



# Hunter Information & Training Program News

Fall 2024

## Coordinator's Corner-Ginamaria Smith

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Fall is my favorite time of year! Not only do we get to celebrate Halloween, but we also get to spend time with friends and family making memories, enjoying Alaska's resources, and putting fresh meat in the freezer. Fall is also a busy time of year for the HIT Program with new instructor trainings, annual instructor meetings, and a final push of classes before the end of the year.

Current instructors are the best recruiters of new volunteer instructors! This fall we certified 27 new instructors which is great since our instructor base is transient just like the state's population. During classes please keep an eye out for parents or adult students who are helpful, knowledgeable, and seem like they would make great instructors. Or do you know someone in your community who is an enthusiastic hunter or shooter who would be willing to share their knowledge with others? We have paper copies of the volunteer instructor application at every class facility for you to handout or you can direct them to our website. New instructor trainings will be held in the spring and the fall, and the training dates will be posted online in December.



A big change for the HIT Program is that Daniel Gutierrez, the Southeast Regional Coordinator based in Juneau, moved out of state in early October. Daniel was part of the HIT Program team for the past 5 years and we'll miss his enthusiasm for teaching, coordination with the Juneau middle schools, and the enjoyment he got from traveling to Southeast communities to teach school hunter education classes and National Archery in the Schools Program (NASP) teacher trainings. We are in the process



of hiring a new person and will let everyone know when we've made a hire.

As we approach the holidays and 2025, the HIT Program Staff wishes you and your family a wonderful, healthy holiday season and a happy new year!~Gina



### DID YOU KNOW?

The 2025 certification class schedule will be posted on our website in early December.

Please help direct friends and family members to the website for information about our classes and additional education opportunities.

[www.huntereducation.alaska.gov](http://www.huntereducation.alaska.gov)



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## Certification Class Photos

Thank you to everyone who took photos during your certification courses. It's always fun to share pictures of the students and instructors enjoying themselves :)

Please keep taking photos in 2025 since we'll use your photos as we update the website, training PowerPoints, and class advertising materials.



**Valdez hunter ed class**



**Juneau hunter ed class**



**Fairbanks BOW hunter ed class**



**Instructor Rich Goodman's daughter proudly showing off her harvest**



**Anchorage BOW hunter ed class**



**Mat-Su BOW hunter ed class**



**Anchorage hunter ed class**



**Anchorage bowhunter ed class**

## REMINDER: Alaska Draw Permit



The Alaska Draw Permit application period is currently open. The six-week application period extends from November 1<sup>st</sup> to December 16<sup>th</sup> at 5:00pm this year. For more information on the draw hunts, visit [www.adfg.alaska.gov](http://www.adfg.alaska.gov) or stop by your local ADF&G office for printed copies of the Drawing Permit Hunt Supplement. Results are expected to be available online on Friday, February 21<sup>st</sup>.

Students can contact Arianne at 907-267-2187 or fill out the online form to request their certification number and a duplicate certification card.

*(Maria after filling her JBER muzzleloader bull moose tag!)*

## IHEA Instructor Resource Site

<https://www.ihea-usa.org/>

<https://www.expertvoice.com/iheal/>

## HIT Program Site

[www.huntereducation.alaska.gov](http://www.huntereducation.alaska.gov)



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## Nominations Needed for 2024 Instructor of the Year Awards

Every year the HIT Program recognizes volunteer instructors who have made significant contributions to the HIT Program. We want to recognize those instructors who have gone above and beyond to advance the cause of safe and ethical hunting.

The nomination form has been emailed to each instructor. Please take the time to nominate one of your co-instructors who has given extraordinary service to the HIT Program.

Awards are given out for the following categories:

- **Hunter Education**
- **Bowhunter Education**
- **Muzzleloader Education**
- **Crossbow Education**
- **Rural Instructor**
- **Outstanding Educator of the Year**
- **Apprentice Instructor**
- **Lifetime Achievement**

*An instructor who has been a volunteer for the HIT Program for many years and is an embodiment of the HIT Program mission. Their efforts as an instructor and mentor have helped provide Alaskans with the skills and knowledge needed to be safe/responsible hunters.*

- **Legacy**  
*To recognize a current or past instructor who has left a lasting legacy in their community, passed on their hunting/firearms knowledge, and contributed to the success of the HIT Program for many years. They exemplify the spirit of the HIT Program and share it with fellow instructors and the students.*

Feel free to contact HIT Program staff for teaching statistics, longevity, and contact information. Nominations must be emailed/received by **January 15, 2025**.

