



Thursday, March 22, 2001

## OU alumna prepares for North Pole expedition

By **Jeff Samoray**, OU Web Writer

OU alumna Susan Martin, CAS '80, is an adventurous woman. When not busy with her teenage son and daughter, the single mom and eighth-grade science teacher from Boyne City, Mich., enjoys biking, hiking, running, rock climbing, skydiving and white water rafting.

But these activities don't compare to Martin's latest adventure, which she calls "the hardest thing I've ever done in terms of a personal challenge."

In April, Martin will embark on **WomenQuest Polar Trek 2001**, an attempt by 12 women to become the first all-female group to ski to the North Pole from Russia. The group will begin their 150-mile journey, which is expected to last three weeks, at an ice station at the 88th parallel in Siberia.

WomenQuest members, comprised of educators, journalists and businesswomen from regions across the United States and Canada, range in age from 27-51. Their main goal is to provide middle-school-aged girls with positive female role models and to encourage an interest in science and mathematics. Group members plan to collect data for scientific research during the expedition.

"We want to involve as many middle schoolers as possible," Martin said. "We'll be communicating with students by satellite transmissions and answering their questions over the Internet. We'll also be developing an educational CD-ROM that will allow them to replicate our trip and make choices based upon our real-life encounters. We'll also have a photojournalist on the trip with us as well as a videographer, and we'll produce a TV documentary."

As the departure date draws near, Martin said she's experiencing a mix of emotions, but they are not deterring her from the expedition.

"Intermittently I have fears," she said. "The ice we'll have to cross does break due to the ocean currents and we'll have to find our way around the pressure ridges, which can be as high as 30 feet. I also worry about frostbite, but the technology has improved a lot since (Robert) Peary first reached the pole (in 1909)."

For more information on WomenQuest Polar Trek 2001, visit the website at [www.womenquest.org](http://www.womenquest.org).

A complete story on Martin will be published in the Spring/Summer issue of **Oakland University Magazine**, available in July. You can subscribe to the magazine by becoming an **OU Alumni Association** member.

### SUMMARY

In April, Martin will embark on WomenQuest Polar Trek 2001, an attempt by 12 women to become the first all-female group to ski to the North Pole from Russia.

Created by CareTech Administrator ([webservices@caretechsolutions.com](mailto:webservices@caretechsolutions.com)) on Thursday, March 22, 2001  
Modified by CareTech Administrator ([webservices@caretechsolutions.com](mailto:webservices@caretechsolutions.com)) on Thursday, March 22, 2001  
Article Start Date: Wednesday, November 26, 2003