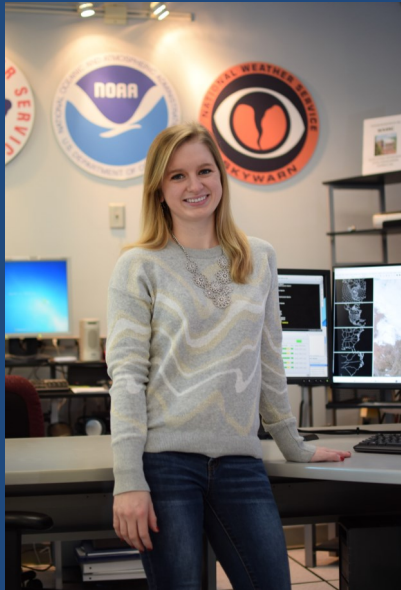


# Q & A with NWS Raleigh Meteorologist Chrissy Cockrell



**Chrissy Cockrell**

**Position:** Entry Level Meteorologist

**Education:** Florida International University

**Hometown:** Key Largo, FL

## **Where did you go to school and what was your NWS Career Path to get to NWS Raleigh?**

I graduated from Florida International University in Miami, Florida. When I started my path in school I did not know what I was going to do with my future degree. When I began volunteering at the local NWS office in Miami, that is when I realized I wanted to work in a forecast office. I applied to a few places and Raleigh was one of my top three choices. I selected Raleigh because it is not too far from the mountains and not too far from the coast. Moving from a “one season” town to an “all season” city also intrigued me to try something new.

## **What got you into weather?**

Living in South Florida my whole life I always did outside activities whether it was going boating, to the beach or participating in after school sports. All these outdoor activities were weather dependent. I would always be watching the weather in the morning to see how the weather would be that day, or the next few days. When I was in high school I took a science class that covered the basic dynamics of weather. Learning that there was more to weather than I thought, I realized I could study it and make a career out of it.

## **What is your current role here at NWS Raleigh?**

My current position is an Entry Level Meteorologist. I am responsible mainly for river and lake data collection, running routine hydrologic products, completing quality control on climate data as well as public



service outreach. Every day I am also learning little by little what the roles of a general forecaster are in order to one day become a forecaster myself.

### **What is your favorite type of weather to forecast?**

Severe weather, because watching a storm develop outside and on radar is fascinating to watch. Living in the Florida Keys I would see this happen quite often because the air is moist from the oceans, usually unstable because of all the sunshine, and a sea breeze is usually in place. Knowing that there is going to be severe weather within the coming days helps me want to understand the current weather even more because you have to understand the now to know what's coming.

### **What is the most challenging part of your job?**

Being that this is my first job in the National Weather Service, every day is a new learning experience, and I love all of it. There is a lot to absorb in a short amount of time, and depending on the weather, it can get very high paced. Also, because I have never lived in North Carolina, I have to learn about the climate and these things you call seasons.

### **What is the most memorable weather event you have experienced?**

Living and growing up in the Florida Keys most of my memorable weather events were Hurricanes. The three major ones I remember are Charley in 2004 that hit right over my grandparents' house, Wilma in 2005 that brushed past the keys and across the middle of Florida, and very recently Hurricane Irma. All of these events inspired to me learn more about weather and understand why events like this happen. Being able to study and understand Irma while it grew in to a monster of a storm was very exciting, this was a textbook category five hurricane prior to landfall. Unfortunately when it was heading directly for the Keys, I had to change my focus from learning from the storm, to fleeing the storm.

### **What do you like to do in your spare time?**

Besides catching up on the newest "Netflix Originals", I enjoy spending time with family and of course taking my puppies to the dog park. My recent move to North Carolina has me exploring my new home including walking, hiking, and any other outdoor events or activities to help me familiarize myself with all that Raleigh has to offer.