

Hi, my name is Koiya Aadi and I am a 16 year old freestyle athlete from Jeffersonville Vermont. I am a proud member of the Smugglers' Notch Ski Club, and I am a junior at Lamoille Union High School. For the past 7 years I've competed in the IFSA Big Mountain Freeride series. When I'm not skiing you can find me swimming, playing lacrosse, and cheerleading.

I am beyond grateful for the opportunities that free skiing has made for me. I've made friendships that are more like family. I have been supported by amazing coaches and teammates. I have competed at the international level twice and I am fortunate enough to have qualified for the Junior Freeride Championship in 2022, 2023, and 2024. This allowed me to compete in places that I never thought I would. In 2022, I was lucky enough to compete in Big Sky, Montana, and the following season I competed in Kicking Horse British Columbia. Unfortunately, due to financial challenges, I was not able to make the trip out to Breckenridge, Colorado this past spring.

My goal is to draw more people of color into the freeskiing community, especially young girls. Growing up, I never saw anybody who looked like me standing on the podium. When I was younger, I never saw any black athletes competing in freeski, it was always just my sister and I. I used to let that intimidate me and make me feel like I did not belong, but now I find myself using that as motivation. I find power in knowing that there aren't a lot of skiers who look like me. I push myself so I can become the role model that I've always looked for.

This season I hope to qualify for the Junior Freeride Championship and travel once again with my team to Kirkwood, California. Due to financial constraints, I am unsure if I will be able to go. If I am granted this scholarship, I will use it to help cover lift tickets, travel and competition fees. It is my dream to one day become a role model for the next generation of freestyle athletes, especially female athletes of color, and competing at the JFC will help me do so.