

SERIOUS JUJU SKATEPARK EXPANDS HOURS, STAFFING

KALISPELL, MT—Serious JuJu Skatepark, Western Montana’s only indoor skatepark, has expanded its staff and operational hours to better serve the Flathead Valley. The past few years have been full of exciting change for this extraordinary non-profit organization. In 2021 they moved to a new home at the Gateway Mall. In 2022 Rebecca Wilson joined the team as the Executive Director, and new Skatepark Operations Manager Randy Beckstrom came on board earlier this year, enabling the park to expand hours from two to five skate sessions a week:

May through September:

- Open Skate is offered Tuesday through Thursday 6-8 p.m.
- Beginners Only Skate takes place Monday 6-8 p.m. and Thursday 3:30-5:30 p.m.
- Private party reservations are available each Friday and Saturday.

You can keep an eye out for Fall and Winter hours at www.seriousjuju.com.

In addition to a new home and an expanded executive team, Serious JuJu has revised their Mission, their Vision, and their programming to reach the community in a bigger way. “It’s all about the kids,” says Wilson. “Many of the kids that walk through our doors are seeking shelter—shelter from their home lives, shelter from their troubles, shelter from all of the confusion and instability around them. Many are quiet and cautious; sometimes it is a slow process for kids to let you in. Just having everyday conversations about how school is going, or the music being played can begin to build a relationship, and these relationships create a community.”

Beckstrom started volunteering at the park 15 years ago and now oversees the skatepark, along with Wilson. The park draws boys and girls from all backgrounds and ages, according to Beckstrom, serving more than 1,000 youth each year. “Our skaters and volunteers come from all over—from Whitefish to Polson, and from Kila to Bozeman,” he says.

Beckstrom stresses the park’s safe environment, which provides adult supervision and a skilled skate coach at all times. Helmets and protective gear are provided to every skater that does not bring their own. Skateboarding at Serious JuJu is for everyone; no skating experience is necessary. “You don’t even need to know how to stand on a board,” Beckstrom says. “Often the older kids help teach younger ones the park’s code of ethics as well as basic moves or the latest tricks.”

Serious JuJu is free to all, thanks to financial support from area churches, local organizations, community members, and a grant from the Gianforte Family Foundation. “Thanks to generous donors like the Gianforte Family Foundation, Serious JuJu continues to grow and strengthen local youth and their families. We are truly blessed.” says Wilson.

The skatepark offers an advantage during the summer. Its air-conditioned, indoor location provides climate control from the heat, storms, and fire season. At each scheduled skate session, Serious JuJu also provides healthy meals and snacks to skaters and their families. “We welcome all types of donations, not only monetary contributions, but also meals and snacks,” Beckstrom says.

In addition to donations, volunteers are essential to the success of Serious JuJu. “It takes a tribe. Our volunteers are here because of their love for the kids. They are the heart of Serious JuJu. These amazing people help create a warm and inclusive space. Together, we see, feed, and strengthen youth and their families,” Wilson says, noting that many volunteers previously skated at the park as kids.

For more information about Serious JuJu, to donate, or to volunteer, contact Rebecca or Randy at 406-885-4566 or at jujukalispell@gmail.com. You can also visit the Serious JuJu website at <https://www.seriousjuju.com>.

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