My NASA Data - STEM Career Connections

Meet Dr. Yolanda Shea, Atmospheric Scientist

Job Title

Atmospheric Scientist

Bio

How long have you been at NASA Langley?

Since 2014

What’s a recent project you were involved in and what was your role in it?

I am working on a science team for a satellite mission that is designed to help us get a clearer picture than we currently have of the Earth's system and how it is changing. I have been investigating how accurate our measurements need to be to detect changes in clouds.

What inspired you to pursue science as a career?

Starting in early middle school I became interested in the explanations behind the weather maps and satellite images shown on TV. I liked how the meteorologists talked about the different parts of the atmosphere like temperature, moisture, and winds at different heights in the atmosphere, and then put information about those different parts together to form the story of our weather forecasts.

What do you love most about your job?

I love that studying Earth science is like working on a jigsaw puzzle. In my day-to-day work, I'm working on a small piece of that puzzle. I can step back and imagine the completed picture and how my puzzle piece fits into it. This helps me to place my work into a larger context. Sometimes the actual picture differs from what I imagined, but when even a part of it is finished, I can see how my work, and the work of my colleagues, helps to answer the big picture questions we're asking about the Earth system. Those moments are satisfying and exciting.

NASA Professional Profile