HIT Program certification courses were taught in 31 different cities and villages during 2021 and we had 479 active volunteer instructors.

Your volunteer hours allowed us to access $617,106 in P-R Federal-Aid funds! These funds are used for HIT Program administration and to purchase class supplies, rent facilities, and pay for travel. Thank you for all of your volunteer hours!

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Dan Palicka-Juneau Range Manager

Hi, I am Dan Palicka the new Range Manager at the Juneau Hunter Education Shooting Complex (JHESC), known locally as the State Indoor Range. I was born and raised in Pennsylvania. I first visited Alaska as a child on a cruise to the Aleutian Islands, and from that moment on I knew I wanted to make Alaska my permanent home. I moved to Alaska in 2002 to work on an AmeriCorps trail crew doing work in Juneau, Haines, Denali National Park, Fairbanks, North Pole, Girdwood, and Seward Peninsula. I settled in Juneau and worked in a number of positions including jobs with the Forest Service, Alaska State Parks, and Juneau Docks and Harbors. I also worked for Alaska DNR as a Natural Resource Specialist doing water rights. I hold a BS in Parks Management from Lake Superior State University.

I have always been passionate about the outdoors and fell in love with camping, survival skills, leadership, and community service through my time in Boy Scouts where I achieved the rank of Eagle Scout. I have carried those skills with me throughout my life working in numerous volunteer and community service positions. Teaching and encouraging people to shoot and enjoy the shooting sports has always been something I enjoy doing. I have served on the boards of many Juneau shooting associated non-profits and most recently was President of Juneau Rifle and Pistol Club and Juneau Shooting Sports Foundation. I formed the current non-profit Hank Harmon Public Range Board. I am an NRA-certified RSO, Rifle, and Pistol Instructor.

A few years after settling in Juneau, I met my wife, Martha. We both love animals and have two German Shepherds who keep us busy! If we are not playing fetch, our favorite hobbies are fishing, camping, boating, and hiking. I realized early on that owning a boat in SE Alaska brought even more enjoyment of the outdoors. Being able to get on our boat and be alone on a beach with a campfire and our dogs is one of the many reasons I call Alaska home. My wife says we own the boat to go fishing; I say we own the boat to go places.

I am excited about the opportunity to work with the public, volunteers, and ADFG staff to increase the usage of the Juneau State Indoor Range and educate people about shooting sports.

2021 Instructor of the Year Awards

Volunteer instructors are the backbone of the HIT Program. As a group, volunteer instructors possess a vast wealth of information which has proven to be invaluable in passing on the knowledge and skills of the outdoors. The HIT Program would like to recognize the following volunteer instructors for making a significant contribution to the HIT Program and considerably advancing the cause of safe/ethical hunting.

Lifetime Achievement Award
Ed Bosco of Anchorage

Ed was certified as a bowhunter ed instructor in 1994, muzzleloader ed in 2007, hunter ed in 2009, and a crossbow ed instructor in 2017. Ed has taught over 172 classes certifying over 2,654 students. He’s been a member of the Steering Group, coached the RCSP Rimfire League, and provides the Canadian Firearms Safety Course for folks who want to travel through Canada with firearms. Ed has received the 2012 Muzzleloader Ed, 2017 Hunter Ed, and
2019 HIT Outstanding Educator of the Year award. Ed has consistently been one of the top three most active instructors in the Anchorage area for multiple years now and can always be found encouraging adult students to become volunteer instructors and promoting youth students to get involved in the shooting sports.

**Lifetime Achievement Award**  
**Rich Graham of Wasilla**

Rich became a hunter ed instructor in 2004 and a bowhunter ed instructor in 2006. He has taught 129 classes certifying 2,218 students. He teaches classes in the Valley and Anchorage, and can always be counted on to step in at the last minute when an extra instructor is needed. He’s been a member of the Steering Group and was the 2018 Hunter Ed Instructor of the Year. He always leads by example and shares his life and professional experience in Alaska with his students (State Wildlife Officer and JBER Wildlife Biologist). He helps mentor new instructors and does a great job helping instruct school hunter ed classes.

