

Media Relations

March 11, 2013

Documentary on Blind Hiker Randy Pierce '88 Screens at UNH March 25



Blind hiker Randy Pierce '88 and his guide dog Quinn are the subject of "Four More Feet," a documentary film screening at the University of New Hampshire March 25, 2013. Credit: Justin Fuller.

DURHAM, N.H. – "Four More Feet," a documentary film that captures the journey of Randy Pierce '88, who is blind, in his quest to summit all 48 of New Hampshire's highest peaks in a single winter season, gets its Seacoast-area premiere Monday, March 25, 2013, at the University of New Hampshire's Memorial Union Building Theatre II at 7 p.m. Sponsored by the UNH outdoor education program, the free event will feature a conversation with Pierce and film director Dina Sutin after the screening. Pierce's guide dog The Mighty Quinn, the first guide dog to summit all the NH 4,000-foot peaks and is the inspiration for the film's title, will also be in attendance.

Filmed in the winter of 2011-12, "Four More Feet" follows Pierce as he, Quinn and co-hikers Justin Fuller and Kyle Dancuse '10 attempt to reach the summit of all 48 of New Hampshire's highest mountains. The film chronicles the team for three months, 300 miles, and 88,000 feet of elevation as they work toward their goal. At the beginning of last winter, 46 hikers were on record for summiting these peaks in a single winter season; Pierce became the first blind person to accomplish the feat.

Pierce, who began losing his vision to a neurological disorder shortly after college and spent several years in a wheelchair due to the same disorder, founded the charitable organization 2020 VisionQuest in 2010 to "inspire people to reach beyond adversity and achieve their highest goals," he says. To lead by example, Pierce took on the challenge of climbing all of New Hampshire's 4,000-foot peaks. He reached out to his UNH classmate Brent Bell '87, now an associate professor of outdoor education at UNH, who included Pierce on several backpacking courses. Students in those courses -- including Dancuse, who is in the film -- gained experience guiding Pierce.

"My reconnection with UNH through the outdoor education program was a large part of the foundation for our hiking success," Pierce says. "I'm excited to showcase 'Four More Feet' as the result of my partnership with UNH."

"Randy has influenced dozens of students who have hiked with him as part of the backpacking course I teach. I hope the screening of this film extends his inspirational message even farther," Bell says.

Pierce adds that the screening at the MUB holds special significance for him. "I began there as a freshman breakfast cook and worked as a pub bouncer, MUSO staffer and eventual MUB pub manager," he says.

To learn more about "Four More Feet" and watch a trailer, go to <http://www.fourmorefeet.com/>.

The University of New Hampshire, founded in 1866, is a world-class public research university with the feel of a New England liberal arts college. A land, sea, and space-grant university, UNH is the state's flagship public institution, enrolling 12,200 undergraduate and 2,300 graduate students.

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Photograph available to download: <http://www.unh.edu/news/releases/2013/mar/monroe.jpg>

Caption: Blind hiker Randy Pierce '88 and his guide dog Quinn are the subject of "Four More Feet," a documentary film screening at the University of New Hampshire March 25, 2013.

Credit: Justin Fuller

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