

My name is Hazel Harris, I have been an adventure scholar in the past and would like to tell you a little about myself and what the mountains mean to me. I've come so far since then and my goals only continue to grow.

I started skiing at a very young age learning the ins and outs of the Vermont mountains I was surrounded by. My mom coached for the GMVS weekend race program at Sugarbush so Mount Ellen became my home. I remember waiting out on the porch until my siblings would get up to go to the mountain. There eventually became what my mom called "two trains" leaving the house. One was at 7AM and the other was for anyone who wanted to sleep in. I was never on the second train... At this time I was too young to ski by myself so I would ski with my mom's race group. As I got older my mom wanted me to stay in the race program because she wanted me to have a solid base for my skiing and work on my fundamentals, something I didn't understand at the time. I eventually reached a rebellious time period where I would sneak off during lunch and meet my friends in the park. Freeskiing gave me the feeling in my body of pure joy and excitement, something that was missing when I raced. My mom began to understand but was just not able to financially support my aspirations of joining the freestyle team. The following year I was lucky enough to join the Diamond Dogs freestyle team at Sugarbush with the help of the Flyin' Ryan adventure scholarship. My passion for skiing skyrocketed after learning how to apply Ryan's core values to my life. I learned my first flip, hit huge jumps and cliffs, had the most fun I had ever had skiing and felt the freedom of the mountain while in this program.

Sadly, the following season I lost my sister in a car accident and lost sight of the importance of implementing these values into my everyday life. What I needed at the time was some sort of structure. This is where some very close friends of ours suggested applying to Green Mountain Valley School to pursue my love for skiing in a racing environment. My parents along with our friends helped me through my application process and scholarships and from then on I had set an expectation for myself, to be a successful ski racer, a World Cup skier and

to make these people proud. Through all of the training, travel, school, and races, I always found time for that joy and excitement of freeskiing through Mad River Glen adventures. My adventures included late night and early morning skins, powder skiing, icy bump skiing, huge cliffs, and flips. This is what I looked forward to on the upcoming weekends after a long week of ski racing. It wasn't until Ry Young gave me the opportunity to see how much potential I could have in the competitive freeride world that I realized racing wasn't what made me happy and Mad River Glen soon became my new home. My biggest fear at this point in time was the disappointment I could potentially cause by letting all the people who invested in my ski racing career down. It turned out to be a learning moment for me. These people weren't here to see my success in ski racing, they were supporting me because they wanted to see me happy. Since then one of my biggest goals has been to make sure that I follow Ryans core values along with my own core values that I have written up to be the happiest I can be in this sport and in life.

I finished my 6th year at GMVS this past spring graduating in the class of 2023 and after a successful season competing in freeride this past winter I decided to attend Montana state university to continue my skiing journey in the big mountains. I have huge goals of landing a spot in the Freeride world tour one day, and am applying for the Flyin' Ryan scholarship to help financially support my dreams.