

Kelly Savoie ([00:00](#)):

Hello, Clear Skies Ahead listeners. This is Kelly Savoie and I'm hoping you can take a moment of your time to rate and review our show wherever you listen to podcasts. We have produced over 100 episodes and you can help us reach even more individuals that will benefit from the diverse experiences shared by our guests. Thanks so much for listening and I hope you enjoy this new episode.

Welcome to the American Meteorological Society's podcast series Clear Skies Ahead: Conversations about Careers in Meteorology and Beyond. I'm Kelly Savoie and I'm here with Emma Collins and we'll be your hosts. We're excited to give you the opportunity to step into the shoes of an expert working in weather, water, and climate sciences.

Emma Collins ([00:53](#)):

We're happy to introduce today's guest, Rob Marciano, senior meteorologist at CBS News. Welcome, Rob. Thanks so much for joining us today.

Rob Marciano ([01:00](#)):

Hi, Emma. Hi, Kelly. I'm excited to be here. Thanks for having me.

Kelly Savoie ([01:04](#)):

Rob, could you tell us a little bit about what sparked your interest in meteorology and how it influenced your educational path?

Rob Marciano ([01:10](#)):

Well, I think everybody in our, I like to call it a fraternity, although it's boys, girls, and everybody in the meteorology community, we all...most of us have an event in our childhood that sparked the interest and/or traumatized, traumatized us to get to be interested in weather. Mine wasn't traumatic. I grew up in the Northeast and I'm aging myself here, but the Blizzard, the late 70s, 70s, there was two big ones, 78, 79, but the big one in New York, I believe was 78. And that one just was bananas. And I was kind of a, I don't want to say lazy kid, but what kid liked to do his homework when you were in elementary school. So I would watch all the weather guys, weather men and women on TV and whichever one gave me the answer I was looking for, which was it was going to snow enough to not have school, that guy became my favorite.

([02:16](#)):

But I just remember that storm just piling up and our school was closed for at least two days. My dad was an airline pilot and his flight ended up obviously getting canceled, but he was stuck at JFK. He tells this harrowing story of walking from JFK to our cousin's house in Howard Beach in Queens and how he had to leave his car behind. So we all had these stories from that blizzard.

([02:50](#)):

And I just remember being out of school for two days. I remember the snow blowing sideways and piling up and not being able to stay outside in it for as long as you normally would in a snowstorm. It was just so ferocious and I was just fascinated by how much snow could come down and come down sideways. And that kind of sparked my interest in weather going forward. I was about 10 years old at that time and then really started taking an interest when I got into seventh, eighth grade. And then high school I pestered my science teacher to share with me his wisdom on weather. And we met once a week after school and he gave me a textbook that I read cover to cover. He would kind of give me these side lessons on. And when I got to college, my first...Meteorology 101, it was that very same textbook.

Kelly Savoie ([03:46](#)):

Oh, wow. You were ahead. You're ahead of the game.

Rob Marciano ([03:50](#)):

It was the one time, maybe the only time in my life, even since then, that I've been ahead of the game. So yeah, since I was a kid, much probably like you guys, right?

Kelly Savoie ([04:01](#)):

Oh yeah. I remember the blizzard of '78. I think we were out of school for like a week. I just remember just my town, they were really bad at plowing the roads, probably couldn't handle it. So everything shut down for so long, but that was amazing. And I remember, too, waiting for those calls. "When are they going to call to cancel school?" Everyone's like, "Oh, here comes the call."

Rob Marciano ([04:26](#)):

Yeah. Landline caller, you're listening to the radio station.

Kelly Savoie ([04:30](#)):

Yes. Right. Or the radio station. Yep.

Rob Marciano ([04:32](#)):

But I'm grateful. Look, I'm grateful it was a fun experience for a kid. A lot of our friends in this business grew up in Oklahoma or in Texas or somewhere down in the south where they had an experience with either a flood or a tornado that scared the bejesus out of them and got them into it that way. Although I would argue that that's not a bad way to come into it nowadays either. It's just the power of mother nature is what puts you in awe. I don't care how old you are. I think there's a weather geek in all of us. And when you tell people you're a meteorologist or in the weather business, everyone seems to have a story to tell. And I think everyone has a little bit of passion in the back of their minds and the back of their hearts, no matter what business they're in, because we're in it every day and you live on this ball of mud long enough, you're going to have a weather story to tell.

([05:31](#)):

And that's one of the things I love about being a meteorologist.

Emma Collins ([05:34](#)):

So what opportunities did you pursue that you knew would be beneficial to securing a job in your profession?

