

REAL-WORLD METEOROLOGY

A series of profiles celebrating a half-century of Certified Consulting Meteorologists



Who: Howard Hanson

What: Professor of geosciences and associate vice president for research at Florida Atlantic University (FAU)

When: CCM since 1997

Where: Boca Raton, Florida

Why: Views his CCM status as adding credibility to his role as a meteorological resource on campus and in the community



How: After several years working as a researcher at the University of Colorado's Cooperative Institute for Research in Environmental Sciences (CIRES), where he investigated mixing processes in the upper ocean and radiative/thermodynamic interactions in marine boundary layer clouds, Hanson sought out certification as a CCM in 1997, viewing it "as the closest analog available to meteorologists of professional certification programs such as the professional engineer designation and the board certifications that the various medical specialties require." He believes that the certification had a positive influence on his subsequent career path, which took him to the University of California (Los Alamos National Laboratory) and later to FAU.

In addition to his academic responsibilities at FAU and his service as editor and board member of several scientific journals, Hanson has been involved in small projects for both the insurance and the electric power industries. Not only does he feel that being a CCM improves his professional standing, but he believes that participation by university faculty ultimately improves the CCM program.

In His Own Words: "I've become something of a meteorological resource for the FAU campus, and I expect that my CCM status adds to my credibility in that role. One thing I'm doing here is presenting a seasonal outlook briefing for the campus at the beginning of each hurricane season, and attendance keeps growing. Because the seminar format provides time to explain what the TV broadcasts can only gloss over, I think it helps everyone to understand the process and the limitations of the seasonal outlooks. And, of course, when an event happens, I get questions from all quarters. So my AMS membership is invaluable in helping me to stay abreast of the state of the art."