

Having established a central CADS Alberta equipment pool, in which Zones can lease what they need annually (<https://cadsalberta.ca/adaptive-equipment-lease/>), we have successfully completed our most recent CIP grant that allowed us to grow our equipment pool significantly, with the goal that no individual who wishes to be participating should be limited by lack of access to the equipment they require to participate.

The second order was placed in the summer of 2022 so that we receive an additional eight sit-skis for the 2022-23 season. The goal is to have an ability to outfit any participant that needs equipment with proper sizing and ability of equipment required. This allows our smaller and newer Zones the ability to access equipment in a cost-efficient lease process, that eliminates high costs in establishing zone programs.

To engage our Zone programs, we are providing the opportunity for CADS Alberta Zones to purchase equipment through our equipment order, which provides the opportunity to receive discounted pricing through reduced shipping costs and other offers of the equipment suppliers we deal with.

To provide additional equipment education to our zones, we will be bringing a Tessier representative to our Education Workshop in 2023-24 to provide an expert knowledge resource to work with our participating volunteer instructors, as this provides a broader knowledge sharing of the equipment usage to ultimately benefit our participants.

CADS Alberta also secured a Calgary Parks Foundation Amateur Sport grant, and an Alberta-Sport Canada Sport Participation grant, both with the intent to secure both additional adaptive equipment and competition equipment entering the 2023-24 season. With the growing interest from our advanced participants and zones fulfilling the development pathway for those choosing to consider a competition pathway as athletes, for example CADS Edmonton and CADS Calgary, these excellent, young competition programs require the tools to support these up-and-coming athletes and advanced participants. CADS Alberta, as the Provincial Sport Organization (PSO), has the responsibility to ensure its zone programs can provide complete program opportunities, which extends to all our zone programs.

Competition

As our 2016-19 Quadrennial was focused on restructuring our competition process, with a build to a successful Canada Winter Games, competition remained an integral component of our 2021-23 quadrennial plan, with a distinct strategy outlined for competition culminating in sending an Alberta Team to the 2023 Canada Winter Games, as was presented earlier under CADS Alberta Highlights.

The CADS Alberta goal is to continue to support CADS Alberta Zones to develop coaching talent within their Zone programs with the knowledge that as of the 2022-23 season CADS athletes can now create a national points profile that allows them to compete in any National alpine competition in Alberta or out of province.

CADS Alberta has established an annual budget area to support competition programming and growth opportunities, focused on coaching quality, and an active start, to basic Learn to Train opportunity at the zone level. This will be a foundation element of the CADS Alberta 2024-2027 quadrennial plan leading to the 2027 Canada Winter Games, a goal for CADS Alberta zone advanced participants and athletes.

CADS Alberta is working closely with Alpine Canada, Alberta Alpine Ski Association, and BC Adaptive Snowsports to ensure coordinated programs that were CADS Alberta led for 2022-23, and to continue with this strategy into subsequent seasons. The 2024-27 CADS Alberta long term plan also advocates for the creation of a snowboard competition stream that is accessible through out zone programs.

For the 2022-23 season, CADS Alberta launched a post-pandemic proof-of-concept strategy to encourage advanced Para-pathway growth in its zone/club programs across Alberta. The strategy focused on the creation of a centralized Para-Alpine competition program based in Cochrane, Alberta. The program provided the ability to access grant funds that allow competition equipment to be made available to CADS Alberta zone programs, and to create opportunities for provincial competition camps, inviting participants and their coaches from across the province. The broader program engaged athletes who were already in a developmental performance pathway providing them a program hub in which they could focus on advancing their skills as athletes, while being exposed to and learning the qualities required to become a performance athlete. For the early stage or active start participant/athletes and their coaches within the CADS Alberta zone programs, the performance hub afforded quality knowledge and experience to be disseminated to these groups so they could then apply these training concepts when back in their home zone programs.

The timing of the program strategy related back to the late 1980s and 90s, in which competition opportunities were more accessible to a broader pool of participants. Training and competition opportunities, up to the Canadian Disabled Alpine Skiing Championships, included physical, sensory, and neurodiverse athletes, from which selection into Para-alpine, Special Olympics, or Deaf Game streams was provided. This allowed for an efficiency in assessing a broad athlete pool, which enabled coaches to select candidates who collectively became the competitive Canadian Para-alpine teams of the early to mid 2000s.

