

Phoenix Teens Hike Yosemite for Juvenile Diabetes Awareness

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Arizona should be proud to call the Maurice family residents. Last year, Ethan Maurice, at just 21 years old, rode cross-country with his older brother to raise funds for the Phoenix Children's Hospital. Their three-month long journey resulted in \$96,000 in donations, and now Ethan is at it again. Accompanied by his 15-year-old sister Haley, the two Maurice teens will hike a 221-mile trek from Yosemite National Park to the top of Mount Whitney—all to raise money for the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation (JDRF).

This is a cause that has affected the Maurice family personally, with Haley being diagnosed with Type-1 diabetes at the age of eight. "I've seen Haley deal with this on a daily basis," Ethan says. "Every night before going to bed she has to be at a certain sugar level or she could go into a coma or even die. We want to push for research to eliminate these complications." Haley says that she attends JDRF camps and has lots of friends with the disease. Their personal struggles to stay healthy give Haley and her brother that much more of a reason to raise money for a cure.

When asked why this specific trail was chosen, Ethan says he's wanted to do it for a long time. Once he mentioned it to Haley earlier this year, however, she wouldn't let it go. "I am going to do this," Haley said to her brother, so the two decided to hike it as a fundraising event. "The previous bike ride was so worthwhile and significant. Another fundraiser like this would be great, and for a good cause," Ethan says about their decision.

The siblings have been training daily for the vigorous hike; working out, running and collecting supplies for the trip. To ensure Haley is able to manage her diabetes out in the wilderness, they plan to bring twice the amount of insulin needed as well as injections in case of emergency. The two expect to hike between 10 and 15 miles a day, and will only pass two re-supply points during the entire 221-mile hike. Without cell phone reception, the teens will use a satellite phone to update their parents on progress, as well as to post on Facebook for supporters.

The goal is to raise \$221,000, which corresponds to the number of miles they will be hiking. Haley and Ethan are confident they'll receive that amount in donations, with 100 percent of the proceeds going to the JDRF. They are financing the entire trip themselves, and embark on July 16 for the three-week trip. To donate to this wonderful cause, go to the Maurices' website: <http://www.summitdiabetes.com/>, and don't forget to cheer them on via their Facebook page at: <https://www.facebook.com/summitdiabetes>.