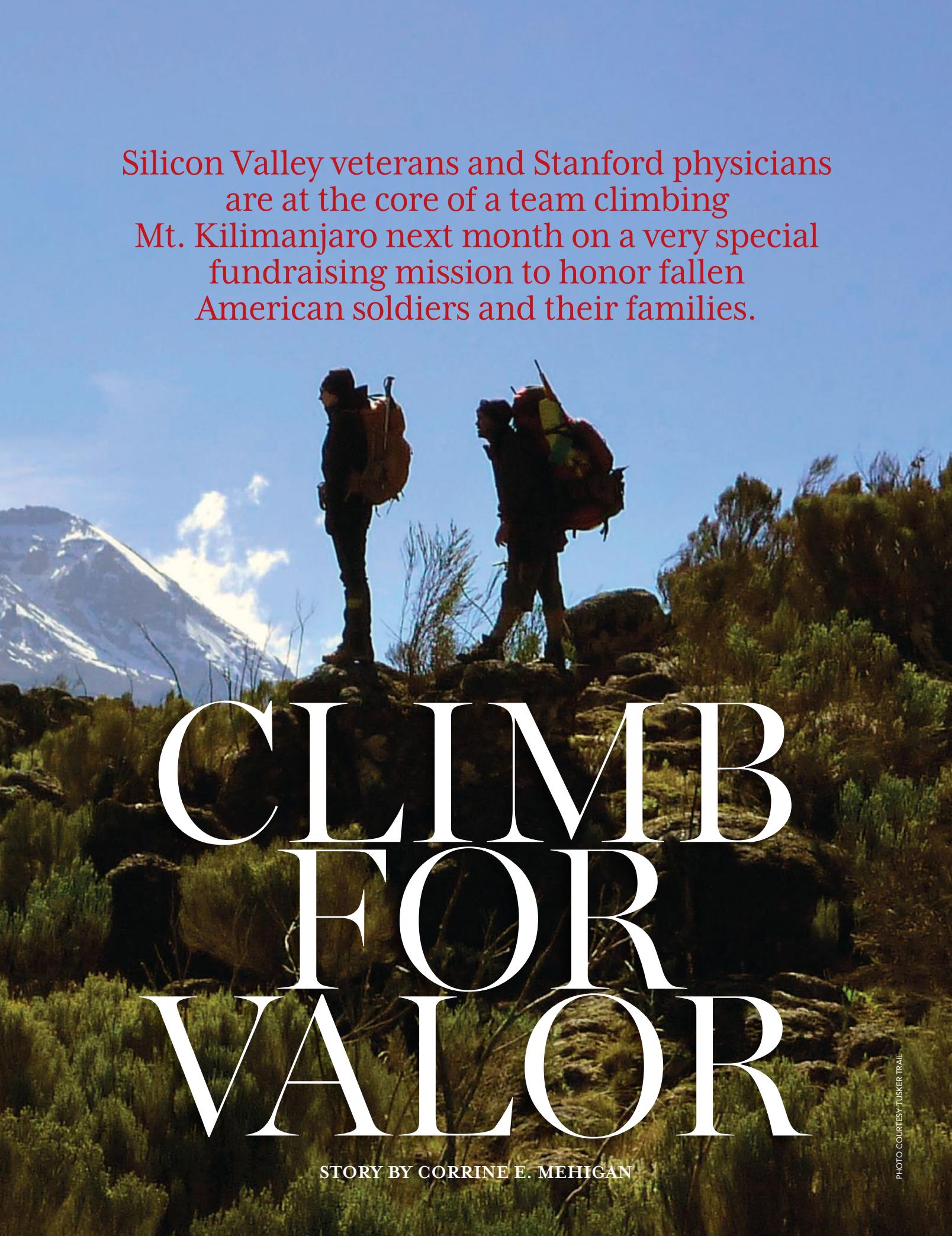


Silicon Valley veterans and Stanford physicians
are at the core of a team climbing
Mt. Kilimanjaro next month on a very special
fundraising mission to honor fallen
American soldiers and their families.



CLIMB FOR VALOR

STORY BY CORRINE E. MEHIGAN

Giving Until It Hurts

While other high-growth Silicon Valley companies might be focused solely on enhancing their success, Redpoint Resolutions, a San Mateo-based international medical, security, evacuation and travel insurance firm, is decidedly not. Rather, its founders, VPs Tom Bochnowski and Ted Muhlner (both Special Operations veterans), are keeping a laser-like focus on their military values as well as social innovation and responsibility, all with an eye to promoting and safeguarding health. As Bochnowski explains, "Health is a constant for us. Not just keeping our clients healthy and safe, but ensuring that our team thrives and our organization stays healthy from the inside out."