## Welcome to Our New Volunteer Instructors

We wish to extend a warm welcome to all new volunteer instructors who have joined us since the publication of our last newsletter. Congratulations and welcome aboard!

### **Hunter Education:**

Anchorage: Richard Cochinos, Charles England

Auke Bay: Sean Huntley

Cordova: Natalie Webb

Delta Junction: Matthew Basye

Eagle River: Jason Amaro, Laura Kabatt-Kennedy, Burt Spence

Eielson Air Force Base: Dylan Stefani

Fairbanks: Samantha Beckett, Clayton Merrill, Allison Morgensen, Jacqueline Veats

Juneau: John Burick

Kenai: Gregory Bedford, Jennifer Nickel

North Pole: Brooklyn Dahlke-Eddy, Dani Easterling

Palmer: Carri Ann Mueller

Sterling: Matthew Will

Wasilla: Jonathan Zeppa

Willow: Wesley Rath

Wrangell: William Bahleda, Tawney Crowley

### **Bowhunter Education:**

Anchorage: Clayton Smith

Wasilla: Jacob Johnson, Jonathan Zeppa

Please encourage students, family members, and friends to fill out the instructor application if you think they would be a great addition to the HIT Program. The application is available online ([www.huntereducation.alaska.gov](http://www.huntereducation.alaska.gov)) and printed copies have been included in all class paperwork boxes or cabinets.

Help the HIT Program recruit the next cadre of volunteer instructors!

## HIT Steering Group Members

Melissa Hendrickson (Interior)  
[melissamch413@gmail.com](mailto:melissamch413@gmail.com)

Regg Simon (Southcentral)  
[reggsimon@hotmail.com](mailto:reggsimon@hotmail.com)

Ted Sandhofer (Southeast)  
[cedarpond@gci.net](mailto:cedarpond@gci.net)

Andy Finke (Rural)  
[bdaf49@gmail.com](mailto:bdaf49@gmail.com)

John Western (Southcentral)  
[jrwesternnavy@gmail.com](mailto:jrwesternnavy@gmail.com)

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## Instructor Notes

### Above & Beyond Recipients



We'd like to recognize the following instructors for going "above and beyond" this summer. Thanks to the Alaska Wild Sheep Foundation for providing Cabela's gift certificates to help us recognize our Above & Beyond recipients. We'll continue to recognize 1-4 extraordinary

volunteer instructors each quarter, so please keep an eye out for co-instructors who go "above and beyond" in the next few months and send HIT Program staff an email.

#### **Lee Brian (Palmer)**

Lee has been a hunter ed instructor since February 2023. During this past quarter, which is the busiest time of year for classes, he taught 6 hunter ed classes. The classes certified 80 students and we really appreciate Lee stepping up to help in such a big way!

#### **Heather Thomas (Anchorage)**



Heather has been busy teaching 4 hunter ed and 2 bowhunter ed classes the past few months which certified 70 students. Heather helped instruct a bowhunter ed class which served as an example during a new instructor training and taught a Becoming an Outdoors Woman (BOW) hunter ed class in Wasilla.

#### **Fred Moore (Seward)**

Fred Moore has ensured hunter ed and muzzleloader ed courses are available to the Seward community for the past 20 years! He taught 1 hunter ed and 1 muzzleloader ed class, and his fall muzzleloader ed classes are always busy due to people getting ready to apply for draw permits!



### Alaskans Afield or BOW class in 2025?

If you are interested in teaching an Alaskans Afield or BOW class in 2025, please reach out to Maria Bakic (statewide) or Dani Easterling (Interior).

[maria.bakic@alaska.gov](mailto:maria.bakic@alaska.gov) 907-267-2534

[dani.easterling@alaska.gov](mailto:dani.easterling@alaska.gov) 907459-7242

### HIT Program Staff Contact Information

#### Anchorage:

Gina Smith 267-2196

Kirk Lingofelt 267-2373

Luke Metherell 267-2241

Maria Bakic 267-2534

Arianne Asay 267-2187

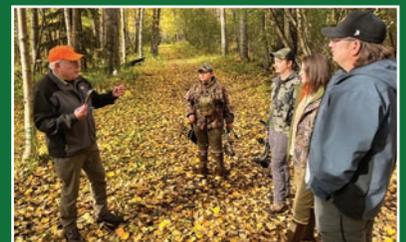
#### Fairbanks:

Tom Halverson 459-7211

Dani Easterling  
459-7242

#### Juneau:

Dan Palicka 586-4101



**Students discussing  
blood trailing during a  
Bow Ed class**