In early 2000 administrative change, mandated by Sport Canada, saw the CADS led National Team Para-Alpine program transferred to be managed under the umbrella of Alpine Canada Alpin (ACA), the National Sport Organization (NSO) responsible for alpine skiing in Canada. The transition saw a change in which only performance athletes selected to the National Para-alpine team became part of ACA, while the development pathway responsibility of the adaptive or Para-alpine context remained with CADS. This created a split in responsibility that saw a decrease in collaboration between physical, sensory, and neurodiverse athletes in competition settings at the CADS Alberta and other CADS provincial programs. Competition development was diminished as a result, with fewer CADS participants seeing the athlete role models on the national team, as they were no longer training within CADS provincial programs. Initiatives were created to bridge this

gap, such as the ACA Carving the Future program introduced in 2007, but these did not tie back to creating competition structures that were sustainable at the CADS division and zone levels.

In 2015 CADS Alberta undertook an organizational review, the outcome of which saw the implementation of a 2016-19 long term plan that included the rejuvenation of four pillars that began with program development (participant and volunteer recruitment), instructor education, adaptive equipment acquisition, and finally competition reintroduction. The competition goal being to field an Alberta Para-Alpine in the 2019 Canada Winter Games being hosted in Alberta. This began the rejuvenation of the CADS Alberta zone program growth, with the addition or relaunch of zone programs in Cold Lake, Grande Prairie, Medicine Hat, Alliance, and the Crowsnest Pass. Member numbers rose from what had become a baseline of 820 to 830 members in 2015 to over 1300 members by 2019, and the result saw an Alberta Para-alpine Team that won all four gold medals at the Canada Winter Games that year.

2020 saw the pandemic introduced, and the growth strategy experienced a severe impact, as was the case with vulnerable populations around the world. As the pandemic subsided, and CADS programming returned to normal levels of operation, the pillars of development, education and equipment were in a solid position of growth once again. This allowed the reintroduction of a competition strategy for the 2022-23 season for CADS Alberta, as the PSO responsible for Para-alpine competition.

Although CADS Alberta represents both Para-alpine and snowboard, Para-Alpine was the initial program offering, with a goal to demonstrate a sustainable proof-of-concept model over the 2022-23 season in which Para-athletes are provided a performance pathway through which to continue to develop their skills and to become a complete, well-rounded athlete in which individual growth is as important as athlete growth. Following the initial season of operation, the program's growth potential grew well beyond expectation, including garnering national and international attention and athlete success as a program.

Following a legal review, combined with considerations involving lack of staff, the need to market, the ability to make decisions quickly, and a level of Board adversity to the risk involved, CADS Alberta decided that the performance pathway be best operationally led by an organizational structure outside the scope of CADS Alberta, while retaining the development level of the competition pathway as its primary responsibility. CADS Alberta, as the PSO, remains focused on its pillars of development, education, equipment, and competition that entails supporting entry level through to Canada Winter Games Learn to Train levels of Para-athlete competition.

Program Transition:

Entering the 2023-24 season, the training centre will operate under ParaSport International (PSI) Inc., an independent entity. PSI supports athletes at the next level of FIS-Para (International Ski Federation) competition, which is the level beyond the nationally licensed athletes competing at Canada Winter Games, which is the assessment opportunity for athletes to advance from a largely Learn to Train environment with CADS Alberta, to a Train to Train and Train to Compete mandate with PSI and its world class coaching staff and integrated support staff.

PSI is the first training centre of its kind, tailored to serving both developing and performance Para-Sport athletes to help them reach their long-term athletic goals, typically attaining a national team, World Cup, and Paralympic level. PSI will remain a strategic partner of CADS Alberta in ensuring that the development pathway is a continuum, providing up and coming athlete talent competing at the CADS Alberta zone level to participate in development camps hosted through PSI and their coaching team. This enables our developing talent pool to have the chance to ski with and observe some of the top performance Para-athletes in Canada and internationally, and ensures a continuity of the complete long-term development pathway within Alberta.

Other Areas

In addition to our four pillars, as outlined, CADS Alberta has undertaken key areas of leadership.

