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JAMESTOWN — Robyn Staup left her teaching job at Myers Park High School in Charlotte, N.C., and moved back home to the Dayton area last summer because she said she wanted a change. She has gotten her wish.

Staup, who is the Earth and life sciences coordinator at the Boonshoft Museum of Discovery, was selected as one of only 14 teachers participating in the first installment of PolarTREC, a three-year international research initiative in conjunction with the International Polar Year.

"I wanted the chance to explore research firsthand, the excitement of having been there and done that, and share it with the public and student groups at the museum," Staup said.

Staup was scheduled to depart from Alaska on April 9 on the USS Healy, a 450-foot Coast Guard ice breaker ship. For six weeks, she will be participating in the Bering Ecosystem Project segment on the climatic conditions on the eastern Bering Shelf.

She also will participate in tagging seals, walruses and other native mammals for tracking purposes.

"For me, just having the chance to be out with the Coast Guard and finding out what's going on with nitrogen supplies and walruses is exciting," Staup said. "Being there, seeing it, and not just reading about it on my own."

Staup, whose expedition is called the BEST cruise, will be working with an interdisciplinary team. She said she was told to expect to work 12-hour days, six days a week, in temperatures from below zero to about 20 degrees.

She will be working under Raymond Sambrotto of the Lamont-Doherty Observatory in Palisades, N.Y.

While on the expedition, she will be posting daily journals, which will be accessible at www.Polartrec.com, click on BEST cruise.

Boonshoft will offer opportunities to interact with Staup through their Web site www.boonshoftmuseum.org.

Staup is a 1994 graduate of Greeneview High School and lives in Jamestown.

She graduated from the University of North Carolina Wilmington in 1998 with a degree in marine biology.

Contact this reporter at joanneclodfelter@am.ritech.net.

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- **Robyn Staup, Earth and life sciences coordinator for the Boonshoft Museum of Discovery in Dayton, is one of 14 teachers selected to conduct research on polar ice in the Arctic with an international team as part of PolarTREC. Staff photo by Jan Underwood**
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