

May 19, 2011

Dear Jen, the Friends of Alta Board of Directors, and Pat:

My mind wanders frequently to my first memories of Alta and Little Cottonwood Canyon. I vividly remember sitting on Snowbird's Wilbere Chair at the ripe age of ten in complete trepidation as I glanced in reverse at Mount Superior's majestic silhouette. After a few years as a committed Snowbird skier, I ventured into Alta for the first time via the Sugarloaf Pass on a particularly icy and graybird afternoon. After sliding sideways down Mambo and Corkscrew, I hopped on the lift and promptly returned to what I then considered the obvious luxuries of Snowbird. My excitement about Alta was ultimately piqued by classic tree turns underneath the Wildcat Chair during a three-foot storm that buried the Wasatch during the 2005-2006 ski season. Needless to say, I have since developed a deep appreciation for the memorable "Alta experience" that inspires a unique attachment to the place—with its stunning peaks, fiery wildflowers, and sanctuary-like ambiance—in locals, newcomers, and veteran visitors, alike.

I am honored to have served Friends of Alta (FOA) as both a summer intern (last August and September) and as the recipient of the first-ever Bill Levitt Fellowship (November 2010-May 2011). The Bill Levitt Fellowship Program was introduced during the summer of 2010 and initiated in November 2010 as a tribute to Bill's public serve record and to his standards of excellence, intelligence, and integrity in public process. The Fellowship program provides selected individuals with the opportunity to work alongside the Executive Director for three to six months to help fulfill FOA's mission by contributing to the organization's protection of the Alta environment.

It has been a sincere pleasure and privilege to work alongside and learn from Jen over the past ten months. I feel incredibly fortunate to have experienced Alta as an active and engaged member of the FOA family, with ample opportunities to transform my personal sentiments about our high-altitude paradise into indoor and outdoor efforts to help sustain and nurture the Alta environment. My assignments as the Bill Levitt Fellow have accurately reflected the expectations outlined when the Fellowship offer was granted. As the Bill Levitt Fellow, I have spearheaded and contributed to a variety of FOA programs and projects, all of which have afforded me exciting and educational opportunities. I have assisted Jen with organizing and executing the following: ongoing fundraising and community outreach efforts; FOA's 30th Anniversary Celebration at the Alta Club in January; the investigation of opportunities for potential environmental education partnerships with the Alta School; the Alta Gala in April; Alta's first community-wide Earth Day event; the bronzing of Bill Levitt's ski boots; recreating the FOA brochure; the recently published spring 2011 newsletter; and the management of FOA's communication and social media tools.

My workload and schedule have satisfied the expectations outlined at the beginning of the Fellowship. Jen has provided me with a steady stream of stimulating projects and opportunities, each with a unique element of instruction or challenge. I am honored that Jen entrusted me with leadership on projects like producing content and layout for the fall 2010 and spring 2011 newsletters and writing multiple fundraising appeal letters. Jen has consistently provided supportive and productive oversight to me when necessary or when requested, but she has also encouraged me to spearhead projects like investigating environmental education opportunities for the Alta School, producing content for the forthcoming FOA brochure, and tabling in front of the Goldminer's Daughter Lodge during a Salomon demo day/community event. I strongly feel as though Jen's leadership in and out of the office has facilitated an appropriate balance between teamwork, learning, and autonomy.

I have been deeply appreciative of Jen's flexibility with my weekly scheduling, especially given the inevitable "distractions" of Little Cottonwood Canyon snowfall—especially during a 724" season. The Fellowship agreement initially outlined an expectation of 20-25 hours of work per week. I have averaged approximately 26 hours of work per week over the course of my Fellowship, and I feel incredibly fortunate to have had the opportunity to strike a perfect balance between work and skiing. Jen has been reasonable and appropriate in informing me of the timeline for each project, and she has been consistently available for review and consultation following my completion of each assignment.

I do not have any significant complaints about my Fellowship experience. I will admit that my least favorite experience while serving as the Fellow was partaking in the execution of the Alta Gala—significant stress from setting up an event of that magnitude in a single day's time, multiple voices and opinions from multiple coordinators, and somewhat chaotic work while executing the event. Participation in the coordination and execution of the Gala was, however, included in the initial Fellowship expectations. Furthermore, I do believe that the Gala is quite a valuable fundraising and community-building tool for FOA.

Over the past ten months as a full-time resident of Alta, I have been privileged to hear countless tales about Bill, his character, and his longtime positive influence on the Alta environment and community. I feel so honored to have fulfilled a position intended to memorialize such a guiding figure in Alta's trajectory over the past fifty years. I consider the Bill Levitt Fellowship program to be a positive institution for FOA and the Alta community, as it facilitates increased engagement and provides the tools necessary to build a network of younger environmental stewards eager to aid in the protection of the cherished Alta environment.

In addition to affording me unique opportunities to give back to the Alta environment and community, both the summer internship and winter fellowship have far exceeded my expectations about internships as a general enterprise. Based on my experience and that of my classmates at Stanford, internship-type employment scenarios rarely offer opportunities for participation in engaging and meaningful projects or as a vital stakeholder in the organization's daily and ongoing efforts. It is gratifying to know that my work with Jen for FOA has effected a measurable impact on the organization's operations and stewardship efforts. My Fellowship has afforded me an enhanced Alta employee experience, and has undoubtedly provided me with valuable workplace experience, which I look forward to applying in the future. I have two years remaining at Stanford to complete my undergraduate degree, and I am certain that my experience with FOA will plant the seeds for new academic and extracurricular endeavors.

Per discussion at the Board of Directors meeting in April and a conversation with Jen, I look forward to helping the organization maintain a network of "graduated" Bill Levitt Fellows, which may be initiated with the addition of an applicable page to the FOA website. I look forward to maintaining my connection to Friends of Alta while in California over the next two years, and I sincerely hope to involve myself again upon my graduation.

Best wishes for a happy and healthy summer,

Annie Kramer
721 Governor Circle
Newtown Square, PA 19073
akramer20@gmail.com