

## Killington Resort and Pico Mountain

Hello and thank you for allowing me to represent the tourism industry today. My name is Amy Laramie and I am the Director of Brand Marketing, Events and Special Projects at Killington Resort. I moved to Vermont from New Jersey in 2009 after graduating from Green Mountain College with a Resort and Hospitality Management degree. I am now a homeowner in Rutland Town, VT raising my 3 kids in this beautiful state of Vermont.

In high school I was a bit unclear of my direction in life, like many of us but knew I had a passion for skiing and snowboarding and slowly made my way to college at Green Mountain. I started my now 15 year career as a silver ware polisher at the Wobbly Barn working my way up and around the mountain in different roles – Wobbly Barn front and back of house, banquet server, Sales and Wedding Coordinator, Marketing Coordinator, Internal Communications and Guest experience manager to my current role on the resort leadership team, that is also comprised of another 2009 Green Mountain College grad.

Our partnership with Green Mountain and now Castleton is truly a partnership – weather we are making the time to meet with perspective students, getting them out on snow or having resort managers teach classes bringing actual resort data to speak to things happening now and in the moment is what makes the program successful and students more engaged. The students get hands on experience and create working relationships with the resort before they are even out of college through the school's co-op program. Our snow reporter who writes the snow report at 6:00 am every morning is currently a second year student in this program and we are already discussing his position after graduation. While many of us may have started out as a ski bum we currently have 300 full-time year-round benefitted positions at Killington Resort and 40 resort and hospitality management students working for us in supervisor or higher level roles. We have a lot of great talent at the resort because of the successful partnership we have with Castleton.

Over my 16 years at Killington I have seen and experienced a lot. But the sense of community is one of a kind. Back in the day the town, business community and resort did not get along. All of us were working on separate projects - marketing to the same people and booking conflicting events. Something had to change in order for us to grow and be successful. In 2012 we started a marketing campaign called One Killington with the community residents, businesses and resort. But this was not just a fad – we made a change and it worked.

- The town recognized the strong branding of Killington Resort and adopted our colors and shield within their logo. This is now seen on signs and marketing throughout the town and region for a cohesive sense of arrive.
- The community and resort also wanted to grow summer operations and we developed a plan to expand our mountain biking trails to have more beginner and intermediate trails, as well as an adventure center and summer events. The summer scene used to be extremely minimal with a couple of businesses open now there's more restaurants and shops open in the summer vs closed in order to service the 50,000 mountain biker visitors we saw in 2022.

- This maybe a surprise to you but many of the success we've seen stems from building relationships, communicating and being transparent and open to feedback. We, the resort, cannot operate in a vacuum we need to listen and support the Killington Community.
- We are part of local boards not only in Killington but the Rutland region as well.
- We instituted a local pass for chamber members to give their employees access to the mountain at a cheaper rate.
- We recognize that when someone visits or speaks about their Killington vacation, they are rating the entire town/community and if the snow conditions were great but the community is not supportive of the mountain or able to access the mountain right in their back yard that is a problem in having One Killington thrive.
- We are all now speaking in one voice and marketing the region together as a team.

Now more than ever we will be working together on Killington Forward since the bond vote for phase 1 of Killington Forward passed on March 7 and we will finally see a shovel in the ground for a village in Killington. We will be bringing municipal water infrastructure, a newly designed and rebuilt Killington Road, workhouse housing and Six Peaks Ski Village beginning as soon as this summer.

I want to thank you for allowing me to speak today and share more story. I am grateful for the community I have made in this industry because we Work Where We Play and Play Where We Work. I am blessed to have made the region where many people vacation my home.