

Department of the Earth Sciences Newsletter

SUNY College at Brockport, Spring 2017



Senior meteorology majors **Miles Bliss, Jill Reynolds, Amanda Burke, Cecilia McCaffrey,** and **Kristian Oliver,** met up with 2016 graduate **Randy Chase** (far right) at the Annual Meeting of the American Meteorological Society in January.



Amanda Burke presented a poster entitled “Connections between positive lightning and convective processes in hail-to-flash-flood transitioning storm elements”. A copy of her abstract is available online:

<https://ams.confex.com/ams/97Annual/webprogram/Paper316714.html>

Amanda commented about the conference: “Since I am planning to go to graduate school next year, the AMS conference was a great opportunity. In addition to presenting my poster on my undergraduate research, I was able to attend many talks which brought me up to date on the current state of the science, and I was invited to receptions to a couple of the graduate schools I am considering. I’ve even had the

opportunity to meet some of the people who have authored the papers I’ve been reading. AMS also has a large representation from private sector companies who are looking to hire students and recent graduates. I’d strongly recommend attending the AMS conference to any upperclassman, no matter what you plan to do in meteorology.”



Again this year, SUNY Brockport meteorology students joined undergraduates, graduate students, and faculty from more than 75 colleges and universities in the national forecasting contest, Wx Challenge. Forecasters compete against local National Weather Service offices and computer models to produce the best forecast of high and low temperature, winds, and precipitation. The Challenge rotates from one city to another every two weeks, and the top 10% of forecasters qualify for the end-of-year tournament. Students in several Brockport meteorology classes are required to participate in order to hone their forecasting skills. 2016 graduate Aidan Kuroski finished second overall in the tournament for the 2015-2016 challenge.

In 2016-2017, Brockport finished in twelfth place, ranking as the highest undergraduate-only institution and leading such school as University of Georgia, Georgia Tech, and the University of Illinois. Currently, four students qualify for this year’s tournament, and we wish them the best of luck!

You can check the latest results at the following link:

http://www.wxchallenge.com/challenge/cumulative_results.php

Northeastern Storm Conference March 10-12, 2017

Drs. Jessup and Rochette and nine meteorology majors attended the 42nd Annual Northeastern Storm Conference in Saratoga, NY. Four of our meteorology majors gave presentations on their senior research projects.



Jillian Reynolds gave an oral presentation entitled “Influence of severe weather on flood-producing rainfall”.

Amanda Burke presented a poster entitled “Damaging Winds as a Result of Thunderstorm Collapse in the Northeastern U.S.”



Miles Bliss presented a poster entitled “Effect of a Shortwave Trough on the Resulting Snow-to-Liquid Ratio of Lake Effect Snow Events Occurring in the Tug Hill Plateau”.

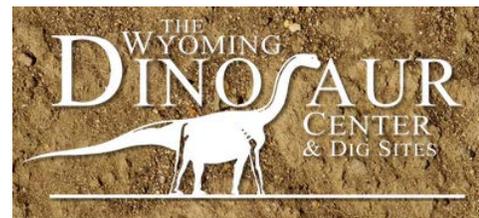
Michael Byrnes gave an oral presentation entitled “Determining the variability of a severe thunderstorm’s parameters with respect to the topography of the Hudson River Valley”.

A copy of the conference proceedings is available at:

<http://www.lyndonams.org/nesc/conference-booklet/>

Brockport Graduate wins AMS Award

2016 graduate **Randy Chase** received the Macelwayne Award from the American Meteorological Society. The nationally competitive award is given to the the best undergraduate research paper selected from the many submissions for the award. Randy’s project examined ozone transport in the tropics. Randy is now a graduate student at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, where he studies atmospheric aerosols. Congratulations Randy!



Sophomore geology major **Meg Dobinski** has been selected for an internship at the Wyoming Dinosaur Center in Thermopolis, WY. Meg will spend six weeks at the museum helping with excavations, interacting with visitors, learning fossil preparation techniques, and participating in all aspects of the operation of a small geological museum.

Retiring Faculty

Two geology faculty, Dr. Judy Massare and Dr. Whitney Autin, are retiring from the Earth Sciences department this year. Dr. Massare retired in December, 2016, but was kind enough to teach Senior Seminar during the spring semester. Having been at Brockport since 1992, her expertise is in paleogeology. She has recently visited museums across the United States and United Kingdom to re-classify marine reptile fossils that were originally categorized over 100 years ago.



Dr. Autin is retiring in May, 2017 after 20 years of teaching at Brockport. He is an expert in soils, stratigraphy, and sedimentology.



The Golden Eagle Forecast



Meteorology students continued their collaboration with Brockport athletics that began last year. Students develop detailed forecasts for the coaching staff for all home and away games for Brockport sports teams. This helps coaches and administrators with decisions about cancellations and postponements and gives Brockport teams an edge, knowing what to conditions to expect for the game. Brockport computer science student Ryan Tampone created a website that student forecasters use to enter their forecasts.

Skywarn Storm Spotter Training



Personnel from the National Weather Service office in Buffalo visited the Brockport campus on Thursday, March 30th to certify interested students as official storm spotters for the NWS. Trained spotters report damage and hazardous weather conditions to NWS forecasters, providing an essential service on behalf of the general public. Several of our students are now part of this network of trained spotters!

For more information on our programs and students, visit our website:
https://www.brockport.edu/academics/earth_sciences
or call the Earth Sciences department at 585-395-2636 to arrange a visit.