

Amidst hurricane strength winds, unstable ice flats, and dust storms, Team VAC (Vascular Access Centers) attempted to reach the pinnacle of Washington State's Mt. Rainier in the name of adult on-set diabetes. Safety concerns and stability issues on the glacier posed by the high winds forced the team to turn around only 3,000 feet shy of their destination.

At 3PM, Team VAC attacked the Muir snow field as we pushed on out of the clouds and into the blazing sun, reflected off the glacier. Carrying heavy packs, Team VAC arrived on schedule at camp Muir (elev. 10,000 ft.) at 4:30PM. It was a remarkable ascent: 5,000 feet of elevation in only six hours of hiking.

After a restless night's sleep with the howling wind gusting over 75 miles per hour, causing our wind vents and doors to burst open, Team VAC ate a quick breakfast and geared up for the summit attempt. Our guides were not optimistic given the wind conditions on the upper mountain. Regardless, we braved the wind and the cold (and the dust storms) and geared up under the starry sky.

Team VAC crossed the Cowlitz glacier, before pushing on to the flats, despite the winds and the instability of the glacier. We arrived at the "Flats" just as wind conditions worsened. Our guides decided that it was only going to get worse, with the wind and decreasing temperatures. And so, we turned around just 3,000 feet shy of the peak. It was a disappointment, certainly, but we safely descended.

For a first time climb, Team VAC showed remarkable strength and poise in poor conditions, making it to the Flats on Mt. Rainier in only a one-day, sustained push.

The team raised nearly \$4,000 for the foundation, showing remarkable strength and perseverance despite the dangerous conditions.

Dr. Reiner, who is an insulin-dependent diabetic himself, dedicated the climb to his late mother. Dr. Reiner's climb up Mount Rainier with his team from Vascular Access Centers is the second of its kind that benefited the Anna Samartino Diabetes Education Foundation.



Team VAC 10ft. Camp Muir



Team VAC



Dr. Steven Keiner