

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: [Name, telephone, e-mail]

**5000 Mile Quest Brings Mother-Daughter Team to [Town/City]
Cross-Country Hike Aims To Raise \$1 Million For Bone Marrow Disease**

A mother-daughter team from Wisconsin arrives in [Town/City] on [Date] as part of their 5000 mile, coast-to-coast hike to raise awareness and funds to fight bone marrow disease. Robin Grapa, a 26-year-old aplastic anemia survivor, and her mother, Patty Laatsch, hope to raise \$1 million for the Aplastic Anemia & MDS International Foundation, Inc., a non-profit organization dedicated to helping patients and their families battle bone marrow diseases.

[Include information about local activities that will take place for Robin and Patty's arrival.]

The team began their hike February 4 on the Atlantic seashore in Delaware, and will finish at Point Reyes National seashore in mid-October. They will follow the American Discovery Trail, a journey of nearly 5057 miles across a dozen states.

“With my new lease on life, I decided I wanted to make a difference—and a big one,” says Robin, who was diagnosed with Aplastic Anemia in 1997 and is now in complete remission. “With more research we can find cures for bone marrow diseases and give patients the hope they need to overcome these debilitating illnesses.”

Aplastic anemia and other bone marrow diseases are non-contagious and occur when the bone marrow stops making enough healthy blood cells. Every 17 minutes someone in America is diagnosed with a bone marrow disease, a life-threatening condition for which, in most cases, the cause is unknown.

“I couldn’t possibly let my baby girl venture across the country by herself, so I decided to join her,” says Patty. “I hope other people will join us, if not physically then at least in spirit, by supporting our hike and helping to improve the lives of everyone suffering from these deadly diseases.”

People can become a “Trail Angel” and help sponsor Robin and Patty’s walk by making tax-deductible contributions online at www.ourhike.com/donate.html, or by check payable to “AA&MDSIF” and sending it to “Our Hike for AA&MDSIF,” PO Box 613, Annapolis, MD. 21404-0613.

[Include other ways local people can help.]

“Most people don’t know much about bone marrow disease until someone in their family is diagnosed,” says Robin. “If just one child and their family become familiar with the disease, the experience will be less scary. If that happens even once, I will know this hike was a success.”

People can learn more about Robin and Patty’s hike at www.aamds.org or www.ourhike.com. Contact Jennifer Krammes at 800-747-2820, krammes@aamds.org, to for more details on becoming a part of “Our Hike.”

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Founded in 1983, the Aplastic Anemia & MDS International Foundation, Inc. is dedicated to serving as a resource for patient assistance, advocacy, and support. AA&MDSIF provides patients and their families with educational materials and medical information, and supporting research to find treatments and cures for aplastic anemia (AA), myelodysplastic syndromes (MDS), paroxysmal nocturnal hemoglobinuria (PNH) and other bone marrow failure diseases.