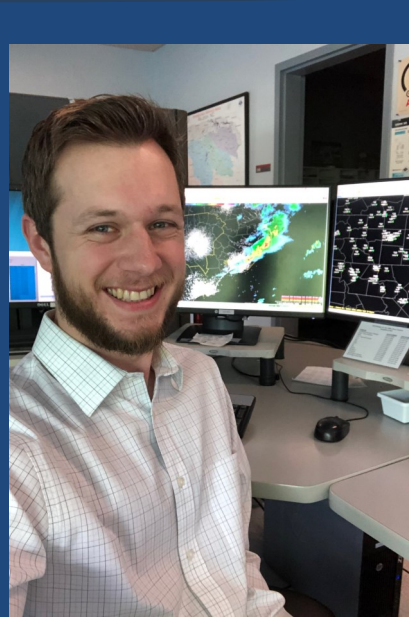


Q & A with NWS Raleigh Meteorologist Aaron Swiggett



Aaron Swiggett

Position: Entry Level Meteorologist

Education: Virginia Tech

Hometown: Fredericksburg, Virginia

Where did you go to school and what made you want to work at The National Weather Service?

I went to school at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (also known as Virginia Tech) to study the science that I love, meteorology. The National Weather Service is the holy grail when it comes to careers in meteorology. There are so many different avenues to explore that you can always find a place where you feel at home.

What was your NWS Career Path to get to NWS Raleigh and how long have you been at WFO RAH?

I first started volunteering at the NWS office in Blacksburg in the summer of 2016 and enjoyed doing the balloon launches that collected upper air data that is needed to help understand the dynamics of what's going on in each layer of the atmosphere. I also learned about the process and all the science that goes into a weather forecast. After graduating from VT and deciding I wanted to start my career with the Weather Service, I accepted a job as an ELF (Entry Level Forecaster) at the office here in Raleigh, NC. This is my first stepping stone on my career path and what an interesting one it has been so far since I started. With the circumstances we have face due to the outbreak, I have enjoyed it so far and can't wait to see where my career takes me.

What got you into weather?

My mother. As a kid, I was petrified of the dark clouds and booming thunder. My mom, however, enjoyed sitting on the porch and listening to the roar of thunder from a distant storm on a summer afternoon. Seeing her calmness and fascination with weather quickly transitioned my fear into wonder and passion.



What is your favorite type of weather?

My passion has always been severe weather. I have gone on a handful of storm chases in the Great Plains and upper Midwest with the Hokie Storm Chase Team based out of Virginia Tech. On many occasions I was the lead forecaster and navigator for the group alongside our fearless leader and professor, David Carroll.

What is the most memorable weather event you have experienced?

My most memorable weather moment was standing a couple miles away from my first supercell. Watching the enormous structure twist and turn as warm air surged at our backs was quite the experience, and one that I will never forget.

What non-weather hobbies do you enjoy?

In my down times, I enjoy the art of photography. This hobby stemmed from my first storm chase. I just wanted to capture moments on this experience that I never wanted to forget. However, what I found was an incredible art form that is truly different for everyone with a camera. Capturing an instant in time that is preserved forever in an image is quite magical.