

# THE Golden *Star*

## Local rider given chance through WASP



Shayne Powell became passionate about snowboarding as soon as he got started.  
— *image credit: Photo Submitted*

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Even with a world class resort just a short drive away in Golden's backyard, skiing and snowboarding could never be mistaken for an affordable sport.

Certainly not for a single mom, and that's what makes Michelle Powell and her son Shayne's tale such a feel-good success story.

Shayne, 15, skied a little bit here and there while growing up but decided he wanted to make the switch to snowboarding not long after the family moved to Golden in 2009. Naturally, costs for season passes, equipment and other gear were a significant road block for Michelle as she strived to encourage her son on his way into the sport. That's where the Whitetooth Affordable Ski Program came into play.

"It's just been amazing. It's been something that he has done avidly every year start to finish. Summer is no fun in our house," Michelle said.

The program, which is run by the Golden & District Community Foundation (with funding from the original sale of the Whitetooth Ski Area) offers lessons, equipment, lift tickets and transportation to Kicking Horse for children and youth from lower income families, depending on a specific family's needs.

Just under 40 children and youth participated in the program for the 2011-2012 season and another 22 the following year according to the latest data available from GDCF.

Michelle's application for Shayne was accepted in the winter of 2010 and he has been enrolled ever since.

Shayne took to snowboarding right from the start.

"I guess I just kind of love the cold. It's like surfing on snow, it was kind of my thing from the beginning," he said.

It's not all fun and games, however.

This season, Shayne completed his Canadian Association of Snowboarding Instructors (CASI) level 1 certification to become a snowboarding instructor. The three-day course is designed to allow students to be able to teach beginner snowboard courses.

By next season, Shayne hopes to earn regular employment at the resort.

"I hope to get more instructors certificates and get to level 4 one day," Shayne said. "I'm going to try very hard to make it (a career)."

For Michelle, it has been rewarding to see her son build up his confidence through sport, even if she shudders at the thought of him flying down the steep terrain at Kicking Horse.

Shayne's growing passion for snowboarding is something that they both know wouldn't have been possible without the Whitetooth program.

"I think it's an amazing program...so many kids see our mountain and now actually have a chance to access their backyard," Michelle said.

"For him to achieve the level that he's gotten to, there's no way that we could have put it together for him (alone)."

<http://www.thegoldenstar.net/ourtown/290076641.html>