# Tahoe City-based guide recounts Nepal quake

**By James Joiner, Daily Beast**

High in the Himalayas, Everest climbers can only hope for the best after Saturday's devastating earthquake.

As the numbers of injured and killed – currently 5,900 and 3,218, respectively–rise in the wake of yesterday's earthquake in Nepal and aftershocks continue to rock the countryside, the first groups of evacuees from nearby Mount Everest's base camp have begun to straggle in to the ravaged capital of Kathmandu. Massive avalanches, unleashed by the quake, destroyed the north side camp, killing 19 people, including Google executive, American Dan Fredinburg.

Pentagon Spokesman Col. Steve Warren said nearly 70 personnel, "including a USAID Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART), the Fairfax County Urban Search and Rescue team and several journalists along with 45 square tons of cargo," took off this morning from Dover Air Force Base bound for Nepal, and are expected to arrive on Monday.

While in no way overshadowing the country-wide devastation wrought by yesterday's quake, the extent of which is still unfolding, there is, on Everest, a chilling sense of déjà vu. This latest disaster comes almost a year to the day after the 2014 Everest avalanche that claimed the lives of 16 Nepalese guides, calling into question the overall safety and cultural integrity of scaling the legendary mountain, often perceived by the public as the pinnacle high alpine achievement.

We spoke with six-time Everest summiteer and founder of Tahoe City-based Alpenglow Expeditions Adrain Ballanger, who is staged at the northern base camp, just miles away from the avalanches and chaos, about what this horrific disaster could

mean for the future of climbing on Everest. Given his limited cell and radio connectivity, Ballanger may not be aware of the scope of the damages in the rest of Nepal.

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