



For Immediate Release

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To the Nth Degree: Northern Virginia Entrepreneur Set Sights on the North Pole

Hopecam, Reston, VA, March 7, 2023 – A Reston, Virginia-based entrepreneur is on a mission to ski 60 miles to the North Pole in April.

Len Forkas, 63, will join a team of explorers taking on the North Pole Last Degree, an expedition on the frozen Arctic Ocean that starts at 89 degrees north and ends at 90 degrees north.

Led by renowned polar guide Doug Stoup, the team will congregate on April 3 in the remote Norwegian village of Longyearbyen for a couple of days of preparations before flying 600 miles to Barneo, an Arctic Ocean ice station. From there, the group will travel via helicopter to one degree from the geographic North Pole. Forkas and his fellow explorers will spend approximately one week skiing on top of the world, where temperatures can plummet to minus 35 degrees Celsius.

For Forkas, an ultra-endurance athlete, the North Pole Last Degree provides an unprecedented way to push himself. The wireless communications entrepreneur began competing in ultra-endurance sports back in 2002, when his son, Matt, was diagnosed with leukemia at age nine (“The exercise helped me cope with the stress of Matt’s illness,” he explains). One year later, he founded Hopecam, a charity that supports children with cancer.

April’s expedition is also an opportunity for Forkas to raise funds for his nonprofit, which is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year. His goal: \$60,000 to match the 60 miles he will ski at the North Pole.

“I know some people think I’m crazy,” says Forkas. “But I think of myself as crazy about Hopecam’s kids. I hope I’ve convinced everybody that I’ll go to any length to support them.”

The North Pole expedition will bring Forkas one step closer toward his goal of completing the Explorers Grand Slam, an almost unfathomable physical challenge consisting of the North Pole, the South Pole, and all Seven Summits (the highest mountain peaks of each of the seven continents). According to the Explorers Grand Slam website, fewer than 75 people have completed the challenge. Forkas—who has already trekked five of the seven summits—plans to join this elite group by his 65th birthday in August 2024.

Headquartered in Reston, Virginia, Hopecam (www.hopecam.org) is a 501(c)(3) organization that provides technology to reduce the loneliness felt by pediatric cancer patients as they undergo treatment. To date, Hopecam has virtually connected more than 2,500 children to over 45,000 classmates throughout the U.S and abroad.