

KPMG Today - Support Services

Announcements

KPMG's Environmental Steward

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It's the coldest, driest, most unforgiving spot on the planet and sits at the "end of the world." It's Antarctica and it's where Sustainable IT Manager **Darren McGann** just recently returned. He was a team member on the International Antarctic Expedition 2011 and Leadership on the Edge Program.

Darren leads KPMG's internal sustainable IT initiative. Strategically aligned with the firm's Living Green committee, his job is to recommend and help implement energy-efficient measures, evaluate emerging green technologies, and ensure that the firm's financial and environmental results are linked.

The expedition is led by renowned polar explorer and environmental leader Robert Swan – OBE the first person in history to walk to both the North and South poles. Robert was so impressed with KPMG's sustainable IT initiatives lead by Darren that he personally reached out to Lord Michael Hastings, Global Head of Citizenship and Diversity, KPMG International, and recommended that Darren attend the program. "Next thing I know, I was approved to join the expedition as its sustainable IT expert and participate in the leadership program of a lifetime," Darren says.



Darren McGann and Robert Swan

On February 27, Darren departed from Minnesota to join a group of 65 business leaders, entrepreneurs, and educators from 20 countries in Ushuaia, Argentina, the southernmost city in the world and the staging place for a two-week expedition to Antarctica.

KPMG Today recently sat down with Darren to learn more about his experiences on the expedition.

How did you prepare for the expedition?

I knew the expedition was going to be physically challenging so I went running in the morning before work three days a week, coached and played hockey in the evenings, and did cross-country skiing on the weekends. I wanted to be in great physical shape so that I could enjoy every moment.



What did you look forward to the most?

I looked forward to discussing sustainability and corporate responsibility with other climate change professionals and educators. I also looked forward to being in Antarctica and seeing the impacts of climate change firsthand.

Who else took part in the journey?

There were representatives from a variety of organizations such as: Hewlett-Packard, Coca Cola, Shell Oil, China Light and Power, and Lockheed Martin who attended the expedition in addition to Robert Swan, expedition guides, and leadership development professionals.

Describe the most significant highlights of the trip for you.

What resonates the most with me is the engaging discussions about sustainability, climate change, and corporate responsibility all while experiencing the great wilderness by whale watching, camping, and hiking up the side of an active volcano.

In addition, while we were on the expedition, the earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear disaster happened in Japan. It ended up being a significant topic of our discussions – the complexity of the energy sector and most importantly how renewable energy is part of the solution.



Just being in Robert's presence was also a highlight in and of itself. He shared his personal experiences as a leader and described his successes and failures. Coincidentally, Robert (left) is the grandson of William Barclay Peat, a KPMG co-founder.

Another memorable moment was reaching the summit, after a four-hour hike, and having an interesting conversation about climate change with an energy commodities professional from the United Arab Emirates who specializes in the carbon offset exchange as well as fossil fuel exchange. As you can imagine, the conversations in Antarctica are not superficial, they get pretty interesting with such a global team.



Approved By Henry Keizer