

Air Quality Champion in Our Community

Name: Amelia Draper

Title: Meteorologist, StormTeam 4

Organization: NBC



How does your work relate to air quality?

As a television meteorologist, I am considered the station scientist. I am knowledgeable on most scientific topics, especially as they relate to climate, nature and natural disasters. As people plan their day, knowing the air quality is important and it is my job to tell them that information. Is it a day to stay indoors with poor air quality? Is the air quality impacting people with health issues like asthma and heart disease, or is the air clean and safe to breathe?

What is your workday like?

My time each day is spent forecasting the weather, building weather graphics, doing school visits or virtual visits, putting together a climate story and of course giving the forecast on NBC Washington, on social media as well as on WTOP radio. If there is severe weather I run weather crawls and alert the public to the current watches and warnings over social media and nbcwashington.com.

What motivates you to come to work every day?

I love my job! Knowing the forecast and effectively communicating the forecast are two different things. I am always looking to improve my communication of weather so non-meteorologists know what to expect when they step out their door. I also love the creative aspect of making new graphics.

What education and career path did you pursue to have the position that you have today?

I have a degree in meteorology from Penn State University. If you love math, science and communication, meteorology may be the career for you! I started working in a small television market more than 10 years ago, moved to a medium size television market then got a job in my hometown market of Washington, DC...my dream job!

Describe your workspace.

No lab for me! I rely heavily on computers and the internet to make my forecast and weather graphics. I use special websites to look at weather computer models, make weather graphics and create social media posts. After that, it is lights, camera, microphones and green screen!

What accomplishment are you most proud of?

I am most proud of making it back to my hometown market of Washington DC. I am also proud of a moment where I lost all of my typical weather graphics during a severe weather event and improvised ... viewers barely noticed!

Is there something important that you want to share that we haven't asked?

Dream big and ask for help! Get an internship, take some classes that push you out of your comfort zone and don't be afraid to try new things.