

UNLIKELY RIDERS



**Impact Report
Winter
2022-2023**

Community Love

"Unlikely Riders transformed the experience of living in Vermont during the long winters for me. By making skiing both financially accessible and beginner-friendly (welcoming all levels of winter sports experience), UR helped bring together a dynamic, welcoming and supportive community to recreate outdoors. It's opened up a new world of winter sports that I thought were outside of my reach, my ability, and frankly were not even on my radar as activities to consider becoming involved in. I now enjoy winter and am so grateful for the great work and generosity of UR."

-Maria Echevarria

"Unlikely Riders has become a vital part of my winter time community, and brings me joy in a time of darkness to see so many black and brown faces on a mountain of white. UR has supported me financially to be able to access gear and lift tickets in which I otherwise wouldn't be able to afford."

-Lily Hammerling

Photo: Community members enjoying our Ski+Ride day at Jay Peak Resort

Introduction

Here we are, gratefully, joyously, and hopeful, entering our fourth season as Unlikely Riders. We are here because of you, thank you.

Reflecting on winter 2022/2023, our commitment to community leadership development through BIPOC affinity + BIPOC majority education courses stand out. We offered 29 scholarship spots to our Unlikely Riders community in Wilderness First Aid, Avalanche AIARE 1, PSIA Level 1 alpine ski, and AASI Level 1 snowboard instructor certifications. Learning these skills in BIPOC affinity or BIPOC majority spaces was transformative, and I'm looking forward to Unlikely Riders offering our 2nd year of leadership development courses this upcoming snow season.

We are excited about supporting our Community Leaders in leading and facilitating their own community offerings this season! We'll continue to organize our monthly ongoing Community Ski and Ride Days at mountains throughout Vermont, as well as weekly snow meetups, and collaborations (new and ongoing) with incredible individuals and organizations for events like the BIPOC Outdoor Fest, XC Ski Days and Migrant Farmworker XC Days at Craftsbury Outdoor Center, and more!

Our gear closet program continues to impress, as it's rooted in the truth that we all should have access to warm, affirming, quality gear and clothing, at no cost, as we reside, recreate, and build our lives here. In winter 2022-2023, we distributed over 800 pieces of gear to our beloved Black, brown, Indigenous, and POC Vermont community! This is possible because of the dedication and contribution of incredible individuals, and supportive organizations and brands. Thank you!

We as Unlikely Riders exist as a thread in the fabric of resources and routines/rituals that support the well-being, belonging, and thriving of BIPOC folks in Vermont and we are grateful for all of our supporters who make this work possible.

For this season, my hope is that we are able to grow into an Unlikely Riders physical location for our gear closet to call home, a space also used for gear fittings, skillshares, and more. I'm also looking forward to more knowledge sharing, gear mending and exchanges, more local events, sunrises on snow, and meet-ups with good food throughout the region. I am excited to grow and support events and offerings led by the incredibly talented folks in our community that so capably co-create nourishing learning environments for BIPOC folks to get together. I look forward to connecting and reconnecting with each other and the land that surrounds and supports us. I hope that we continue to take good care of ourselves and each other through this season and next, and I look forward to seeing folks out on the snow.

To winter and softly falling snow,

Hana Saydek
(he/him/his + they/them/theirs)
Executive Director

Our Story

Mission

Unlikely Riders is mobilizing our community to find healing with the mountains while claiming space in the snow sports industry & culture. Fostering outdoor play is our act of resistance. We are using snow sports as vehicles for radical conversations and movements while acknowledging and reconnecting to the land we ride on. Our work is to encourage all Black, Indigenous, and People of Color to engage in fun, radical joy and offer support to find healing through the mountains while centering our needs and abilities.

Vision

We envision a world where we are in right relationship with the land, with all non-human beings, and with each other. We practice this through bringing folks together, in our collective brilliance, to experience familiar and new outdoor activities, and through challenging and supporting each other as we grow and shed dominant narratives that no longer serve us.

Values

We believe that all should have access to winter recreation regardless of class or economic status, race, gender, disability, or any historically and currently oppressed identity.

We believe in the power of snowsports to heal and support the wellbeing of the mind and body.

We recognize that acting with a white supremacist scarcity mentality through hoarding goods, access, and knowledge is present in the current dominant culture of snowsports. We recognize that there is enough for everyone and prioritize equity through distributing goods, access, and knowledge to those who have been historically excluded from participating.

We believe in the inspiring power of representation.

