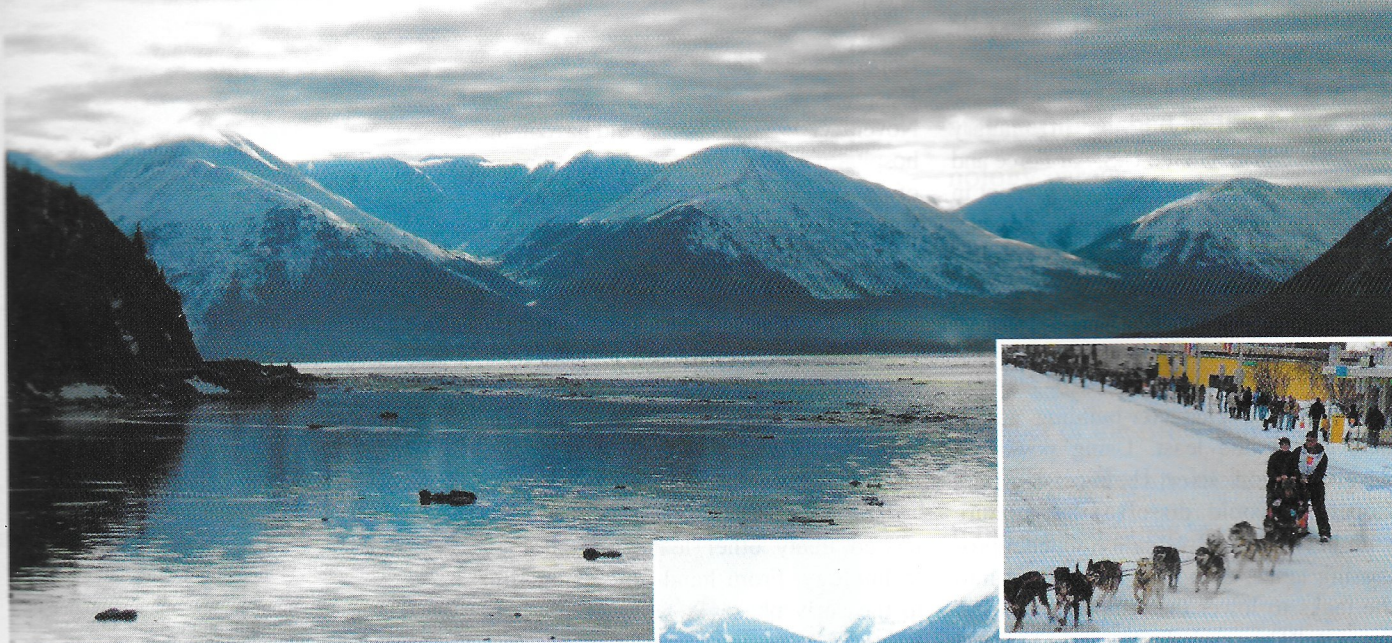


North to Alaska

One traveling tech trades sun for fun



What makes a person leave a region known for its warmth and sunshine for one famous for its long winters and heavy snowfalls? For traveling technologist Gloria Hernandez, CNMT, it was a chance to see the United States and, more importantly, a chance to hit the slopes and play in the snow.

Born in Spain, but raised in Tampa, Fla., Hernandez decided on a life on the road four years ago when a friend became a traveling tech. "I wanted to travel with him, so I became [a traveler] as well," she says. "Also, I have really never been outside of Florida since I was a kid, and I thought it was a great opportunity to see the country."

Hernandez originally took a position in Alaska two years ago, but left to take assignments in various hospitals throughout the continental United States. Fate would play a role and Hernandez once again found herself working in Alaska, currently at Providence Alaska Medical Center in Anchorage.

Providence renewed her assignment in the beginning of March, meaning Hernandez could stay in Alaska and watch the famous Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race, a more than 1,100-mile trek from Anchorage to Nome, Alaska. This year marks the second time she witnessed the race. (The first time was during her first Alaskan assignment in 2002.)

"The race was awesome," Hernandez says of her first experience two years ago. "I had never seen it before. I didn't even know what



(Clockwise from top) The Alaskan backdrop provides an excellent landscape for the winter sports enthusiast; the 2002 Iditarod; Hernandez outside of work.

the race was. That's how sheltered I was in Florida. It was just neat seeing all of the dogs, the running and feeling like you are part of the sport."

Sports that Hernandez are avidly a "part of" include snowboarding and cross-country skiing, which, she says, she does every opportunity she gets.

"I like the winter season and outdoor sports, so living here is not a big deal for me," Hernandez says, referring to the drastic climate change from Florida to Alaska. "It's really beautiful here and the winters aren't as bad as everybody thinks they are."

— Tom Schaffner