

## **Nina Martin, NSS 41664, Georgia**

Life Member, NSS Fellow

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I started caving in the early nineties and immediately fell in love with the exploration, the unknown, and how much it pushed me. I also fell in love with the people. I have been part of the Dogwood City Grotto (DCG) since I started caving and consider them my family. Each year, the DCG is proud to host the TAG Fall Cave-In, the second largest caving event in the country. And I have been very proud to be involved with organizing that event since the early nineties as our proceeds provide grants to cavers in support of conservation, exploration, and research. I have held several committee positions in both the DCG and at the TAG Fall Cave-In. This amazing event has given me the opportunity to be the chairperson three times. This experience has also allowed me to share my knowledge and serve on the Cave-In Advisory Board. In addition to regional events, I was also fortunate enough to be part of the team that welcomed you Home to the 2014 NSS Convention in Huntsville. In the NSS, I also currently serve on the Awards Committee. I spent two years on the board of directors for Chattanooga Hamilton County Rescue and I am SPRAT– Society of Professional Access Technicians - trained, and NCRC– National Cave Rescue Commission - trained.

For 18 years, I owned Inner Mountain Outfitters with my husband, Jeff. I loved running that business with him and being so thoroughly involved in our community. As a small business owner that specialized in gear and equipment for rope access technicians, first responders, and the caving community, I have networked with some of the best in the profession to improve my understanding of new product innovations and technical skills, while delivering outstanding service. And I know many generations of cavers because of that opportunity. I joined Over the Edge in 2010 and have a long tenure and visible presence working with the public and organized cavers to teach safe and responsible caving techniques while promoting fellowship in the caving community and beyond. Because I live in TAG and owned IMO it's only natural that I fell in love with vertical caving and training. I feel like I'm in my element when I am helping someone to complete their first rappel, or learn a new climbing technique, as I love to help people and instill confidence. I have devoted thousands of hours to training and teaching people who want to experience life from a different perspective. This interaction has taught me how to connect with people and understand their viewpoints, philosophies, and fears. It has also taught me how to be a clear, and direct communicator and to be invested in conversations. My passion to listen and respond to our members is what I bring to the table as an NSS Director.

We are in unique times of transition within the NSS, and we have learned through a pandemic how much our cave family means to us. Caving is not just exploration,

science, sport, survey, vertical, and diving, it's also a lifestyle and community. As a Life Member and Fellow, I feel like it is time for me to give back to the community that I love on a national level. Because I know so many generations of cavers, I have a unique perspective and would like to see some of that continuity between the generations of cavers come back. I want to impact and contribute to our legacy within the NSS through the voices of our members. I have the experience to bridge multiple viewpoints and I feel I can express those accurately through motions and advocacy on the NSS board. The NSS needs to be more active in events and training opportunities as those interactions are essential to connect and communicate with our membership. I can help with communication of what the members want. I want to contribute to the mission of the National Speleological Society by representing the membership.

Thank you for your consideration,

Nina Martin  
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