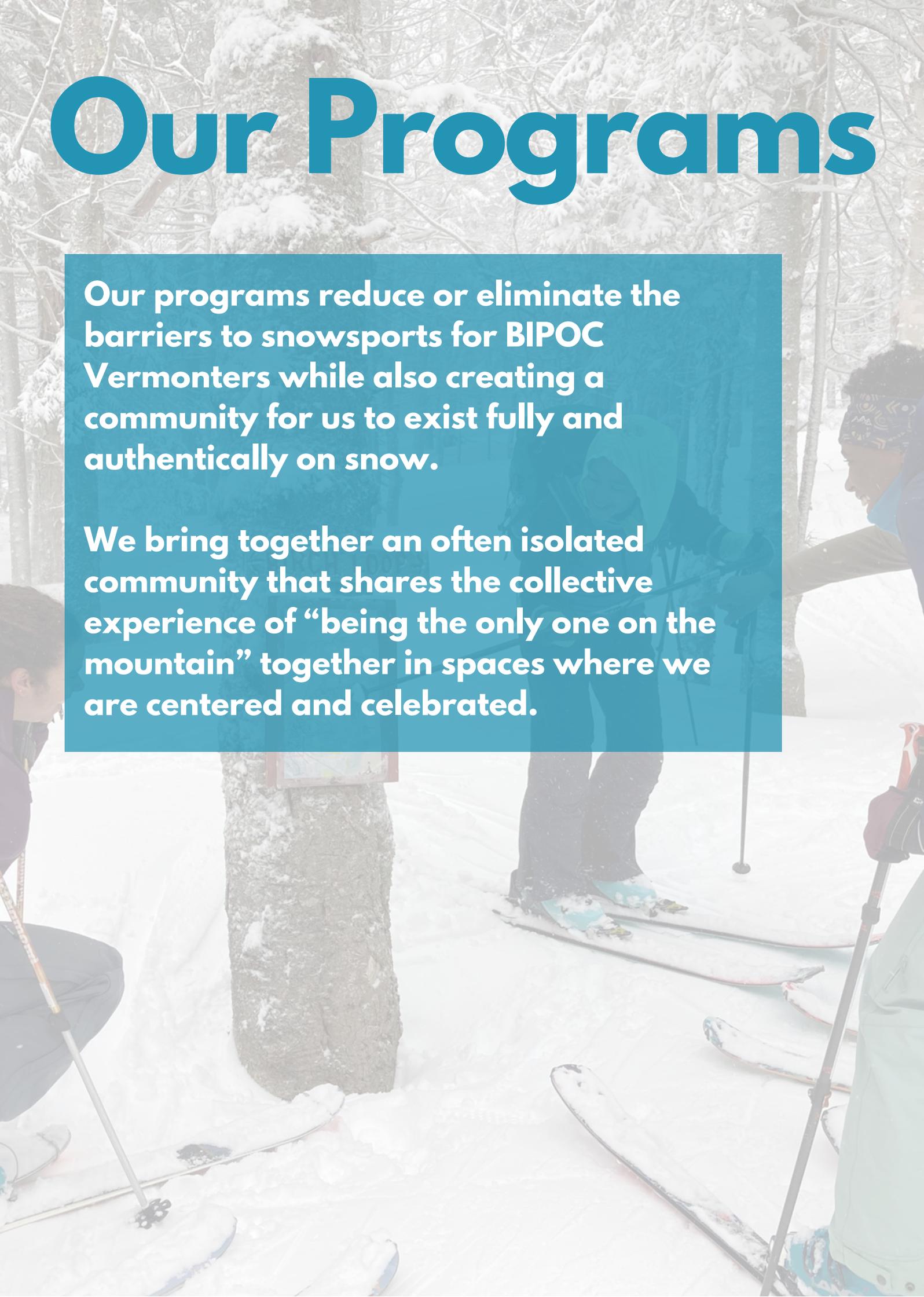
We believe in the strength of folks coming together.

Just
12%

of Skiers and
Snowboarders
identify as
BIPOC.

**We're Here to
Change That**

Our Programs

A background image of a snowy forest with several people on skis. A teal text box is overlaid on the image, containing two paragraphs of white text. The scene is bright and wintry, with snow-covered trees and ground. The people are wearing winter gear, including jackets and headbands. The text box is positioned in the upper left and center of the image.

Our programs reduce or eliminate the barriers to snowsports for BIPOC Vermonters while also creating a community for us to exist fully and authentically on snow.

We bring together an often isolated community that shares the collective experience of “being the only one on the mountain” together in spaces where we are centered and celebrated.

Gear Closet

800+
pieces of
gear
distributed

The Winter Gear Closet is our flagship program, this season we distributed over 800 pieces of gear to our community at no or low cost. We kicked off the winter by hosting a party at Outdoor Gear Exchange where our entire gear closet was available for our community to get outfitted for the season.