**Hunter Education Instructor of the Year**  
**Paul Houser of Palmer**

Paul’s commitment to the HIT Program continued in 2021 as he taught 17 hunter ed classes and 2 bowhunter ed classes! Six of the classes were school hunter ed field days and Paul willingly shared his real-world hunting/shooting experience with the students. Paul makes the classes fun for the students and ensures the field course is interesting and informative. His willingness to teach was a huge help this past year and ensured that the HIT Program met the community need for classes in the Valley.

**Bowhunter Education Instructor of the Year**  
**Kevin McGaha of Anchorage**

Kevin taught 8 bowhunter ed classes in 2021 which certified 85 students. He was certified in October 2017 and has been an active instructor ever since. He stepped in to help during the summer months when lots of bowhunter ed classes were scheduled and got the chance to teach with a number of longtime and new instructors too.

**Outstanding Educator of the Year**  
**Bill Kubik of Wasilla**

Bill Kubik taught 11 hunter ed classes and 3 bowhunter ed classes which certified 199 students in 2021. He helped instruct the Migrant Education school field days held last spring at Finger Lake Elementary School. He is a very patient instructor and it was noted that his calming presence helps keeps students engaged while ensuring all topics of the course are covered.

**Rural Instructor of the Year**  
**Mark Somerville of Copper Center**

Mark Somerville has been a hunter ed instructor since 2005 and a muzzleloader ed instructor since 2006. He has instructed at least one hunter ed class in Glennallen for 16 of the past 17 years, and if a student completed hunter ed in Glennallen, odds are that Mark was one of the instructors. He also became certified as a NASP Basic Archery Instructor in 2014 and helped get NASP set-up at the Kenny Lake School.
Volunteer Instructor Pins in 2021
The HIT Program awards 500 and 1,000 hour pins to instructors who have volunteered that much time for the HIT Program. Five-year pins are also awarded in increments when a volunteer instructor has remained active with the HIT Program for a five-year period. The first five-year pins have a start date based on the year 2002, which is when hunter education became mandatory in part of the state. Thank you to these dedicated volunteer instructors!

Dakota Arnold-North Pole
Stephen Berendzen-Fairbanks
Michael Bradley-Fairbanks
Boyd Branch-Sitka
James Brazeau-Talkeetna
Joseph Brewer-Homer
Molly Cunfer-Anchorange
Winston Davies-Wrangell
Michael Degman-Fairbanks
Andrew Dore-Eagle River
Ronald Doshier-Anchorange
Douglas Drake-Fairbanks
William Dunker-Nome
Terry Fuller-Dillingham
Jack Greenalgh-Sitka
Drew Gruening-Juneau
Steven Gustin-Sitka
Alysia Hancock-Glennallen
Ryan Hastings-Ft. Wainwright
Heidi Hatcher-Glennallen
Joshua Heinbaugh-Fairbanks
Melissa Hendrickson-Fairbanks
Krista Holbrook-Fairbanks
Laura Huling-Soldotna
Tim Kuivila-Anchorange
Jess Lujan-Juneau
Frank Marley-Anchorange
Patti Miller-Copper Center
Bobby Ruby-Talkeetna
Robert Scott-Dillingham
Dora Sigurdsson-Anchorange
Melissa Smith-Soldotna
Mark Stopha-Juneau
August Asay-Anchorange
Chet Benson-Anchorange
Aaron Degnan-North Pole
Tom Halverson-Fairbanks
Justin McGinnis-Glennallen
Kenon Paul-Fairbanks
Kristen Romanoff-Juneau
Joedy Wake-Anchorange
Sam Albanese-Eagle River
Logan Balstad-Juneau
Andy Finke-Kodiak
John Harvey-Tok
Vaughn Hazel-Sitka
Rafe Johnson-Bethel
Chris Launer-Eagle River
Scott Lubey-Anchorange
Alan Peoley-Anchorange
James See-Craig
Steve Untiet-Anchorange

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Andy Finke
Hunter Education Instructor
(Kodiak)
Fred Voss
Hunter Education Instructor
(Anchorage)