

✘ I've just returned from completing the Climate Ride from New York City to Washington this week, on behalf of UCLA's Emmett Institute on Climate Change and the Environment. As Ann posted earlier, funds raised through the ride benefit the Emmett Institute and Dan Emmett is generously matching, dollar for dollar, every contribution up to \$50,000. The experience was an amazing one that I thought worth sharing.

The ride was beautiful, hard, and moving. Five days, three hundred miles, along gorgeous country roads in classic Northeast fall weather, with the apples and pumpkins out and the leaves just starting to turn. Once we reached the eastern Appalachians on day four I realized just how hilly the region is, and the hills go on for miles! Needless to say that part of the ride was both gorgeous and painful. On Day 5, on the approach to Washington, D.C., the inspiration of reaching the capitol gave me a huge boost of energy, helped by the fact that the ride shifted mostly to downhill. Even better, I had new company on my bike as Emmett Institute board members Andy Sabin and Dan Emmett joined the ride. Despite my age advantage, both are extraordinary riders.

The moving part was mostly the other riders - all these people, many of them not young and not athletes, doing this hard hard thing to try to make a difference. Young, medium, and old; from all walks of life; all linked by a sense of urgency for saving the environment, and - to quote my mother - by all having a lot of gumption. The youngest rider was 14, the oldest 78 (our team member Dan Emmett, who joined for the last day), and a 72 year old completed the whole ride.

Perhaps even more moving were the leaders and staff of Climate Ride, who worked unbelievably hard all day and most of every night - a bunch of them continuously for 23 days, because they moved directly from the Midwest Climate Ride to the NY-DC ride. These folks created an experience that was not only executed with the precision and skill of a mini Normandy landing - attending to every detail with care and intelligence, on top of every problem almost before it happened - but was also bursting with fun, humor, and kindness. This is an organization with a big heart and a sharp mind. Speaking as an old enviro-hippie-radical gone establishment, these kids make me feel like the world might be OK. ✘

The next Climate Ride will take place next year in beautiful California, with a route from San Francisco to Sacramento via Napa. The dates aren't set yet but once they are, if you're a biker or want to become one, sign up! It's truly an incredible experience.