

My background in economics and entrepreneurship has helped me to understand that there is a balance in life that is determined by people's desires and motivations. Living in Santa Monica, CA, I am surrounded by people who seem environmentally conscious, but absentmindedly wash down their sidewalks with a hose. My academic and career goals are centered on understanding how and why people use their environmental resources and how I can be an agent of change toward maintaining the quality of lives in the face of climate change. I would like to achieve this goal by creating educational documentaries and presentations about severe weather, climate change, and their impacts on societies and individuals around the world.

Since I want to do interdisciplinary studies, I'm not sure which graduate program would best suit my needs. I am currently looking at the CU Boulder Geography Department's "Environment-Society Relations" major as well as University of Denver's "International Disaster Psychology" program. I want to incorporate the ideology of WAS*IS into my studies as soon as possible. I have experienced a lot of resistance and misunderstandings when I try to explain research in weather and society. It is as if people's minds are categorized and blocked off to the blending of ideas and the natural continuum of life.

Throughout my last two years at Santa Monica College I have taken initiative to seek out opportunities to mold my future. One way my efforts have been rewarded so far was being chosen as a student volunteer for the American Meteorological Society's annual meeting in Phoenix, AZ this past January. I was able to make contact and meet in person with a role model of mine - Eve Gruntfest. It was so exciting to be personally invited by her to the WAS*IS gathering! I loved meeting the professionals involved in integrated research.

Because I am not currently at a college that is connected to a research community, it has been difficult to forge ahead on my own. I am very proud of my determination, but sometimes I feel like an outsider. I am hoping this workshop will link me to scientists, researchers and peers so that I can feel more connected to the atmospheric science community. Just like at the AMS gathering of WAS*ISers, I am eager to listen to the ideas and experiences of professionals who understand my interests.

I want the WAS*IS workshop to help me see the best niche for my skills. In addition to guiding my own future, I am extremely excited to share the information I learn with other students at my college. Through my mentorship in the counseling department, I want to show students that there is a much broader range of options available than what is currently being presented to them. I have already made contact with professors and student groups that have passion for weather and climate. Because I would ultimately like to create documentaries on societal impacts of weather and climate, I plan to create a presentation to share with these groups of students about the opportunities to weave social science into weather and climate studies. I hope my actions will deepen the roots of the WAS*IS grassroots efforts. This feels like the perfect stepping stone towards my goals because it includes public speaking, educating, and inspiring others. I think early motivation is important. Motivation starts with information.