



**Name: Nate Smith**

Email: Nate.smith@mountained.com

Address: Salt Lake City, Utah

Education: Ph.D (Health Promotion & Education/University of Utah/2013); M.S. (Health Promotion & Education, emphasis: Linking Outdoor Recreation with Living a Healthy Lifestyle/University of Utah/2010); B.S. (Health Promotion & Education, emphasis: Emergency Medical Services/University of

Utah/2008); Undergraduate Minors: Parks, Recreation & Tourism/Nutrition Certification: Single Pitch Instructor

Occupation: Director for Mountain Education & Development LLC

### **Why do you want to run for the AMGA Board of Directors?**

I am interested in becoming a member of the Board of Directors for the AMGA because of my belief and dedication to the goals and objectives of this organization. For nine years I have pursued my full certification with the AMGA. Throughout this process my desire to become more involved has grown significantly as has my drive to contribute positively and professionally to the efforts of all involved. The AMGA's work is important and necessary and I hope to contribute as a professional to the furthest extent possible.

### **What are your qualifications?**

I have recently finished my Ph.D. in Health Promotion & Education at the University of Utah. Prior to that I completed both my M.S. and B.S. with two additional undergraduate minors. I have maintained my WEMT-B certification along with my Avalanche level 1-3 credentials. I worked as the coordinator of climbing programs for the University of Utah from 2007 to 2012. I also served as the academic representative concerning the relationship between the AMGA and the University of Utah. I was also responsible for the completion of the University of Utah's accreditation application concerning their outdoor climbing courses and programs. I currently work as the director of Mountain Education & Development LLC which maintains the courses for the University of Utah that I originally designed and setup. Further, I have participated in most of the AMGA programs including TRSM, SPI, RIC, IIC, AGC, SGC, SMGC/AE, and AAGC/AE. I hope to complete my IFMGA certification in the near future.

### **How will you work with the Board of Directors?**

I hope to work with the Board of Directors in a collaborative role such that I am a contributor to the effort and experience shared by all involved. It is important to me that I work as a team member with the Board and that we jointly handle the concerns, issues and assignments necessary for the successful continuation of the AMGA.

**Would you give an example where you have shown good participative management skills?**

I have worked in an administrative role with the University of Utah for six years now. I have managed approximately 1500 students throughout 100+ different for credit climbing courses. Included in my responsibilities was the mentoring and management of 30+ instructors and interns. Additionally, I have worked with the Kenyan Wildlife Service in the development of outdoor training programs for their climbing ranger staff and other outdoor professionals associated with Mount Kenya National Park and various surrounding conservancys. This responsibility has existed for 3+ years.

**What do you consider one of your biggest failures and what did you do to overcome this?**

One of my biggest failures involved an unsuccessful attempt of a solo climb of Aconcagua in Argentina, South America when I was 19 years old. I become unresponsive for 56+ hours in my tent at 16,000 ft and had to be rescued by the climbing ranger team and revived at their basecamp medical unit. This experience was incredibly humbling and life changing for me. When I returned home, I dedicated my efforts towards my education both with the University of Utah and the AMGA. I made a commitment to educate others of how best they can function and experience the mountain environment both in a non-technical and technical manner. I believe I have accomplished this in the seven and a half years since the accident.

**What are the key strategic issues facing the industry, profession and the AMGA Board? How do you believe the board should respond?**

I believe that guiding access for American guiding and also work access for internationally certified guides in America are among the issues facing the industry and profession of guiding. Additionally, I think that the encouragement of credentials associated with this profession is a continued concern. I think that the Board can continue to ensure the integrity of the AMGA programs and outreach. Additionally, I think that the Board can further collaborate with

academic institutions and government entities in a joint effort to further the understanding and approval of credential based guiding in America.

**Describe an incident when you led through significant conflict on an important principle. How will this influence your participation on the board?**

Recently I was challenged by our partner operator in Kenya regarding the treatment and consideration of the porters of Mount Kenya National Park. My dissertation research has involved the changes in working conditions for this population. In doing so, I have gained valuable insight into their working conditions and opinions associated. The local operator insisted in paying a wage well below the recommended industry minimum wage. In doing so, they (and us) would be contributing to the exploitation of this population. It is important that Mountain Education & Development LLC contributes positively to the outdoor recreation industry on a global scale. I involved myself in negotiations as both a representative of our company and also an advocate for the local porter culture. In doing so, our access and affiliation was threatened. In the end, the partner Kenyan operator agreed to meet the minimum wage expectation and guaranteed this for the remainder of this climbing season. My belief in providing a positive contribution to the outdoor recreation profession will continue in my possible position with the board. I will adequately research issues and present them accordingly. I will work through concerns and work hard to ensure a positive outcome for all involved.

**How will you handle the time commitments required for this role?**

I have researched the time commitment associated with this role and have become comfortable with it. I have discussed this with my colleagues and other associates for which it might affect. I have gained support for my position on the AMGA Board and know that I am capable of adequately making time for my participation.

---