



"I appreciate the sense of community the whole program provides. I started the program as a Devo and worked my way all the way to the Elite Team. Every step of the way, I felt supported and appreciated. Every coach I had through the process wanted the best for me and shaped me into the person I am today."

~Zanden McMullen, APU Elite Team & 23/24 U.S. Ski Team

Happy Holidays to all APU Nordic Ski Center families and friends!

As 2023 comes to a close, APU Nordic Ski Center is busy moving into the race season. This year has brought MANY projects our way. As the projects take root, our ski center has grown welcoming new children, teens, adults and families into our community, building a new wave of APU skiers. Our lives get busier each day with the start of the race season in town in December, and we are excited to cheer for our skiers with the Besh Cup and SuperTour kicking off the U.S. Domestic racing circuit at Kincaid Park December 12th - 17th at Kincaid! The forward momentum APU Nordic Ski Center has achieved this year has been wonderful, and our success has been due to your support.

As a non-profit, donations are what help us to fund our year-round operations and support the goals of our athletes. We ask for your generosity in providing a charitable contribution this holiday season to APU Nordic Ski Center. The donations allow for us to continue our mission and vision to develop world-class skiers while promoting the participation in cross country skiing through community based athletic programs. Every contribution makes a huge difference to our operation in helping to offset costs of student athletes at APU, helping replenish waxing supplies, purchasing radios for our coaches to run our daily programs, and building our programs into the future. With your support this year, we will begin preparations for the 2026 Winter Olympics with a motivated Elite team and push forward the exciting projects that are currently underway for 2024 and beyond.



Before we unveil updates about exciting projects, it is important to ***celebrate the present!***

In 2023, APUNSC had more than 450 program members. We have 13 professional and talented coaches who are dedicated to our programs. Our Elite Team is 23 athletes strong with 7 Elite Skiers currently racing Period 1 of the World Cup! We have new and seasoned skiers and Olympians who have joined the Elite team who all bring positive spirit and a team mentality the the group. *(photo above, Elite team time trials at Kincaid in November)*

The World Cup season openers in Ruka and Gällivare has offered excitement, hope, and motivation for our World Cup racers along with those gearing up for the SuperTour races in December.

Rosie Brennan captured back to back podium finishes in Ruka, placing 2nd in the 10km Classic race *(photo right from U.S. Ski Team)* and 3rd in the 20km Freestyle pursuit. She currently is ranked 2nd in the World! Rosie's performance along with some other outstanding results from our APU World Cup team affirms that the work our coaches and athletes have put in to help our skiers prepare and train for the race season is a job well done. In Gällivare, the U.S. Men's relay team consisting of APU Skiers Gus Schumacher, Scott



Patterson, Zanden McMullen, and U.S. teammate, Ben Ogden, placed 5th overall, one of the best men's relay finishes for the U.S. in over 20 years. Luke Jager and JC Schoonmaker's team (*Men's teams photo right from U.S. Ski Team*) finished close behind in 8th place. Novie McCabe is currently 2nd in the U23 World Cup rankings! We look forward to local races starting in December in Anchorage and to February for the World Cup Races in Minnesota. We hope there will be a large contingent APU Contingency in the Lower-48 and we are excited to see how our APU skiers do at home in the USA.



Projects have filled every day in our coaches lives since the beginning of 2023. Many are currently underway with much more to be done to get each project operational. Here's a quick Overview.

Thomas Training Center on Eagle Glacier

We are excited to report on the NEW Thomas Training Center Facility on Eagle Glacier is underway! (*photo right*) The exterior envelope of the building has been constructed, and while the build has momentarily paused over the winter, it will continue construction once the weather permits in the Spring. The goal is to have the Glacier operational Summer, 2024. We will be busy this winter securing furniture and appliances to equip the Glacier with needed elements for the camps.



Rollerski Treadmill

In 2023, APU purchased a Rollerski Treadmill that will be delivered to APU at the beginning of 2024. The treadmill will live in the weight room in the Atwood Building at APU. Having this equipment will be a pivotal piece to athlete development not just for APU, but for all cross country skiers in Alaska. (*photo right - Rosie on treadmill in Park City during U.S. Training Camp*)



Piston Bully at APU!

Due to glacier construction, we were able to pull the old Piston Bully off the glacier and house it at APU. (*photos right of Piston Bully arriving on campus*) This means that future grooming of the Jim Mahaffey trails will be supported, offering more opportunity for training close to home for our programs, skiers and community. The Piston Bully is being worked on by Erik Flora and team.



Each step we take, and each project we undertake has a single core idea that keeps us moving forward. We want to ensure that every skier, young and young at heart, is supported and has a home here at APU. This ideal is what creates our community, and it is our community that sets APUNSC apart.

From an APU Elite skier and current U.S. Ski Team member who grew up in the program:

"I've been lucky enough to get to be a part of all levels of the APU program starting as a Devo (the Groms was not a program yet). In my experience, across the program, people prioritize treating each other well and being kind to everyone. No matter the level you are at, the staff and the team are invested in helping you reach your goals and will put in an amazing amount of work to help you reach them, even if your goal is just going outside and having fun while exercising. I feel extremely lucky to have been sort of raised by this program and the people in it!"

~Luke Jager, APU Elite Team & 23/24 U.S. Ski Team



We thank everyone for being a part that makes up our wonderful APU community. ALL of these projects and our successes are due to the continued support from you. With this holiday season, we wish everyone good health, time with family and friends, and of course, lots of skiing!

Sincerely, Head Coach & Director, Erik Flora & APU Nordic Ski Center Coaches Eric Strabel, Galen Johnston, Forrest Mahlen, Eliza Rorabaugh, Sean Clapp, Anna Darnell, Anna Trujillo, Sara Miller, Becca Rorabaugh, Annie Gonzales, Hailey Swirbul, Naomi Kiekintveld, Penny Smythe