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## My NASA Data - STEM Career Connections

### Meet Kristopher Bedka, Senior Research Scientist



#### Job Title

Senior Research Scientist at NASA Langley Research Center

#### Bio

##### Where are you from?

I am from Chicago, IL.

##### What do you do?

My colleagues and I use satellite data collected by satellites in geostationary orbit and low-earth-orbit to study clouds. We process these data to learn about clouds. For example, we find answers to questions like:

- How high and thick are the clouds?
- Are their tops made of ice or water?
- How do they influence the Earth's radiation balance?

One of my particular areas of expertise is studying the development of hazardous convective storms. We use satellite-based data to automatically detect areas where conditions such as hail, tornadoes, damaging winds, and/or aviation turbulence and icing are likely to occur.

I also do some educational outreach work as well. I visit schools to meet with students and tell them about what I do, my career path, and what it's like working for NASA.

##### What missions are you involved in?

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The closest connection would be the CERES mission, an instrument on Terra and Aqua as well as other satellites. Scientists need to have very detailed depictions of cloud cover to understand the energy exchange and balance on Earth.

### **What was your career path?**

All of my degrees have been in meteorology and atmospheric science. I went to Northern Illinois University and then on to the University of Wisconsin-Madison where I also attended school until I began working at their Cooperative Institute for Meteorological Satellite Studies (CIMSS). From there, I moved on to working at NASA Langley.

### **What do you do for fun?**

I like watching and playing sports. I also like gardening and landscaping. My art skills are about the equivalent of a first grader, so flowers and plants are a great type of art form for me. I also like cooking and eating all sorts of ethnic foods.

### **What inspires you?**

The desire to keep pushing forward and to understand things that others have never done before. In atmospheric science, you start looking at one area, working hard and researching it in depth, and then you realize you might be one of only five people who know what you know. You meet top scientists in the field and it is interesting to connect with them and their research and understand how they became the best of the best. Seeing other people work hard inspires me to work every bit as hard.

### **Any favorite quote(s) that you would like to share?**

“Shoot for the moon and hope to get off the launching pad.” – Patrick Minnis, Recently Retired From NASA Langley

Credit: GLOBE Observer