

My name is Hazen Abbott and I am a competitive freeride athlete and live in Jericho, VT. Ever since I can remember, my dad has educated me about Ryan Hawks as a skier and as the amazing person he was. When I was about 8 years old, I got a poster of Ryan's Core Values mounted on my wall. I decided that I would memorize his core values. Since then I have thought about them a lot and tried to spread his stoke and amazing attitude everywhere I go. I am a part of the Smugglers Notch Ski Club. Being a part of this organization means a lot to me because it helps me become a better skier and I have lots of peers that push my growth as much as I try to push theirs. Progression is one of the most important parts of skiing because no matter what you do there is always more you can do. To me, one of the best feelings in the sports is landing a new trick or new big air and still knowing I can progress even more.

One of my mentors is Grifen Moller, he is my ski coach and has my back no matter what. He always pushes me to do bigger hits and clean up my aerial tricks. Having a coach that can demonstrate big jumps and tricks is important to me because he can do everything better than I can and helps me progress so much. To me, it is so important to ski with people who are better than you because it is so fun to try to mirror their style. For example, I try to follow Grifen and do everything he does. One time in particular, I was following him in the park and he spun a left 360 off the first jump which I was comfortable with and on the next jump he winded up to the left to spin a right 3. My eyes were so focused on him that I did exactly what he did and ended up doing a right 360. This is a trick I was very uncomfortable with and had proven to be a challenge for months, but after following someone who is better than me I exited my comfort zone and progressed my skiing.

My favorite adventure is when me and my friend Mac were in the lift line and looked up at the side of Madonna mountain and saw a small strip without any trees that looked like a tooth. We decided to find it. So when we got to the top, we skied over and saw a small opening in the trees. We entered and looked at the unskied strip of fresh powder. My eyes lit up. I dropped first and enjoyed the lushest knee deep powder. I stoped a little way down and could hear Mac yelling with joy. After skiing the rest of the chute, we came out on a main trail. We stopped, hugged each other and reflected on the adventure we had just had. The unknown of what was below was the best part.

Adventures like these, where the unknown is so apparent, are my favorite because you never know what to expect. If I receive the Flyin Ryan scholarship, I would use it to go to the junior freeride championships in Breckenridge, Colorado in the beginning of April. Going to Nationals has been a goal all season and I felt like it would be hard because I moved up in age groups, making me one of the youngest in my group competing against kids 2 years older. I was able to execute some solid runs in both national and regional comps this season and won multiple podium finishes. I also had the opportunity to travel to Snowbird, Utah to try competing out west. It was a very good experience and helped improve my skiing a lot. If I received a Flyin Ryan scholarship, I would help keep Ryans stroke and drive for growth alive. My main goal is to be someone that younger skiers look up to as a driven and passionate skier.