
My NASA Data - STEM Career Connections

Meet Janel Thomas, Weather Forecaster



Job Title

Weather Forecaster

Multimedia Resources

- [ESW Career Spotlight: Janel Thomas](#)
- [NASA Scientists Explain the Art of Creating Digital Hurricanes](#)

Work Description

Check out this interview, taken from the NASA Earth Science Week video, where Janel is interviewed about her experiences with the weather, as a child and now as a weather forecaster.

[Video: NASA | ESW Career Spotlight: Janel Thomas](#)

Video

NASA | ESW Career Spotlight: Janel Thomas | <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pcX5ZsVGbOE> | Source: NASA Goddard

"I'm from the Midwest. I'm from south of St. Louis, Missouri, so I've seen my fair share of tornados. And when I was probably 8 years old I experienced my first tornado. And, my family, my home, everything was fine; we survived it. But it was enough that it scared me so bad that I figured if I learned more about it, it wouldn't scare me anymore. So I was an elementary school student with weather books lining my shelves, so it kind of started really young that I would be less scared if I just learned more.

My name is Janel Thomas, and I'm a forecaster for the HS3 Mission for hurricane science and research. I have my Bachelor's of Meteorology from St. Louis University in Missouri, and then I'm currently pursuing my Master's degree at the University of Maryland Baltimore County. My current advisor has been working with the NASA hurricane missions for many, many years and so coming on as his graduate student I was able to work with the Genesis and Rapid Intensification Processes, the GRIP Mission in 2010 and then take more of a leadership role in the forecasting team here for HS3.

I can say the very most amazing experience I've ever had was working with GRIP. Being able to be in the plane, looking out the window and seeing the hurricane surrounding, seeing the eye wall, breaking through, seeing the water below, seeing the sun shining above me, and just the stadium feel of the clouds was probably the best experience of my entire life. And just right behind that, the people that I get to interact with, the research I do, the papers I read, the scientists I see on TV, on the Weather Channel, I actually get to work with them face to face. They know my name, they know my first name, I get to talk to them on a first name basis. And it's really neat to make those connections because hopefully in the future when I'm wanting to continue my profession that I have a great background of scientists that know how I work and have seen me working and they're great references for me in the future."