

Central America 7 Peak Challenge: Summer 2008

“...its mission of providing the highest quality undergraduate and graduate programs is inseparable from its mission of developing new understandings through research and creativity. It prepares students to assume roles in leadership, responsibility, and service to society. Texas A&M assumes as its historic trust the maintenance of freedom of inquiry and an intellectual environment nurturing the human mind and spirit.”

-An excerpt from the Texas A&M University Mission

As a committed member to the A&M community, I carry the mission and core values of our University with each of my endeavors, both personal and professional. This institution's traditions are built on excellence in the areas of leadership, responsibility, discovery and service. With this in mind, I am fully aware that the Globetrotters Grant Board will review a considerable amount of creative and inspiring proposals well worthy of the becoming reality. However, I believe I offer something more. The following is a proposal is firmly rooted in the very spirit that sets Texas A&M apart from every other school in the world; to choose extraordinary over ordinary.

**My Motorcycle:
1999 Honda Shadow
Ace 750cc**



The Proposed Challenge: A 6-week motorcycle excursion from College Station Texas to Panama. On the return trip, each of the 7 highest peaks in the Central America countries will be reached by foot.

Estimated Departure and Return

- **(Departure on June 22, 2008)**
- **(Return on August 3, 2008)**
- **Week 1:** Direct ride from Aggieland, **TX** to Boteque, **Panama**.
(approx 8-12 days total, depending on weather)
- **Week 2:** Ride to and summit Volcan Baru, **Panama**.
Ride to and summit Chirripo, **Costa Rica**.
- **Week 3:** Ride to and summit Montogon, **Nicaragua**
- **Week 4:** Ride to and summit Cerro Las Minas, **Honduras**.
Ride to and summit Cerro El Pital, **El Salvador**.

- **Week 5:** Ride to and summit Volcán Tajumulco, **Guatemala**.
Ride to and summit Doyle's Delight, **Belize**.
- **Week 6:** Return to Aggieland.

Anticipated Costs

Gas

- **Approximate mileage of trip:** 2500 miles (each way), 5,000 miles (total)
- **Approximate gas mileage:** 40-45 miles per gallon. (average 42.5)
- **Approximate Cost of Gas:** \$3.25 - \$3.75 per gallon (estimated cost of gas in central America for Summer 2008, average of \$3.50)

http://money.cnn.com/2008/03/10/news/economy/gas_prices/index.htm?eref=rss_top_stories

Total: \$412.00

Food & Water

Due to the high energy level required for the trip, proper food and water will be crucial for successful summiting of each mountain/volcano. High performance energy bars/food and water (in addition to regular meals) will be necessary.

Anticipated cost: \$20.00 per day (food and drink)

Total: \$900.00

Shelter

Though the trip will consist of primarily camping overnight, weather and water conditions may result in a number of required hostel stays.

- **Camp ground fees:** \$5.00 - \$11.00 per night (average \$8.00)

Estimated nights camping: 30

- **Hostel stay fees:** \$10.00 - \$20.00 per night (average \$15.00)

Estimated nights in hotels: 15

Total: \$465.00

Boarder Crossing

Boarder crossing for motorists include entry and motor vehicle fees for each country. This is a difficult expense to predict as sometimes it will not cost anything, and other times it can be very expensive (depending on boarder patrol protocol in Central America). The travel site below suggests no more than \$30.00 per boarder crossing in the Central America countries.

<http://www.latinamericacollection.com/centralamericabook/bordercrossings.html>

- **Estimate Boarder Costs:** 8 countries (including Mexico), 2 ways = 16 boarder crossings

Total: \$480.00

Guide Fees

Not all the mountains/volcanoes included in this trip are easily accessible with well mapped routes to the summit (Examples are in Honduras and Nicaragua and El Salvador). In these cases, travel sites have recommended local professionals that assist in trail finding and proper accent.

- **Estimated guide service fees:** \$50.00 per guide (for 3 mountains).

Total: \$150.00

Other Expenses

- **Motorcycle repair**
- **Emergency money (Injury, vaccinations, medical treatment)**
- **Additional Gear (as needed, depending on weather conditions)**
- **Photo/Video expense (for presentation upon return)**

Total: \$400.00

Total Cost Estimations:

Funds needed for this trip: \$2807.00

Funds currently available for this trip: \$1200.00

Funds still needed: \$1607.00

I will be continuing to save for this trip through Spring 2008 and expect this final amount to slightly decrease to around \$1400-\$1500.

Other Note:

While I would also love to include the volcano Pico de Orizaba (Mexico's highest point), unfortunately it rises 5,636 meters (18,490 feet) into the stratosphere and is covered by a glacier. While this may be another travel endeavor in the future, I believe the trip above will suffice for the time allowed.

I completed my undergraduate education at Colorado College in Colorado Springs in May, 2006. As a young African American male with the ability to speak Spanish, I utilized every opportunity possible to explore Spanish speaking countries and expand my mountaineering outside the Rocky Mountains. Like most travelers, I became addicted to exploration. However, unlike all travelers, my explorations have always seemed to include a physically demanding and high risk element that would set my trip apart from the average traveler. For example, I can remember choosing un-named beaches to locate and surf instead of the popular tourist sites. Another time I choose to reach an island off Nicaragua by boat, instead of taking the quick trip by plane. Modern day transportation advances have shrunken our world and increased international travel opportunities to the average person. It has been my belief that true exploration covers new ground in a new way, so that you can bring back useful information not available in your travel guides or internet sites. These excursions push the limits and require complete confidence by the traveler regarding safety, language ability, and navigation. It is this essence of challenge that I have rediscovered in the spirit of Aggieland and will demonstrate in this quest. I have been planning this trip since February of 2007 and would be honored to collaborate with the Globetrotters Grant Board to embark on your most creative, challenging and inspiring funded trip to date.

I would like to sincerely thank the Globetrotter staff and benefactors for providing to opportunity students to compete for international funding to students interested in traveling the globe. It is my full intention in the future to give back in the same manner of funding international travel.

Important Note: This entire trip will be well documented, photographed and videoed. I only thing I have found more enjoyable than the experience itself is sharing it with those that have helped make it possible. An informal or formal journal presentation, slide-show and video **will** be included in my contract.



The Trip Table

Name	Country	Peak	Type	Mountain Range
Volcan Baru	Panama	3,474 m 11,398 ft	Volcano	Costa-Panama Range
Cerro Chirripo	Costa Rica	3,820 m 12,533 ft	Mountain	Cordillera de Talamanca Range
Mogoton	Nicaragua	2107 m 6910 ft	Mountain	Central-Central America Range
Cerro Las Minas	Honduras	2848 m 9347 ft	Volcano	Central-Central America Range
Cerro El Pital	El Salvador	2,730 m 8,957 ft	Volcano	Sierra Madre de Chiapas Range
Doyle's Delight	Belize	1124 m 3686 ft	Mountain	Mayas Mountain Range
Volcán Tajumulco	Guatemala	4,220 m 13,845 ft	Volcano	Sierra Madre de Chiapas Range