83

Jackets
+
Snowpants



74

Baselayers



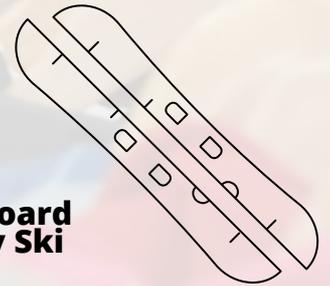
29

Helmets and Goggles



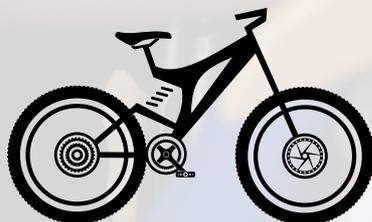
3

Complete Splitboard
and Backcountry Ski
Set-ups



1

Full Suspension
Mountain Bike



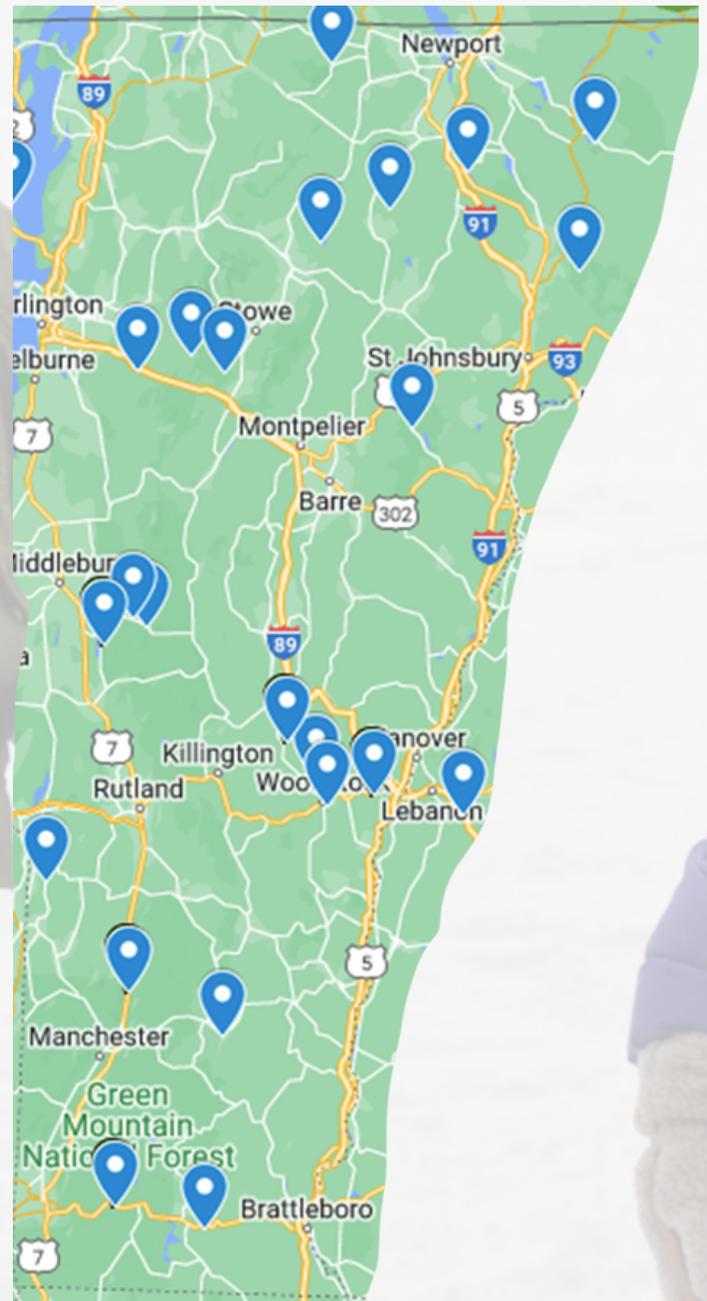
100+

Skis, Snowboards, Boots, Gloves, Hats,
Socks, Neckies, Headbands, and Hoods
from Burton, Anon, Skida, Turtle Fur,
Gordini, and Darn Tough



Lift Tickets & Trail Access

Our members spent over 700 collective days on snow and mountain bike at 14 ski areas, nordic centers, and bike parks throughout Vermont at no cost. Additionally, this summer we sent out 400 state park day use passes for our member to use at 41 state parks thanks to Vermont Parks Forever.



1100
days on
snow, bikes,
or state parks
at no cost

Community Instruction

177
members
guided on
snow and bike

BIPOC ski, snowboard, backcountry, XC ski, and mountain bike instructors, provided guidance and instruction to 177 members throughout the season at 6 different ski areas, XC centers, backcountry zones, and bike parks.

