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The ACA National Office is serving up the latest paddlesports news! To find the content that matters to you most, use the guide below.

- **Forward Strokes** brings you a chance to hear directly from ACA leaders about the ACA's role in advocacy and access to the Mountaineers new Advocacy 101 eLearning Course!
- **Making Waves** is full of new opportunities from the ACA — from the 2024 Summer Solstice Celebration to the ACA's new Inclusive Paddle Collective to a new optional discount for PACs!
- **Bringing Home the Gold** provides information on how to find and share events in the ACA's Competition Calendar.
- **Safety Talk** shares our first Instructor of the Month for 2024!



Public Policy Committee Live Stream Panel

The ACA Board of directors invites you to tune-in to the first presentation in a series of five live stream panel discussions scheduled for **Thursday, January 18 at 7:00 PM EST**. The first panel, moderated by Brett Mayer, the ACA's Policy & Stewardship Director, will discuss:

- What policy means to the ACA
- The ACA's role in advocacy
- The ACA's core policy focus areas
- How you can get involved

This series of panels is a unique opportunity for the paddlesports community to hear directly from ACA Leaders and ask questions about current and upcoming initiatives. The second panel, hosted by the ACA Regional Activity Council, "The Voice of Clubs, Grassroots, and Recreational Paddlers," will be on Thursday, February 2 at 7:00 PM EST. View the [Live Stream Panel Announcement](#) for more information and the dates of upcoming panels.

Paddlers Tune-In - LIVE - JAN 18 - 7:00 PM EST



Join on Facebook

Join on YouTube

The Mountaineers Advocacy 101 eLearning Course

We are excited to share that our friends and Outdoor Alliance coalition member organization, [The Mountaineers](#) released an Advocacy 101 eLearning Course! This course is a great opportunity to go from an outdoor enthusiast to an outdoor advocate. Throughout Advocacy 101, course-takers will learn the basics of advocacy and best practices for advocating for important conservation and recreation initiatives, including:

- Best practices for five ways to engage with lawmakers.
- How to engage with land managers and best practices for submitting feedback and comments on land planning efforts.
- Opportunities to take action by crafting a letter to a lawmaker or land management agency.

After completing Advocacy 101, eLearners will be ready to continue advocating for an issue or place you care about on their own and with fellow outdoor enthusiasts and as a part of organized lobby days and other opportunities. If you are not already a member of the Mountaineers, don't worry — you can still take the course by signing up for a free guest membership!

Take the Course



2024 Summer Solstice Celebration Sticker Design Contest

The ACA will begin accepting submissions for the 2024 Summer Solstice Sticker Design Contest on Monday, January 22! This contest is an opportunity for paddlers to show off their creative side and design the logo for the 2024 Summer Solstice Celebration. This logo will be displayed on the ACA website, used in marketing materials to promote the event, and printed onto die-cut stickers

to be handed out during the in-person paddling events hosted as part of the 2024 Summer Solstice Celebration!

In addition to some serious bragging rights, the artist who creates the winning design will be awarded a \$150 NRS gift card!

[More Information](#)

ACA Inclusive Paddle Collective

Join us for the inaugural meeting of the Inclusive Paddle Collective! As an ACA community, we are committed to promoting inclusivity and access to all people who want to engage in paddlesports. Together, we can build a stronger and more diverse paddling community.

The Inclusive Paddle Collective will convene quarterly to exchange best practices, foster a sense of belonging, and explore ways in which the American Canoe Association can better assist groups working with historically marginalized communities. We define historically marginalized communities as those who identify as LGBTQ, disabled, racially underrepresented, individuals identifying as an underrepresented gender, and those with lower socio-economic status. By sharing our experiences and knowledge, we can cultivate a more welcoming and equitable environment for all paddlers.

This first meeting on **Wednesday, January 31 at 7:00 PM EST** will provide an opportunity to share insights, discuss challenges, and generate ideas to advance our collective mission of creating inclusive and accessible experiences on the water.

[Register](#)

A New Benefit for PACs: Club Express Discount

ACA Regional Activity Council (RAC) announces the addition of a new Paddle America Club optional benefit. As an ACA affiliated Paddle America Club, your club has the option to contract with Club Express at preferred national pricing to utilize their platform for website services along with content management, membership communications and ecommerce capabilities.

Three Club Express Demos will be hosted for interested ACA PACs. The first of which is **Wednesday, January 18 at 8 PM EST**.

[More Information](#)



ACA Competition Calendar

Paddlers can search for and share competition events in the [ACA's Competition Calendar](#). If you have a favorite paddling event that you want to publicize to the ACA community, we encourage you to fill out this [Event Submission Form](#). We will then post your event to the ACA Calendar. If you are searching for events in your area, it is easy to filter by state and/or discipline.



Instructor of the Month

Please join us in congratulating Harriet Götze, the first ACA Instructor of the Month of 2024! Harriet is an Instructor Trainer for Canoe Touring and for River Canoeing. She teaches across Europe, primarily in Germany but also in France, Austria, and Slovenia.

The ACA loves Harriet's commitment to expanding access to the healing side of paddling. As Harriet reminds us, ACA instructors are uniquely qualified to support organizations who work to support people through experiential learning by offering to share our expertise of how to paddle safely and have fun while doing it. Learning and sharing are key to a long and healthy career in paddlesports education. We look forward to many more years of learning from Harriet Götze!



ACA's longest serving instructor in Europe and Instructor of the Month, Harriet Götze

[Read More](#)

If you know a truly awesome ACA instructor, [nominate them as future Instructor of the Month!](#)

Instructor Certification Renewals

Attention certified instructors and trainers! Many certifications recently expired or set to expire at the end of this calendar year. Be proactive and review your certifications!

If your certification expired in 2023 and you aren't sure what piece of the renewal you are missing, here's a tool to help:

When you log into your [CMS account](#), toggle the "show expired/ superseded" button on the right side of your screen, and then you'll see a link directly to the right side of your certification. Click

that link, and it will take you to a page called "Progress Towards Certification Renewal." That page outlines all the certification renewal requirements, which ones you have met, and which ones you may have not yet met.

- Do you need an administrative extension until 12/31/2024? [Request one here!](#)
- Would you like to downgrade to a lower level?
- Are there missing courses or update records that you need to discuss or submit?
- If you'd like to retire your certification, what led you to making that decision?

For more information, please contact the ACA's Education Department at sei@americancanoe.org

Thank you for reading our monthly newsletter! Follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) for the latest stories and updates!

Have some news to share? We encourage you to submit your content for consideration using this [Content Submission Form](#).

Sincerely,

Kaycee Maas, Communications Coordinator

ACA Paddlesports

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