

Julie Demuth
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Dear Ms. Demuth,

I am a graduating senior studying meteorology at The Pennsylvania State University. I was pleased to meet you at the 87th American Meteorological Society Annual Meeting in San Antonio, Texas, this past January where I first heard of the Weather and Society * Integrated Studies (WAS*IS) program. In my junior year I began to realize how the ideal career for me is one that combines people and science – and I see this workshop as a giant stride in that direction and as an opportunity to educate myself and contribute to the field.

As a student at Penn State, I have chosen to take challenging courses in a variety of areas to obtain a broad range of experiences – including classes on scuba diving, coral reef research, law, economics, and history. I have taken extra classes to expand my knowledge base because of my many interests and desire to clearly communicate with individuals in other fields in a manner they will understand. My experience in various classes would be particularly helpful in enhancing dialogue between different disciplines. Additionally, serving as a teaching assistant has helped me improve my ability to communicate scientific issues to a non-technical audience.

This past fall, several discussions in my Tropical Meteorology class were devoted to questioning how the public perceives forecasts issued and how warning systems and forecast communication could be improved. This semester, I have a class on natural hazards in which we study earthquakes, volcanoes, and tsunamis, as well as meteorological events. In this class we work in groups and on an individual basis to write vulnerability assessments, evaluate socio-economic impacts, and synthesize protocols to better prepare for and respond to future hazards. I feel my experience from these particular classes and others will make me a useful participant in the workshop.

I stand at the beginning of a new path as I graduate in May. Whether I will accept admission to a graduate program utilizing my meteorological knowledge in combination with the social sciences or decide to enter the job market immediately I hope to have the opportunity to integrate my study of science and the needs of society. My goals are very similar to those of WAS*IS – to apply my meteorological knowledge in a way that will enhance the understanding of the interplay between meteorology and the social sciences to benefit the public. I am excited and hopeful at the possibility of attending NCAR's Societal Impacts WAS*IS workshop this summer.

Sincerely,
Laura Clemente

Senior, Penn State Meteorology