



Bringing the Adventure and Science Communities Together

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ASC Mountaineer Program Reaches New Heights in Central Asia

Bozeman, MT, October 17th 2012 – American Alpine Club member, Hari Mix has successfully collected microbe samples for University of Arizona researcher Dragos Zaharescu who is affiliated with the Biosphere 2 project. Mix's collection accounts for the highest altitude microbe collection to date at 23,000ft at the summit of Mt. Lenin in the Snow Leopard Mountains of Kyrgystan. Zaharescu and his team who were connected with Mix through the nonprofit, Adventurers and Scientists for Conservation (ASC), will analyze the samples as part of a global effort to better understand nutrient cycling in extreme environments and how it is affected by a changing climate.

Funded through an American Alpine Club's Live Your Dream Grant, Mix came to ASC, a nonprofit dedicated to joining the science and adventure communities, to make more of his expedition than just summiting peaks. "I get immense personal satisfaction, freedom and perspective from mountaineering, but I have really embraced the opportunity to incorporate scientific work into my trips," said Mix.

As well as being an alpinist, Mix is a Ph.D Candidate in Environmental Earth Systems Science at Stanford University. Working with ASC gave him the opportunity to meld his passion for high altitude ascents with his research. Along with Mt. Lenin, Mix was able to successfully collect samples on Peak Vorobiova (18,700ft), Peak Korzhenevskaya (23,311ft), and Pik Kommunizma. The 18 samples ranging from 11,800ft to 23,406ft will contribute to an important study that may help understand biological weathering in these high alpine environments. "With this location we reached a difficult altitude limit for living communities. Our research has been greatly furthered by Hari and ASC," says Zaharescu.

The data collected through this program is part of a larger ASC initiative to collect microbe samples around the world for Zaharescu and his team. These opportunities allow

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adventurers to add another dimension to their trips. Mix explains, “As adventurers, we depend on wild places. ASC does a great job in coaxing those headed on amazing journeys to contribute to the understanding and stewardship of the places we love most.” Mix continues, “This kind of adventure science may be the best way to protect these spectacular and high altitude places.”

To get involved in this project, climbers can visit

www.adventureandscience.org/microbes.html

About Adventurers and Scientists for Conservation

Adventurers and Scientists for Conservation was founded in January of 2011 with the knowledge that people traveling in the outdoors genuinely want to do more for the places they visit but often struggle with how to make this happen. ASC exists to address these issues by pairing adventure athletes already traveling to some of the earth's most difficult-to-reach places with the scientists who need information from these areas. While saving the conservation community millions of dollars, we provide the world with an opportunity to learn about the planet on an unprecedented scale. For more information visit www.adventureandscience.org

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