Mountaineering in Peru
May 20 – June 2, 2014

Twelve nights of hotels, alpine lodges, and camping, all meals with exception of in-town meals, in country shuttles/flights $1,750

Trip Overview
The mountains will be your classroom for this two week experience—with the assistance of porters, donkeys, and alpine guides, you will learn mountaineering techniques and the satisfaction of a real challenge. Your journey begins in Lima before a quick flight to the mountain city of Huaraz. After two days of acclimatizing, the group will head to the Way Inn, an alpine bed and breakfast located in the foothills of the Cordillera Blanca range. Beautiful peaks, open ranges, warm people, and a dynamic community await you on this trip—a community you’ll encounter first hand through an immersive service project part way through the experience. Prior experience not required.

While the terrain, mountains, and people we will encounter in Peru will make this an exceptional trip, but a less obvious reward comes from the challenge itself. For this trip, you will work with a small group in tight quarters towards a unified end. You will learn mountaineering skills, the basics of backcountry living, about Peruvian culture and ecology, and push your own limits along the way.

General Schedule of Trip
On May 20th we will meet in Lima’s airport to catch a flight to Huaraz the next day, where we will spend several days acclimatizing on short hikes, gathering and packing supplies for the trip, and sleeping in a hotel. On May 23rd we will drive to the village of Jerush and spend two days farming with families. For the night of the 24th we have been invited to share dinner with these families in their homes. The 25th through 27th we will make our way to the base camp of Maparaju for a summit attempt on the 28th. We will spend the next three days trekking over Cojup Pass, through Cojup Valley, and back to our shuttle to Huaraz for our celebratory dinner. On June 2nd we will fly back to Lima where the trip will conclude.

The Cordillera Blanca
The Cordillera Blanca is renowned as a mountaineering destination as well as a critical source of water and electricity for much of Peru. For a country that receives 80% of its electricity from hydroelectric power, it’s no small wonder that global warming and the retreat of the glaciers is a concern for the people of Peru. For two days, the people of Jerush will be our window into the culture, concerns and joys of life in the Cordillera Blanca range. To truly understand a place you must spend time with the people that call it home, so we will be spending time with a group of farmers early on in the trip—helping with farm work, engaging in conversations, and sharing our meals and cultures.

With Huascaran’s peak exceeding 22,000 feet, the Cordillera Blanca attracts even the most seasoned mountaineers. We’ve set our sights on an ambitious, but attainable alternative to Peru’s highest peak: we will climb the 17,469 foot Maparaju. The group will spend time in the mountain town of Huaraz and with families in Jerush while preparing for our trek through the Cojup Pass to our summit hike.
Transportation
You are responsible for your own flight and transportation to the first hotel in Lima, Peru. We will provide detailed instructions on how to best travel to Lima, or you can travel with the GRAB staff if interested. We do not include the initial airline price into the cost of the trip since there are many ways to arrive and depart from Lima—and you may decide to continue traveling once the trek is over.

Once you have arrived in Lima, we provide coverage for the flight to Huaraz and all other ground transportation needs. A valid passport expiring no sooner than January of 2015 is required for participation.

Preparation
Participants should be physically prepared for this trip, meaning you should be out running or walking with a 30 pound pack three to five times a week to get ready. The altitude for this trip will exceed 10,000 feet, and being physically fit will help to ensure your enjoyment of the experience.

The range of hiking experience is not significant but you should be ready for mountainous terrain, and feel good about walking 5-9 hours a day.

Accommodations/ Meals
All accommodations for this trip consist of hotels, an alpine lodge and six nights of camping. If you are a couple, you will be provided a room with one bed to share in the hotels and single travelers will be paired up. All hotels should have attached bathrooms. In the dormitory style Alpine Lodge, numerous travelers will share a room such as the three story “rock room” built into the side of a boulder. There are usually common areas for trekkers to socialize and enjoy their meals.

All meals—with the exception of in-town meals—are included in this trip, and will be provided by the porters for the backcountry portion.

Weather
In Huaraz, average temperatures lows should be around 35 degrees with highs in the 60s. In the Cordillera Blanca weather and conditions will vary greatly. We will likely see snow, wind, and temperatures ranging from below freezing to the mid 60s.