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### **GOVERNOR'S SPECIAL SAFETY AND HEALTH ACHIEVEMENT AWARD North America Outdoor Institute Recognized for Safety Education Programs**

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The North America Outdoor Institute received the Alaska Governor's Special Achievement Award in the field of Health and Safety during the 2010 Governor's Safety and Health Conference held at the Captain Cook Hotel in Anchorage. NAOI reached more than 10,000 individuals in the past year with Be Snow and Summer Smart education programs.

NAOI is a non-profit corporation founded in 2004 by a group of outdoor enthusiasts with a mission to save lives from preventable outdoor injuries and deaths using interactive, practical training methods. Dean Cummings, one of the original founders and lead instructors, whose personal commitment to safety education inspired others to get involved and help, along with Executive Director Debra McGhan and Vice President Richard Desautel, attended the luncheon and accepted the award on behalf of the organization.



From left: Governor Safety Rep.; Debra McGhan, NAOI Exec. Director, Dean Cummings, Chief Instructor, Richard Desautel, NAOI Vice President, Governor Safety Rep.

The 2010 NAOI board of directors includes: Desautel, President Keith Stinebaugh, Secretary Joe Rucker, Treasurer Nigel Guest and Advisor Alex Eaton.

The NAOI training team includes certified mountain and wilderness guides, Search and Rescue professionals and special guest instructors who have given endless hours of time and passion to teach and share their experience, knowledge and skill with others in an effort to save lives.

The programs are made possible thanks to grantors and sponsors that provide critical capital and resources. Top funders of the program include the State of Alaska Division of Parks, the Mat-Su Health Foundation, the Elihu Foundation, Jessica Stevens Foundation, H2O Guides, Inc. and Alaska Mining and Diving Supply.

The organization also depends on members and a mostly volunteer staff including Joe Sylvia, Dorothy Adler, Dan Dryden, Merletta Morris and Desiree Olson who share a belief in the mission and have joined the cause to arm every Alaskan and visitor with basic, practical information that makes it safer for everyone to recreate and travel in this amazing state.

The Alaska Governor's Safety Committee is to be commended for recognizing the efforts of NAOI and bestowing this honor will bring necessary attention to this important field of safety. The organization pledges to continue working on behalf of all residents and visitors to Alaska in an effort to reduce injuries and deaths from preventable accidents.

Learn more at [www.naoiak.org](http://www.naoiak.org)