

REAL-WORLD METEOROLOGY

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



Who: Timothy Spangler

What: Director, the COMET Program

When: CCM since 1978

Where: Boulder, CO

Why: To compete in the consulting world while working in the private sector



How: Spangler spent 11 years with North American Weather Consultants (NAWC) as a field project director, air pollution consultant, and eventually as vice president. He worked primarily with the power industry helping to develop new power plant sites that would be environmentally viable under the Clean Air Act and investigating issues with existing facilities.

After leaving NAWC, Spangler worked two years for Westec Services Inc. as their coastal studies manager out of San Diego, which also involved field research in California for the oil industry. He worked on two major field studies in the Santa Barbara area investigating dispersion in coastal complex terrain. There had been many studies of coastal dispersion, and many studies of complex terrain dispersion, but few studies of coastal complex terrain dispersion, so Spangler found the challenge to be exciting and rewarding. In 1985, he joined the faculty at Northern Illinois University, and in 1990, he joined the COMET Program at UCAR, becoming director in 1992. Over the last 22 years, Spangler has focused on education rather than consulting. Today, the program he directs delivers half-a-million hours of training to 70,000 users worldwide.

In His Own Words: “During the 13-year private sector period of my life, I decided to do three major things that would upgrade my skills and my value to employers and clients: I learned to fly, earned a Ph.D. from Utah State University, and received my CCM certificate. I remember the CCM oral being led by Loren Crow, a famous early CCM. He asked me if I placed any significance on the fact that I would be the youngest CCM in the AMS (at that point). I said ‘no,’ and I hoped he wouldn’t either.

“I have kept my CCM active during the last 22 years as a statement about how I believe education and experience and continuing education are important. I have served on the CCM Board—including as chair—and also served on the committee considering recertification and continuing education requirements. I believe the CCM program serves the AMS and the certification holder as well as providing one measure of qualification to employers, clients, and funding agencies.”

For more information on the Certified Consulting Meteorologist (CCM) Program, please visit the AMS Web site at www.ametsoc.org/amscert/index.html.