

***The AMS Board for Early Career Professionals wants to highlight members of the weather, water and climate enterprise who exemplify the AMS Mission just a few years into their career. Our “Perspectives from Early Career Professionals” segment aims to highlight early career achievements in multiple sectors of meteorology.***

***This segment highlights Chris Gloninger, on-air Meteorologist in Boston, Massachusetts!***

BECP: Where do you currently work and what path did you take to get to the position you are currently in today?

CG: I'm currently the weekend evening meteorologist at WBTS-TV (the NBC-owned station) in Boston. This is my 13th year in the industry with previous stops in Milwaukee, Albany, Flint and Rochester.

BECP: What is it like to be an early career professional and work in the broadcast sector

CG: It's tough. Money is tight during your first couple of jobs. While I was in Rochester, NY, I taught a course called "Introduction to Weather and Climate" at Monroe Community College to make some extra money. You can expect to move – a lot! If you want to get into bigger and bigger markets, you can expect to move every 3-5 years.

BECP: How important were internships early on to get to where you are today?

CG: Internships are key! Although I didn't keep in touch with the meteorologists I worked with during my internship, I kept in touch with the news director. My internship was at WABC-TV in New York City. Kenny Plotnik was the news director. He was the longest serving news director in New York City and at the time, WABC was the number one station in town. He worked with me through the years, critiqued my work and eventually I got to work for him in Boston. NBC brought Kenny to Boston to launch the new NBC owned and operated station back in 2017.

The internship was NOT easy. I lived on eastern Long Island, approximately 100 miles from New York City. Every day, for 10 weeks, I'd ride the bus into and out of the city. I'd spend 6-8 hours at my internship and 4-8 hours round trip on the bus.

I was also extremely lucky to have parents that sacrificed a lot to make my internship possible. We never had a lot of money and they had to budget a significant amount of money, not just for the college credits for the internship but for the round trip transportation each day to the city.

BECP: What was the most difficult part of the job search process for you?

CG: When I started, you needed to submit VHS tapes; after VHS tapes came DVDs; after DVDs came links, which are a lot easier. That part of the process is very simple. However, each job that's open has hundreds of applicants. The news director typically only views the resume tape for a few seconds. More than 75% of the time, you won't hear anything from them. That doesn't mean you aren't good – it likely means they already had someone in mind for the job.

BECP: What is something unique you've been able to accomplish/experience so far in your career?

CG: Some of my career highlights were out of the studio and in the field. During the 2017 hurricane season, I was able to help my parent company, NBC, cover hurricanes Harvey and Irma, and during the 2018 season I was sent to North Carolina for Florence.

BECP: Is there anything you would have done differently in college knowing what you know now about your job?

CG: Honestly, no. I had great professors and advisors that pointed me in the right direction.

BECP: To reach this point in your career, what role have mentors and advisors played?

CG: Mentors are invaluable. As I mentioned in my previous answer, it's because of my tightknit relationship with my mentor that I have the job that I have today. He would constantly critique my work, I'd work in those suggestions and then I'd have him review it again. At some points, it was discouraging, but I had to keep the big picture in sight.

BECP: Whom do you admire in our profession? Why do you feel that way?

CG: I admire every colleague I've worked with along the way. There are at least one or two meteorologists from each station that I've kept in touch with. That's what I've found in my nearly 13 years in the field – it attracts kind people!

BECP: What advice would you give to an early career professional starting in this field?

CG: Build a budget! You won't make much at your first (or even your second) job. In some cases you may need a second salary. It's important that you don't live beyond your means. Make sure you always keep your tape fresh. I was let go from my second job when the station went bankrupt – since I had a tape ready to go, I was able to apply for a new job that same day.

BECP: Do you have any helpful tips for someone going through the job search right now?

CG: Although the job application may say "please no calls or e-mails", do email the news director with in week of sending your link and reel. It's ok to be a little pushy, just don't overdo it. A short message will do.

Also, if the application says to send your work to Human Resources, call the station's assignment desk and ask for the news Director's name and e-mail address – and send it directly to the news director.

BECP: Do you have any tips or advice to give to young professionals when it comes to applying and interview for a job?

CG: You'll have to do a screen test if you're selected for an interview. Make sure you bring some makeup. Study the map of the area you're interviewing in and know some of the town names. Don't be afraid to ask the chief meteorologist and the news director questions – it might be a good idea to come prepared with a few questions to ask.

BECP: What are some challenges you have experienced as an early career professional?

CG: Having to move around the country a significant amount. It's a tough sector to be in and put down roots. I've also had to work a lot of holidays, so my family (and now also my wife's family) has had to learn to work around that.

BECP: What do you want to be doing in 5 years? Why?

CG: I'm one class away from my Masters of Science in Emergency Management. During my time as an undergrad, I was also a firefighter. Emergency Management helps link those two passions. Since I love being in the field, it's my goal to be a network field correspondent covering any/all natural disasters.

BECP: How do you feel the field has changed? Where do you think it's going?

CG: Honestly, you don't need more than a Bachelors of Science Degree in Meteorology in the broadcast field and chances are your future employer won't even ask you for your transcript. However, it's good to be well-rounded and it's my advice that you find a niche to make you a bit more valuable.

BECP: What does a "work life balance" mean to you?

CG: It's easy to get overwhelmed. I've learned it's critical to make time for yourself and your loved ones. During the first 11 years of my career I only had to worry about myself, now I need to look out for my wife as well.

BECP: What steps do you take to make time for your family while doing shift work?

CG: One of the reasons I took this job in Boston was to have the same days off as my wife. We never shared a day off together due to our work schedules. I also try to make the most of the hours before I go to work. If I'm working weekend evenings, we will try to do something fun together with friends or family or even just take time to do household chores earlier in the day. It's important that you make time for your loved ones.

