

Q & A for NHC



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You have to be one of the most sought-after people in the building.

I guess so. It comes from the amount of years I have been here, since its inception in 1995. I know the building real well; the electronics, communications, networking, and power distribution. I consider myself a jack of all trades; do a little bit here, a little bit there. It seems that when people need help, they go to me.

The evolution through the years here must be enormous.

This building is being changed constantly. There's new equipment, there's adding or modifying the space in rooms. So yes, I have seen a lot of activity.

How did you evolve into such a good position?

That's a good question. When I was young, I loved to tinker with things; put things together, take things apart. That intrigued me into studying engineering, because it requires thinking and doing in a logical order, having all of your ducks in row before starting a project. I have a Bachelor's degree in electrical engineering from Florida International University and a just-completed Certification for audio/visual, one of the things I really love to do.

What prepared you for NHC?

Before I came to the Hurricane Center, I worked at (NOAA's) Aircraft Operations Center, working on the NOAA P-3 hurricane hunter aircrafts, performing engineering duties and participating in general atmospheric and hurricane research. The AOC was located at Miami International Airport at the time.

What encouragement do you have for aspiring young engineers?

For young kids, I always tell them that schooling for engineering is just like meteorology. There is no gray area. You either like it or you don't like it. It's a great technical field to be in, and I am so blessed to be able to work in this environment. And the great thing about my job is that I do a lot of things out of the box.

How so?

We don't always follow a paradigm. For example, a weather forecast office has to follow a narrow road, whereas we have the flexibility as a national center to be creative. That's what has really kept me going in this business.

With all of the changes you've seen at NHC, what is the coming marquee event?

It is obviously the type of data that we're going to be receiving, from GIS-type format data, and the GOES-R satellite imagery that's coming down. It's definitely a bigger stream of data, and we have to be ready to handle that type of data, display it, and provide it to the end-users. Being interactive and doing collaborative things will play a big role in how we do things.

Some of those are already in play.

We are providing (experimental) IP-addressed briefings to the media and public. The future is the Internet. You talk about cloud-computing, which will play a big role in years to come. Things are getting more complex, but resources and budgets are getting smaller. Companies are now providing services where you can serve up your data or the processing out on the Internet, what they call the cloud. I believe that sometime in the future that is how it will all end up.

When you leave the building at the end of the day, can you leave it behind you?

Generally yes, but it depends. There are times I go home and I am thinking about something pressing that I need to get done. I don't have the answers for everything, but I get on the Internet at home and do my research. My real big thinking time is when I am coming to work, after I had a good night's sleep and I am relaxed. I have 30 to 40 minutes of my own to think, no one to bother me, and I get my ducks in a row before I come to work.

What do you do when you are not thinking about work?

I enjoy my kids, I enjoy the outdoors. I am not a couch potato. I am always looking for something, whether it's working around the house, putting something together, or working on my cars. I have three kids and they are all involved in activities, so I have a busy house.

It sounds as if it is just as busy at home as it is here.

It's tough to find some quiet time, but I don't require a lot of it.

What do you see yourself doing down the road?

I look forward to just progressing in this building with the newer technology. We'll be doing the next phase of the media center, which will be a nice area for presentations

and media events. I take enjoyment in doing that, and working for other (NOAA) offices as well. As long as I am challenged in some way, my interests will stay here.

Clearly, you are not someone to sit by and watch things around you.

People don't let me do that, in the sense that they're always looking to me for something.

Send comments to: nhc.public.affairs@noaa.gov