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## Interest Statement – WAS\*IS

By the start of the workshop, I will have received my Bachelor of Science in meteorology/climatology. As a meteorology/climatology major, I have come to realize that meteorology and climatology is much more than just understanding the processes of the atmosphere and Earth's climate system. In my undergraduate career I have pushed towards more public applications and outreach as well as research geared towards social science application. It has become my belief that to further protect citizens from natural disasters and extreme events, research must be applied to how society perceives scientific research as well as public warnings.

As an undergraduate meteorology/climatology major at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, many a friend and acquaintance assumes I desire to be a forecaster or hassle me because of the perception the meteorologists consistently put out wrong forecasts. Situations such as that have pushed me towards a route that is geared towards dispelling such misconceptions and understanding why individuals believe what they believe and act the way they do given a certain amount of information. My biggest influence has been Daniel Nietfeld and the research and surveying he did during the aftermath of the Super Tuesday outbreak in February 2008. The idea that individuals do not take or seek proper cover when given a tornado warning is baffling to those within the field of meteorology, but may not be as trivial as one might think. To be a meteorologist and truly *understand* how the public thinks is an angle the field has put on the back burner, in my opinion, for far too long.

My undergraduate research, though not extensive, has been an attempt at linking together meteorology and climatology directly to public use and application. A project during my junior year consisted of inquiring the feasibility of and possible usefulness of an airport climatology system for small aviation craft and new pilots. Currently, in my senior year, I am researching *El Nino/La Nina and Possible Severe Weather Correlations* to possibly aide in long term forecasts as to the 'severity' of a severe weather season. As an undergraduate, it is difficult to find willing faculty or programs built towards social science application of meteorological and climatological knowledge and research, but with the WAS\*IS program and snowballing interest in social science applications, I am more than hopeful and excited for the future.

The next step for me is graduate school, and the search has been arduous. As mentioned above, full programs following the WAS\*IS ideals are not readily out there. The previous may hold true, but it has not stopped me from pursuing a social science aspect as I have sought out faculty at institutions such as Penn St, Oklahoma, and Nebraska that work on projects that involve meteorology and/or climatology and social science angles. I feel that the WAS\*IS program will only further my interests in and help me further refine my interests in weather and society. It is my full intention to go through a Masters program and into a PhD program and stick with the social aspects of weather and climate. I can only hope that I am accepted into the WAS\*IS program and am allowed the opportunity to collaborate and learn from individuals who share many of the same visions and interests I do.