Touch the Earth Program Description

Trip Name: #037-15, Climb Baker with Becker
Trip Leader: Mark Becker, Carson Tortorige
Trip Dates: 05/26/15 - 06/02/15

Please read prior to submitting your application:

This mountain of an opportunity will afford you the once-in-a-lifetime experience of attempting to summit Mount Baker with Georgia State University’s President Mark Becker. Ten participants are anticipated to join co-leaders Mark Becker and Carson Tortorige. Applications are accepted until mid-February. These applications will be screened by the leaders based on a number of traits that will provide the team with the preferred mix of personality and ability levels to achieve the teams’ goals. At various times leadership is managed by Carson Tortorige, President Mark Becker, and three professionally trained mountain guides from the American Alpine Institute.

This trip will present challenges that have the potential to test the participant both mentally and physically.

At times the participant will travel with a backpack consisting of their personal and shared group equipment weighing up to forty (40) pounds on a trail system of varied terrain and natural surfaces including snow, ice, mud, and rocks. The distances traveled are typically measured in elevation change with the maximum elevation climb on the summit day close to 5,000 feet. Your first day will require a climb of roughly 2,500 ft. to an elevation of 6,000 feet above sea level. Descents will exceed 5,000 feet.

Lodging will be camping in tents occasionally on snow. Backcountry meals will be nourishing and adequate but may not be the volume one is accustomed to. Temperatures through all zones may range from a high temperature near 70 degrees to a low of 20 degrees Fahrenheit.

The greatest physical and mental challenge of the trip will likely be the attempt to summit Mount Baker which stands at an elevation of 10,778 feet above sea level. Participants will spend 3.5 days at high altitudes above 6,000 feet with roughly only 7 hours above 8,000 feet. For some this can produce mild altitude sickness in the form of headaches and shortness of breath. Requirements to accomplish this portion of the trip will be a positive attitude, being a team player, good aerobic physical fitness level, ability to climb icy slopes on foot with proper protective gear, and ability to endure the elements.

Working hard for your success in this trip is paramount, and a healthy physical fitness level with precise training regimen will be recommended. Those who are more physically prepared will have greater
enjoyment during their climb with a greater chance of summiting. Candidates who do not meet the minimum expected fitness level per the evaluation of the trip leaders may be dropped from participating in the trip.

From March to May, four weekend training and meeting days with one or both of the Leaders to local hiking areas will be required. These dates are March 8, March 29, April 12, and May 10. Two of these will be half-day trainings; transportation will be provided. An optional six to eight more training days may be offered by the leaders (transportation pending), with more training expected on your own.

Provided sufficient qualifying applications have been received, the anticipated close to accepting applications is Monday, February 16. Candidates will be announced approximately 10 days after the closing.

Student cost is expected to be partially or fully funded by Crowdfunding donors and Touch the Earth Scholarships. Since these funds will continue to accumulate into early May, Course Fees will be due in four payments that may amount to the total trip cost of $1,695. At the time of the trip offering to applicants, and throughout the time leading up to the trip, candidates will be updated on their total trip cost with the subtraction of current crowdfunding donations. Applicants offered a spot on the trip must register with a $300 deposit due on March 2nd by 6:00p.m. at the Touch the Earth office. Future payment deadlines will be due at 6p.m. on the following dates: April 3, April 20, and May 8.

Trip Date: Tuesday, May 26 – Tuesday, June 2

**DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION**

Students with documented disabilities who may need accommodations during their study abroad experience should discuss these needs with the Program Director and the Office of Disability Services at the time of application.