43

Alpine Skiing



58

XC Skiing



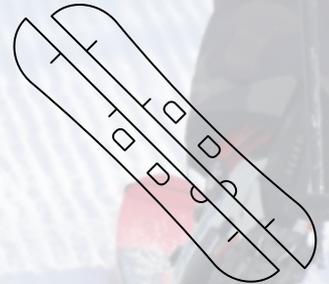
28

Snowboarding



27

Backcountry



21

Mountain Biking



Community Events

250+
members
gathered

We kicked off our season in November 2022 with our **Community Night at Outdoor Gear Exchange**. This was an incredible event with over 50 members attending. We had our full gear closet available for members to get outfitted for the season and we also had skill sharing sessions on layering for winter, and ski boot fittings.

Throughout the winter we hosted monthly **Community Ski and Ride Days**, and bi-weekly **Friday Night Lights** ski and ride events.

Our community also connected virtually via zoom, where we held sessions on how to safely start backcountry skiing and snowboarding led by **Abby Crisostomo** and **Andrew Romano**.

At the end of the season our **Community Ski and Ride** celebration at Jay Peak brought 45 **BIPOC Vermonters** together for group rides, lessons, sunshine, and ramen.

Educational Programs

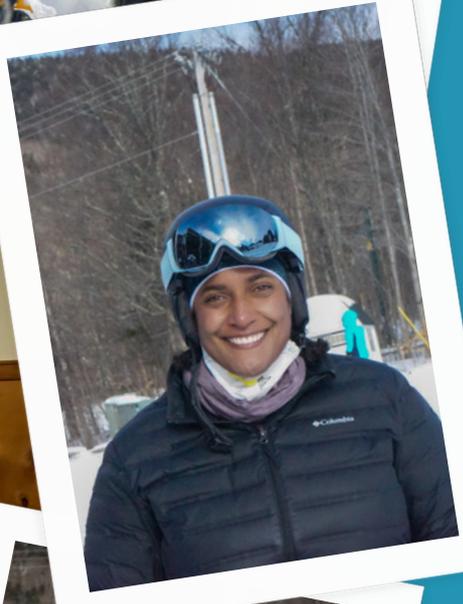
This winter we debuted our educational programs. We trained our community members in Wilderness First Aid, PSIA Level 1 Alpine Ski Instruction, AIARE Level 1 Avalanche Education, and AASI Level 1 Snowboard Instruction, all at no cost to them.

In total 19 Community Leaders received 29 certifications.

Many of these Community Leaders went on to instruct skiing, snowboarding, and backcountry events throughout the season.

**19
Community
Leaders
trained and
certified**

Our Community



Looking Forward

This winter we plan to continue to scale our programs through mentorship and leadership development opportunities to support community members in instructing and leading events. We are especially excited for our community education offerings, including avalanche education and wilderness medicine. We are working on expanding our gear closet to an accessible showroom. We'll continue to organize affinity spaces for LGBTQ+, Black, and Spanish speakers while we also are working to expand our geographic focus. We hope to serve rural BIPOC folks in neighboring states like New Hampshire and Maine, across the unceded land of the Wabanaki Confederacy.

Ways to Support

Every donation from \$1 to \$100,000 is so important to our work and signifies a commitment to equity and racial justice. Your donation will go to work immediately to support BIPOC Vermonters in the outdoors.

You can make a donation online at unlikelyriders.org/donate or by scanning the QR code below.

Many folks have fundraised for us, raising funds through a hike, ski or a different event or activity, such as selling their art or a bake sale. We welcome this and are grateful for the ways that individuals are creative with their interests and endeavors as a way to support us!

If you are a business and would like to support our work, please contact abby@unlikelyriders.org

You can also mail a check to us at:
Unlikely Riders
70 S Winooski Ave #322
Burlington, VT 05401

Gear Donations:
To learn what gear we accept please visit unlikelyriders.org/gearguidelines.



Thank you!

None of this work is possible without the generous support from our donors. This year our community came through in a big way, with hundreds of people contributing to support BIPOC Vermonters on snow both with monetary and gear donations.

We are exceptionally grateful for the support from the following businesses and organizations:

Outdoor Gear Exchange
Bolton Valley Resort
Ben and Jerry's Foundation
Jay Peak Resort
Burton Snowboards
Cochran's Ski Area
Craftsbury Outdoor Center
Middlebury Snowbowl
Saskadena Six and The Woodstock Inn
Magic Mountain
Vermont Community Foundation
Darn Tough
Voile Mfg.
SDR Clothing Company
Gordini
Turtle Fur
Skida
Big Sky Mountain Products
Acadia Mountain Guides

Appalachian Mountain Club
evo
Sangha Studio
SkiRack
Liza S. Art
Charlotte Dworshak
Splitboard VT
Professional Ski Instructors of America
Vermont Parks Forever
Miso Toh Kome
Badger Balm
Sidesurfers
Burke Mountain
Whaleback Mountain
Vermont Mountain Bike Association
Parlor Skis
The Alchemist
Lawsons
Zero Gravity Brewing



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unlikelyriders.org
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