

Griffin Larson personal essay 2023

I enjoy being in the mountains. Every free moment in the winter, I spend my time at Smugglers Notch or touring the backcountry surrounding Mt. Mansfield. I have become more interested in backcountry skiing over the past couple of years, finding it more rewarding and enjoyable than taking hot laps on the chairlift. I have also become less competitive, taking a step back from competition and now view it as an opportunity to have fun with my friends on the mountain. I still take the competitions seriously, but I try to have more fun and not be so hard on myself.

In the summer, when I'm not able to ski, you'll find me on my bikes. I enjoy riding through the roads and trails around Vermont, racing in all categories of bike races, ranging from mountain bike to road to cyclocross. I ride at local group rides and the weekly race series at the Catamount Outdoor Center.

Some of my current goals are to continue what I'm doing. I've found what I enjoy, and I want to spend more time doing what I love. I'd like to commit to more days exploring the backcountry and hiking through the mountains. I also want to influence the younger generations and help them find what they love. As a coach at the Smugglers Notch Freeski Team, I hope to help the kids find what they love about skiing and influence them to try new things.

This past season, I competed at the local IFSA events in Vermont, as well as the North American Championships in British Columbia. I finished the season ranked 8th, which qualified me for the Junior Freeride World Championships. After competing at worlds last year, I hope to take this opportunity as almost my redemption. I'm more comfortable with how the event works and what I can expect coming into the competition.

I want this scholarship to help my family and coach travel to Europe for the Junior Freeride World Championships. I want to represent the adventurous attitude that Ryan Hawks had and show that it's more about having fun rather than winning.