



Sun Valley Adaptive Sports

Children, Teens, Adults, Veterans
We change lives and make people smile!

BERT GILLETTE - BIO

Bert Gillette is a Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist (CTRS) and the Higher Ground program coordinator for Sun Valley Adaptive Sports. Raised in a military family, Bert grew up as an Army brat in various locations nationwide. His dad had a 25-year career as a MEDEVAC pilot and his mom worked as a registered nurse. His parents' combined experience influenced his eventual career choice of providing therapeutic recreation to disabled veterans.



Through college, Bert worked as a caretaker for an assisted living program, and as a job coach at his local sheltered workshop. Realizing his true passion lay in disabled sports Bert volunteered as head coach of his local Special Olympics track and field team, and assisted with the bowling program. He continued with these jobs and volunteer activities until he graduated with a CTRS in 2002 from Central Missouri State University.

Bert volunteered for a camp at the Breckenridge Outdoor Education Center (BOEC) serving adults with traumatic brain injuries. He had a life changing experience. He returned to the BOEC as an intern immediately after finishing school. During his time there, Bert received specialized training in various adaptive sport activities, including: climbing, ropes course facilitation, team building, kayaking, canoeing, rafting, stand and sit skiing, and more. He also gained experience working with diverse ages and ability levels. Bert stayed in Breckenridge for four years working as a sports instructor, summer course director for the BOEC, and as a supervisor at a ski school daycare.

Bert left Colorado to become the Outdoor Education Director for Big Rock Creek Camp in Valyermo, California. At Big Rock he created curriculum and facilitated outdoor science and adventure programs. While he enjoyed teaching and running this education program, Bert longed to return to the realm of adaptive sports.

After visiting Sun Valley and learning about the Higher Ground program Bert knew this was the place to pursue his career ambitions. He moved to Sun Valley in October, 2008. With exceptional interpersonal skills, and a wealth of adaptive sports knowledge, Higher Ground program coordinator has been the perfect fit.

As Higher Ground program coordinator, Bert and a team of SVAS recreational therapists have led the adaptive sports industry in developing one of the most respected, effective and therapeutic sports and recreation programs in the nation for injured veterans. Through his efforts, the program has made a number of key therapeutic and networking advancements to improve the long term effects of the program, resulting in more effective outcomes and a more meaningful and lasting impact on wounded service members. Many of Bert's methods connecting warriors with resources for lasting success and long term follow up are being used by other organizations and agencies helping to improve the quality of the industries serving injured veterans.

Bert enjoys skiing, rafting, kayaking, biking, climbing, camping, backpacking, canoeing, hiking, disc golf, Nordic skiing, and anything else in the outdoors. He is also an avid reader, loves word games, plays bocce, juggles devil sticks, recites tongue twisters, and makes up his own corny jokes that the rest of the staff has to suffer through.

Box 6791 Ketchum, ID 83340 (208) 726-9298 www.svasp.org info@svasp.org