

Corey Borg-Massanari Foundation Places First Avalanche Dog with Taos Ski Valley

TAOS SKI VALLEY, NM – August 3, 2021 – This month, the [Corey Borg-Massanari Foundation](#) provided a grant for its first avalanche dog placement. Corey perished tragically in an avalanche in Taos in 2019, and was found by Taos 'avi' dog Izzy. Now, Corey's eponymous foundation raises funds for outdoor safety, with a focus on avalanche dogs. Finn, an 11-week-old golden retriever puppy, became the newest trainee of the Taos Ski Valley avalanche dog team. This elite group of dogs is trained to search and rescue visitors in emergency situations on the mountain. The new puppy was paid for with a grant from the Foundation.

"It is amazing to see the foundation's goals be realized with our first avi dog placement in Taos," said Corey's mother and the Advisor of the Corey Borg-Massanari Foundation, Bobbie Gorrón. "This foundation's effort to fund outdoor safety initiatives is borne out of our family's tragedy, but I know Corey would be so proud that his love for skiing and dogs led to this bigger impact that will affect other outdoor enthusiasts for years to come."

Finn comes to Taos Ski Valley from Chattanooga, TN, and is from a successful field trial line of hunting dogs. These dogs have a high drive and are bred for hunting and retrieving, which translates well to search and rescue training. Finn will be owned and trained by Taos Ski Valley patroller Zackery Anderson. All avalanche dogs are owned by members of the Taos Ski Valley ski patrol, and live with them when not working. Leland Thompson, another Taos ski patroller and owner of the avalanche dog who found Corey, assisted with the avalanche dog application process.

Taos Ski Valley starts training avalanche dogs when they are very young, and Finn will be no different. Obedience training and housebreaking has already begun. Next, Finn will start some on-mountain familiarity training: learning to ride chairlifts, snowmobiles, sleds, and getting to know the terrain of the mountain. Next, likely when Finn is around 1, he'll begin his formal training. To begin, this consists of a "hide and seek" game where toys are hidden in snow and the dogs have to find them by scent alone. After they learn the game, training becomes more realistic, with members of the ski patrol hiding in snow caves, out of sight, and the dogs have to locate them. Once dogs can pass a 20-minute certification test in which they locate 1-4 people hidden in snow caves, they are ready to begin the real work of a search and rescue dog.

"The mission of the Corey Borg-Massanari Foundation is an important one for outdoor safety and we are delighted that one of our patrollers is the recipient of the first dog. The gift of Finn is truly remarkable," said David Norden, CEO of Taos Ski Valley. "He is an incredible puppy just full of potential, and I know he will go on to be an integral part of our avi dog team, and an invaluable resource on the mountain. We will always grieve the loss of Corey, and we are humbled and incredibly proud to carry on his legacy through Finn."

About the Corey Borg-Massanari Foundation

This Corey Borg-Massanari Foundation supports outdoor safety, the purchase and training of National Ski Patrol dogs for rescue efforts and provides support to the skiing communities Corey Borg-Massanari loved so much. To read Corey's story or to donate to the Corey Borg-Massanari Foundation, click [here](#) or mail a check with a memo of "Corey Borg-Massanari" to: Initiative Foundation, 405 1st St. SE, Little Falls, MN 56345. The Corey Borg-Massanari Foundation is a partner fund of the [Initiative Foundation](#).

About Taos Ski Valley

Nestled among the pristine peaks of northern New Mexico, Taos Ski Valley is undergoing a \$300 million renaissance making it one of North America's premier vacation and adventure destinations. With over more than 300 inches of average annual snowfall, 300 days of sunshine and more than 1,200 skiable acres, Taos Ski Valley is the industry's only B Corp Certified ski resort, which means it operates with the highest standards of environmental sustainability, and social and economic justice. An independently owned and operated resort, Taos maintains an authentic charm while delivering a world-class experience both on-mountain and off for skiers and riders of all abilities. Taos Ski Valley is proud to participate in the [Mountain Collective and Ikon Pass](#). To learn more about Taos Ski Valley and its B Corp commitment, please visit www.skitaos.com.

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