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How did you first get interested in weather?

My father was Dr. John C. Freeman who was a meteorologist. One of my first memories was driving near the beach on two pieces of wood to cross a bay during a hurricane. My father always involved his children in his weather projects. I can also remember sitting out on the drive way watching funnel clouds form.

My mother was also a physics and math professor and my husband told me later that the dinner conversations at our house were always very scientific.

How did you find your first job, and what was it like?

I was majoring in mathematics at the University of St. Thomas and needed a job. I started working as a student met tech and programmer at the Institute for Storm Research. This involved plotting and analyzing the weather data to create the global surface maps for the forecasters to prepare their forecasts. The position also included hindcasting the winds from past surface maps to create data files to run numerical wind and wave models.

I then became very involved in programming the numerical weather prediction and oceanographic models at the Institute. I worked very closely with my father and basically was in class for the 30 years that I worked with him. I became not only a programmer but a tropical and marine weather forecaster as well.

How would you describe your current job and how is it different from a forecasting job and other jobs you've had?

My current job is President of Weather Research Center and Director of The John C. Freeman Weather Museum. In 1987, I started Weather Research Center with my father. WRC is a non-profit educational and research center dedicated to inspiring the next generation of scientist and engineers.

One of my father's passions was to educate young meteorologists. He passed this passion on to me and one of the main functions of WRC is to train recent meteorology graduates in the art of marine and tropical weather forecasting.

In 1993, the dream of the Weather Museum started with the development of Weather Camp. Weather Camps are summer day camps that allow the meteorologist at the center teach young future meteorologist.

One meteorologist, who just became a Certified Consulting Meteorologists, told me that some of the most helpful training he received at WRC was teaching weather camp and Weather Labs

because he learned to describe what was going on in the weather in terms that non-meteorologists could understand. He uses this everyday now to brief the CEO at his company.



Jill Hasling, CCM, demonstrates the size of hurricane wind fields along a hurricane forecast track during Museum District Day at the nation's first Weather Museum.

The John C. Freeman Weather Museum found a home in the Houston Museum District in

April 2006 and has had visitors from over 40 states and 15 countries. The Museum strives to make the Community Weather Wise.

As a meteorologist it is very important to network with others in the meteorological community. I do this by being a member of the American Meteorological Society, National Weather Association, NCIM – An Association of Private Sector Meteorologists, the Marine Technology Society, and Houston Museum District Association. It is important not only to be a member but to be involved in helping the profession grow and prosper. My father played an important role in mentoring me throughout my career. His encouragement kept me going even when it was not popular to be a female in a male dominated profession. He pushed me out of my comfort zone having me give papers at meetings when there were no other women in the room.

Every meteorologist should strive to become certified through the American Meteorological Society. This certification is important no matter what segment you work in, private, public or academic.

Is forecasting the weather part of your job anymore?

Since I am involved in training young meteorologist, I am involved in forecasting every day. I really enjoying learning about the weather and learn something new from every meteorologist I meet.

Our science continually changes with new models and observations that can help you become a better forecaster.

What would you say to those interested in working in the private sector?

The private sector is an exciting field. Some of the most exciting work that I do is Forensic Meteorology. You become a weather detective to find out what the weather was at a certain place and time.

The private sector is one of the fastest growing sectors of the field of meteorology and covers many areas from forecasting to research to observations.