Rather than simply writing big checks to a variety of charities, Bochnowski and Muhlner are driven to be involved in causes that are important to them and their team in a very hands-on way. This includes travel philanthropy—engaging in travel as a means to demonstrate commitment and as a method of giving back. "Our Ripcord travel protection program celebrates the freedom travelers have to enjoy their personal passions and adventures worldwide," Muhlner says. "We are grateful this freedom exists and we strongly support those who have sacrificed so much for our country, including veterans, first responders, and their families."

For a former Army Ranger (Bochnowski) and Navy SEAL (Muhlner), only a philanthropic project that involves giving until it hurts—quite literally—will cut it. Together with their team, including Stanford-affiliated physicians Avinash Patil and Rebecca Walker, Bochnowski and Muhlner are determined to ensure that action, and putting your money where your mouth is, will speak far louder than words when it comes to supporting the families of fallen warriors. They have joined Tusker Trail in support of the Climb for Valor up Mt. Kilimanjaro to benefit the Duskin and Stephens Foundation.

A Test of Strength and Endurance

Climbing Kilimanjaro is a celebrated travel endeavor, known as one of the greatest mental and physical challenges in existence. It's estimated that more than 40,000 men and women between the ages 25 – 75 attempt the climb each year. Reaching the top of Kili is on many a sophisticated and established traveler's bucket list. Tahoe resident and Native South African Eddie Frank has been leading these climbs for the past 38 years, and his company, Tusker Trail, is known as the premier Kilimanjaro climbing outfit, mounting 77 fundraising climbs to date and raising over \$12 million for charities, including Make-a-Wish Foundation.

For the first-ever Climb for Valor (February 15 – 26), Frank himself will lead 12 dedicated climbers up Mt. Kilimanjaro. He relates, "We're making this climb a symbol of what these families have endured. Climbers include two wounded vets as well as three widows of fallen soldiers." The financial goal for the climb is \$100,000, a fundraising effort supported by Bochnowski and



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"If you've never done the climb it's very difficult for me to convey the feeling of euphoria and achievement you get when you get to the top of Mt. Kilimanjaro. It is truly life changing and will speak to you in a positive way for the rest of your life" explains Eddie Frank of Tusker Trail.

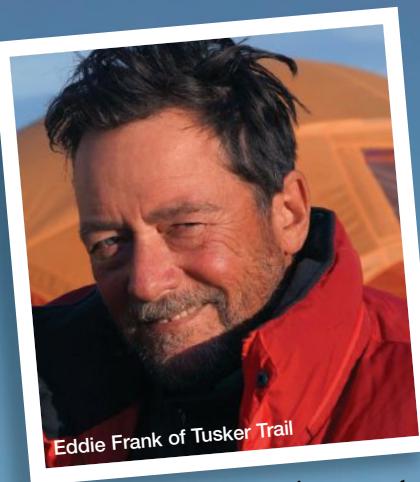
Muhlner. Options to contribute to the cause include making the climb or making a donation. One hundred percent of the funds raised by Climb for Valor activities will go to the Duskin and Stephens Foundation. (NOTE: As of press time, there are still a handful of spaces available for additional climbers.)

Bochnowski is one of the dedicated 12 making the climb. He is clearly proud to be part of something he considers much larger than Redpoint or even Mt. Kilimanjaro. "What we're doing is promoting awareness and working to create opportunities for these families," says Bochnowski. "Let's send these kids to summer camp; let's give them opportunities to go to college—whatever we can do to be a positive influence and support them."

Muhlner's support for the Climb for Valor is also nothing short of inspiring. "The loss of 'Big Mike' Duskin and Riley Stephens and the thousands like them in our country is felt every day by boys and girls who now live without fathers, wives without husbands, siblings without brothers, and parents without sons," he says. "Life takes a dramatic turn when the breadwinner doesn't come home. Families struggle, and despite paying the ultimate sacrifice, they are too often forgotten."

Better Very Safe Than Sorry

Eddie Frank may not be a formally trained physician, but he has nearly four decades of experience in high-altitude training and more than 50 successful climbs to the top of Mt. Kilimanjaro. The U.S.



