Joel N. Myers—founder, president, and chairman of AccuWeather, Inc. and current Penn State trustee and alumnus—committed $2 million to support Penn State’s Department of Meteorology’s weather center.

It is the largest gift ever made to the department and among the largest ever received for programs in the College of Earth and Mineral Sciences. In recognition of Myers’s generosity, the new weather facility will be named “The Joel N. Myers Weather Center.”

Myers received his B.S., M.S., and Ph.D. degrees in meteorology from Penn State. A Philadelphia native, he founded AccuWeather in 1962, while he was a Penn State graduate student, fulfilling an ambition to begin a business that would educate mass audiences about the weather and how it impacts everyday life. Since then, AccuWeather has evolved into an internationally known company, while Myers has won numerous awards for his business acumen, including being named by Entrepreneur magazine as one of the top 500 entrepreneurs in American history.

Meyers served on the university’s meteorology faculty from 1964 until 1981. For 18 years, he appeared on the Penn State “Weather World” broadcast. In 1981, he was elected to Penn State’s Board of Trustees. He has been reelected to nine consecutive three-year terms as a trustee since that time.

William Easterling, dean of the College of Earth and Mineral Sciences, notes that the weather center facility recently underwent a complete renovation. “One of the most critical needs is to keep up to date with technology,” he notes. “That means

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REAL-WORLD METEOROLOGY

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

Who: William “Bill” Thompson
What: Consulting meteorologist
When: CCM since 1972
Where: Calgary, Alberta, Canada

Why: Thompson’s early years included experience with a national weather service, a regional flood-warning organization, and the environmental departments of an oil company and an energy regulatory agency. Consulting provided him with an opportunity to use this variety of experience to operate on an independent basis.

How: At the time of application, the process consisted of a written exam followed by an oral exam. The examining committee consisted of highly credible members of the weather service and research institutions. The exam was rigorous. The process has recently been enhanced to ensure that consultants remain active and technically competent.

In His Own Words: “I became an active consultant in 1986. By about 1990, most of my projects were international in nature. One of my larger projects was in the installation of a real-time hydrometeorological data acquisition system in the Karakoram Mountains of Northern Pakistan. Other projects included an upgrade of a wave forecast system in the Arabian Gulf, hail mitigation in Argentina, and transfer of radar technology to Dominican Republic Weather Service (ONAMET) meteorologists. I have also worked on projects in several other countries. Typically, many weather-related projects are undertaken by firms whose primary interest is not meteorology. For those of us not affiliated with a research institute or a national weather service, accreditation serves three purposes. First, it sets a standard for training and experience. Second, endorsement by the AMS provides a level of comfort for potential clients. Third, it enhances the profile of meteorology as a discipline within international lending institutions and aid organizations. At least two of my projects can be attributed to referrals as a result of certification.”

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