Revenue Generation

2022-23 saw CADS Alberta successfully obtain grant support, sponsorship, or donations in the amount of \$292,616.00 beyond our core Alberta Government operating funds and AGLC funding. A percentage of this was allotted to the CPSTC program being developed in Cochrane, of which the 2023-24 program year will be a fiscal transition year, in which the performance program will separate from CADS Alberta formally, while retaining a collaborative strategy between the two organizations.

A key grant included the Foundations of Canada Investment Readiness Grant (IRG), which provided the ability to acquire legal support, as well as fundraising and sponsorship support. 2023-24 will continue work with the fundraising and sponsorship support as part of the IRG funding. The success in increasing our funding opportunities for 2022-23 will be enhanced moving into 2023-24.

2022-23 also saw the creation of a CADS Alberta Needs Summary. The intent of this document is to outline the strategic needs in detail for the organization, so that targeted areas can be focused on over the 2023-24 season as part of the onset of our next quadrennial planning block. The goal remains to see CADS Alberta as a healthy PSO and non-profit organization.

Developing Stakeholder and Partnership Relationships

As seen under Key Partners early on in this document, 2022-23 saw CADS Alberta secure several new funding and in-kind relationships. This will be an integral part of our strategy within our 2024-27 long-term plan, as it is important that we diversify our support avenues to ensure continued success as an organization.

Advocacy and Outreach

- Board Diversity - Entering the 2022-23 season, we now have a 12-person Board with 25% female representation and 25% adaptive representation. We will continue to strive for increased Board equity leading to the 2023-24 season, while encouraging skill sets needed to support our organizational needs.
- CADS Alberta is also excited to add two new zones that include Fort McMurray and Whitecourt. Discussions were initiated over the 2022-23 season, with the goal to formalize these zones entering the 2023-24 season.

Membership

The Zone programs in Alberta include (as of 2022-23):

- Alliance (Valley Ski Hill)
- Banff (Mt. Norquay) – Will establish a CADS Calgary program connection and competition connection.
- Calgary (Canada Olympic Park - WinSport)
- Cold Lake (Kinosoo Ridge)
- Crowsnest Pass (Pass PowderKeg)
- Edmonton (Rabbit Hill)
- Grande Prairie (Nite Hawk)
- Lethbridge (Castle Mountain)
- Medicine Hat (Hidden Valley)
- Nakiska – CADS Alberta’s primary competition training base.
- Red Deer (Canyon Ski Area)
- Tawatinaw (Westlock)

CADS Alberta participant membership is made up of people with spinal cord injury; amputees; spina bifida; cerebral palsy; visually impaired; hearing impaired; brain injury; cognitive impairment and many others.

Our membership for the 2021-22 season saw significant recovery post-pandemic. Our focus will continue to be on ensuring safe program environments as we move forward so we may continue to regrow the CADS Alberta brand and winter sport activity for all abilities. We also remain cognoscente that pandemic concerns still have the potential to impact vulnerable populations, so awareness and education will be a mainstay of CADS Alberta planning and zone communication.

The **2021-22 membership:**

- **Total 769**

The **2022-23 Membership** has successfully rebounded to pre-pandemic numbers that are presented below:

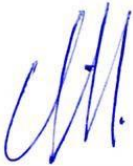
- Female Volunteer (Various types) – 350
- Female Participants – 184
- Male Volunteers (Various types) – 376
- Male Participants – 291
- Non-Binary Volunteers – 4
- Non-Binary Participants – 6
- **Total Count - 1211**

Summary

The above work was made possible through a highly innovative and dedicated CADS Alberta Board, without whom the above work and provincial support would not have been possible, and the exceptional support of Sharon Veeneman, the CADS Alberta Executive Coordinator. CADS Alberta continues to have a goal as being a Provincial Sport Organization that expects to be viewed as a leader in sport delivery in Alberta and for all Albertans in an inclusive and safe setting.

Thank you to our many long-standing and new partners, stakeholders, and collaborators, and thank you to our CADS Alberta Zones for their exceptional collaborative spirit that continues to make CADS Alberta a social community that is as important as the sport and recreation community it represents.

Respectfully submitted,



Ozzie Sawicki
Program Director, CADS Alberta