

# Dept. of Natural Resources: Hunter education program announces 2022 volunteer Instructor and Group of the Year

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**MADISON, Wis.** –The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) today announced the hunter education program 2022 Instructor of the Year and Group of the Year.

Award winners are nominated by their peers, community members or DNR staff and selected based on exemplary characteristics such as exceeding expectations, advancing and enhancing safety education, along with community service. The nomination period is open from Dec. 15 – Feb. 15.

The 2022 Instructor of the Year is Richard ‘Rick’ Heisler. Rick has taught hunter education for more than 44 years and has certified more than 3,000 students through traditional and internet + field day courses. He remains active in recruiting and mentoring new instructors and junior instructors. Rick is active and engaged in his local community as well as with hunter education program staff, all of which enhance his courses. He also serves as an instructor for local Learn to Hunt courses.

The 2022 Group of the Year is the Waupaca Hunter Safety Group. The Waupaca Hunter Safety Group consistently provides year-round hunter education opportunities in both the traditional and internet + field day courses. They have a large and active group and are continuously recruiting instructors and junior instructors. The pride they exhibit in their community and their teaching shines brightly as they emphasize safety at every opportunity. Working closely with their regional Outdoor Skills Trainer (OST), they have analyzed and implemented several

enhancements to their program offerings to better the experience for both the instructor and the student.

Members of the Waupaca Hunter Safety group include:

Instructors: Ross Bielema, Phil Blohm, Amanda Bronk, Steven Chase, Ryan Gulbrandsen, Joel Harris, Chris Hazen, Rene Lehman, Jim Machamer, Jim McCarthy, Andrew Minster, Tom Mitchell, Becca Parker, Jim Peglow, Chris Peters, Paul Piencikowski, Brenda Porrey, Jesse Schulz, Justin Stanke, Terry Stults, Jennifer Swenson, Michael Syphard, Don Wick, Jesse Wiegert, Scott Young and Rachel Zieglar

Junior instructors: Mason Gulbrandsen, Traeh Ogle, Coltin Polifka and Cecilia Treadway

Hunter Education Instructors volunteer approximately 40,000 hours annually while teaching and certifying tens of thousands of students, varying in age, learning style and motivation.

To learn more about nominating an instructor or becoming an instructor yourself, visit [the DNR's Instructor Corner](#).