



# Climb for a Cause

*Two Implant Dentists Turn Their  
Passion for the Outdoors Into  
a Mission to Uplift Others*



Two longtime members of the American Academy of Implant Dentistry (AAID) are taking their commitment to service to new heights—literally. In February 2026, Dr. Rajiv Patel and Dr. Sangiv Patel, both implant dentists and avid outdoor adventurers, will embark on a strenuous ascent of Cotopaxi, one of the world's highest active volcanoes, located deep in Ecuador's Andes Mountains. Their mission, however, reaches far beyond the summit. It is the inaugural effort of "Climb for a Cause", a charitable initiative created to raise significant funds and awareness for five nonprofit organizations that are close to their hearts.

The idea for Climb for a Cause grew organically from their shared love of hiking and their shared belief in service. "We were going to do this hike regardless," said Dr. Sangiv Patel, who practices in Melbourne, Florida. "But we believe strongly in giving back through what we call service through body, mind, and wealth. This climb allows us to honor all three."

For both clinicians, the outdoors is more than recreation—it is a source of clarity, reflection, and growth. "Nature is so silent and pure," said Dr. Rajiv Patel. "It opens up your mind. Just like we respect the human body in implantology, we respect nature when we're out there."

The February ascent will take the pair up Cotopaxi's glacier-covered slopes to a breathtaking summit of 19,347 feet. The challenge is physically demanding and requires crampons, ice axes, and roped glacier travel. Climbers typically begin their final push in the middle of the night to reach the peak at sunrise, navigating crevasses, steep ice, and high-altitude conditions.

Yet both dentists see the climb as symbolic of something deeper. "Climbing is an analogy," said Dr. Sangiv Patel. "We're physically climbing, yes, but we're also climbing on behalf of all our colleagues—to elevate our profession, to elevate our communities, and to elevate ourselves as human beings."





## A Fully Self-Funded Mission With a Goal of \$100,000

Unlike many charity expeditions, The doctors are personally paying all travel and expedition expenses. "It is totally self-funded," said Rajiv. "Not a penny goes to administration. Every dollar donated goes directly to the charities." He has also pledged to match donations—up to \$7,500 per charity—to double the community's impact.

The beneficiaries include a mix of local and professional organizations:

- Rescue Outreach Mission, which provides temporary shelter, meals, and job resources for individuals experiencing homelessness.
- Love Missions Global, which supports survivors of human trafficking through empowerment programs.
- The AAID Foundation, which funds education, research, and outreach—including veteran smile programs and scholarships.

Additional charities selected personally by the climbers include The Rotary Club of Lake Mary Charitable Foundation which supports many local and international humanitarian projects, youth programs and disaster relief, and The Children's Hunger Project that which helps food-insecurity for children.

Their ambition is bold: raise at least \$100,000 for these organizations. "This is a learning curve," said Sangiv. "But we hope it becomes a long-term AAID Foundation program—something meaningful that grows year after year."

## An Invitation to the AAID Community

Although only two climbers will stand on Cotopaxi's summit, the dentists insist this is a collective effort. "Join us," Sangiv said. "Climb for a Cause is about all of us reaching a higher point—physically, mentally, spiritually, and as a profession."

For more information or to contribute to Climb for a Cause, members may contact the climbers directly or donate through the Rotary Club's secure portal, where funds will be received, tracked, and distributed. The Rotary Club Of Lake Mary supports many local and international humanitarian projects, youth programs and disaster reliefs.

**Those wishing to make a donation, may do so by check payable to:**

**Rotary club of Lake Mary  
memo: Cotopaxi Expedition  
P.O. Box 951567  
Lake Mary, FL 32795-1567**