



## OAR'S FIRST KILIMANJARO CLIMB FOR AUTISM

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Contact: Wendy McKinnon, Programs and Outreach Associate  
(703)243-3466, [scholarship@researchautism.org](mailto:scholarship@researchautism.org)

*Arlington, VA*— In an unprecedented effort to spread awareness and garner financial support for the Organization for Autism Research (OAR), Sarah Carter is determined to climb Africa's Mt. Kilimanjaro this July. This will be the first time anyone will have climbed a mountain for autism research and OAR.

Sarah, a 26-year old Harvard alumna currently working at Boston Children's Hospital, says that her brother's struggle with autism inspired her to consider this enormous undertaking.

The aptly-named *Ascent for Autism* aims to help improve the lives of those affected by the disorder by supporting the unique work of OAR. Using evidence-based research, OAR focuses solely on helping families, educators, and individuals with autism answer questions they confront on a daily basis. By the time of her climb, Sarah hopes to raise \$30,000 for the cause.

"I am excited to be in a position to support the unique efforts of such a dedicated young woman," declared OAR Executive Director Mike Maloney. "Sarah has undeniably given this personal challenge a lot of thought. Her great ascent will mirror the struggle of individuals with autism, and she will accomplish it in much the same way – by taking the uphill route and doing it one step at a time."

Sarah's goal is the summit of Mt. Kilimanjaro, an upward climb of 19,340 feet. Though she is not an experienced climber, Sarah is confident that with enough time for mental and physical preparation she can reach the top. As Sarah devotes the next six months to conditioning, she will be making important decisions such as what gear to use, which route to take, and what trekking company to select to guide her up the mountain.

To share her thoughts, inspirations, and preparations for this effort, Sarah has created a [blog page](#) that will be continually updated as she nears the date of her ascent. To learn more about how to help Sarah, visit <http://www.researchautism.org/news/otherevents/AscentforAutism.asp>.

**ABOUT OAR:** The Organization for Autism Research (OAR) is a national, nonprofit organization formed and led by relatives of children and adults with autism and Asperger Syndrome. OAR is dedicated to promoting research that can be applied to help families, educators, caregivers, and individuals with autism find much-needed answers to their immediate and urgent questions.

Since 2001, OAR has awarded more than \$2.2 million to fund 112 applied research studies and published six community-friendly resource guides in its *Life Journey through Autism* series. OAR

introduced the Schwallie Family Scholarship Program offering college and vocational school scholarships to individuals with autism spectrum disorders in 2007, and in 2009 and 2010 produced Operation Autism, [www.operationautismonline.org](http://www.operationautismonline.org), a web-based resource for military families touched by autism, and a companion resource guide, *Life Journey through Autism: A Guide for Military Families*.

For more information about OAR, please visit [www.researchautism.org](http://www.researchautism.org).