Eddie Frank of Tusker Trail

Army Special Forces consult regularly with Frank on high-altitude techniques and strategies. At the summit of Kilimanjaro, climbers are breathing an estimated 50% of the oxygen that they're breathing at sea level. Clearly, the body is under a lot of exertion and strain in that kind of austere environment. "Climber safety is our primary concern," stresses Frank.

"At Tusker, we have the medical training and experience to take people up safely. We make sure you are healthy and fit enough to keep on going, and we look after you along the way and take the necessary measures in case an emergency does happen."

Frank is quick to point out that with the Redpoint team backing Tusker and climbers on the mountain, safety and emergency response are as good as it gets. "Redpoint provides Tusker security in knowing their capability worldwide includes evacuations from some of the most challenging locations on earth through a broad network of unique medical, security, and logistics experts and resources," Frank explains: "They come from the military, where your word and your handshake mean everything. That means a lot to me." That translates to immediate, 24/7 access to special operations veterans, paramedics, nurses, and medical experts like Stanford-affiliated Doctors Avinash Patil and Rebecca Walker.

The Ultimate 'Fixers'

Medicine, as applied on Mt. Kilimanjaro, is very different from what happens in an American emergency department on a daily

"Redpoint provides Tusker security in knowing their capability worldwide includes evacuations from some of the most challenging locations on earth through a broad network of unique medical, security, and logistics experts and resources," Frank explains.



basis. Doctors Avinash (Avi) Patil and Rebecca Walker are critical to Bochnowski and Muhlner as members of a core team that provides the best medical oversight for their business, including medical services and evacuations for their clients. As Muhlner explains, "Avi and Rebecca probably spend more time in the field than any of us do, either playing or working. They are very adept at medicine in the outdoors in the most remote parts of the world and urban settings. Their experience and expertise really extends our capability."

The two doctors are experts in international emergency medicine and have backgrounds that are especially relevant for more adventurous travelers who enjoy pushing the extremes and discovering remote locations. "They've lived it and done it, from both a medical and professional standpoint. Yet it's also their natural affinity for the adventure travel lifestyle—they're explorers. They are as real as it gets," adds Bochnowksi.

Avinash Patil, MD

When Redpoint decided that Avi Patil would join Bochnowski and the climb on behalf of Redpoint, Patil was excited at the opportunity to combine his love of adventure travel with his medical expertise. "The Climb for Valor is a chance to make a personal pilgrimage with a truly unique group, all driven towards a common cause and being part of something larger than one's self," he explains. Board-certified in Emergency Medicine, Patil has done extensive work in developing countries in education, patient care, and international health care systems development. He's no stranger to adventure travel either, having provided medical planning and support for international adventure races and having led whitewater rafting

expeditions for 18 years. "Whatever trip I go on, I inevitably end up being the doctor," he says. "But I don't mind. I embrace the role. I enjoy both the adventure and supporting it medically."

A Bay Area native, Patil has always embraced the region's outdoorsy lifestyle, including surfing, snowboarding, and sailing on the bay. His family lived in India for two years when he was in elementary school, and the memories of that time abroad made an impact. Following a residency and an international emergency medicine fellowship at Loma Linda, he worked part-time in the emergency room there as an attending physician and spent the rest of the year traveling. "During that time I lived in different countries, including Peru, Honduras, Kenya, China, India, and the Solomon Islands, doing various projects and teaching," he recalls.

These days Patil splits his time between emergency rooms at both Stanford and the Santa Clara Valley Medical Center while also serving as an invaluable member of Redpoint's team, staying on call and making critical decisions related to medical services and evacuations for their clients. Emergency medicine combines everything he enjoys about medicine and a lifestyle that is constantly in motion. "I see kids, I see adults. I enjoy treating the entire spectrum of diseases in medicine every day. There is never a dull moment responding to diverse emergencies and populations consistently," he explains. "I love seeing patients and don't ever want to give up clinical work, but working with Redpoint to provide travelers of all speeds our best expertise and care at their most critical moments is incredibly rewarding. It all makes for a life I truly enjoy." That



Climb for Valor fundraising activities include climbing Mt. Kilimanjaro (February 15-26) and/or donating to the Duskin and Stephens Foundation. The Duskin and Stephens Foundation's mission is to provide for the families of fallen soldiers with financial and emotional support through various charitable efforts. For more information on how to contribute, please visit www.tusker.com, duskinandstephens.com, or email ripcord@redpointresolutions.com.



Eddie Frank pictured at the top of Mt. Kilimanjaro, leading a high altitude course with off-duty Special Forces soldiers.