Rob Marciano ([05:39](#)):

Oh boy, getting a job in this profession. Did I say I was a lazy kid? Yeah, I figured, okay, so I went to Cornell for meteorology and did the four-year thing and the physics, the calculus, the chemistry, all the things that seemingly had nothing to do with weather. But when you got to your last two years, it was like, okay, now I get it. So I struggled with that, crawled to the finish line with, I don't know how many office hours with my professors and got out and thought, okay, well I'm not quite ... I don't know if teaching's in my bag, although I was a teaching assistant and taught a lab once a week, which was kind of fun, but it was also frustrating because a lot of kids took weather as a blowoff. I don't think I could stomach being a teacher for that reason.

([06:34](#)):

So being a teacher, being a researcher, that didn't seem like it was in my blood as much as I struggled with the lab reports working for the National Weather Service or the government, that didn't seem to be my path. And pointing at a screen and talking about the weather, that seemed to be a decent way to make a living. So I thought, "Okay, well, I've got my degree now. I can talk. Let's just go do this. " And it's super easy. And so I got an internship and got a demo tape together and I couldn't get a job. I was horrific and I looked like I was 12 and so I got a job as a waiter, traveled. I just thought maybe the more people I talk to and practice talking in front of whoever and the more life experience I have, maybe I'll get a few more...maybe I'll look a little older in a year or two and I'll be able to get a job on TV.

([07:48](#)):

So that was kind of my path. And then of all things out of waiting tables, I took a job on Wall Street.

([08:02](#)):

I think one thing that we all have in the weather business is I don't think you're going to make it to the finish line as a degree to meteorologist if you don't have a massive amount of curiosity and not just for weather, but for everything. And I graduated Cornell, a decent school and I didn't even know what the Dow Jones was. So I felt immensely stupid. And while I was waiting tables, I was waiting in this kind of trendy restaurant, these finance bros would come in and talking their thing. I'm like, "What are these guys talking about? I have no idea. They look like they're making a lot of money." And one guy asked me while I was waiting tables on him, "What do you want to do? " And I said, "Well, I have a degree in meteorology, but I'm kind of curious about all these guys coming in here from Wall Street, kind of want to try that."

([08:59](#)):

And he said, "That's just what I wanted to hear." And he gave me his card and he said, "Come to my office on Monday." And he owned this trading company where he had a soft dollar portfolio management product and he had an institutional sales trading desk. And long story short is they hired me as a grunt and I learned the ins and outs of Wall Street and trading and became a stock trader and did that for three or four years, which I loved. And in retrospect, when I see my friends in my neighborhood that are in finance and I look at the size of their house and I look at the size of my house, I sometimes wonder if I made the right decision.

Kelly Savoie (09:50):

Well, that's so interesting that you started off. I'm really curious to hear how you switched back to working in meteorology.

Rob Marciano (09:59):

Yeah. So obviously I still had my passion for weather. I still went through at the time, there wasn't the internet, so I can't say I went and checked out all the models every day, but I still had an interest in it and I still believed that's where my heart was as much as I was having fun learning about Wall Street and all the ins and outs and started getting better at doing what I was doing and started making good money at it. There was two... but I was always looking at reading the trades and scanning for a job opening somewhere close by maybe, and there was not one but two openings at WVIT in Hartford, Connecticut. And I thought, "You know what? They might just be desperate enough to give me a try if they've got two openings." So I called up there and they patched me through to the weather center and Brad Field was the chief meteorologist at the time and he picked up the phone, I told him my name, I said, "I have a degree in meteorology." And I lied.

(11:10):

I said, "I don't have resume tape. I'm pretty much right out of school" because my resume tape was so bad, I said, "Yeah, my mom lost it. I don't have it. I don't have one." And I said, "Look, I'm driving. I'm coming to Boston for 4th July weekend, so I'm driving through Hartford, maybe I can ... " He's like, "You got a degree? You got a pulse? Come on in. " He probably was working eight days a week. He was miserable. It's like anybody to fill a spot here, I've got two openings. And so I drove the two hours, stopped over in Hartford and that went with Brad. I think it may have even been a weekend, or no, it was late in the day on a Friday. And he put me in front of the wall and he let me do a couple takes at a little mini weathercast and gave me a couple of pointers to kind of help me be not so horrible and he put it in front of his boss and was like, "Oh yeah, I got this guy, he can do the weekend and the weekend morning, we need him." So I rented a room in Hartford and I did my day job in New York City on Wall Street and then Friday night I would drive up to Hartford and I stayed, rented a room with some random family, and I did weekends for them for like five or six months until they found two people that were qualified and the news director sat me down and he said, "You, you're going to do fine in this business.

(12:41):

You just need to go to a small market and do this every day, do all the things, but you're fired."

Kelly Savoie (12:48):

Oh no.

Rob Marciano (12:50):

More or less. But I had a resume tape, so I sent it out. I sent it out and one of the dozens of stations that said no thank you to me the year or two before, one said, "Okay, yeah, we've got a morning opening. You can come make a very small percentage of what you're making on Wall Street and come be our morning meteorologist." So that was Lake Charles, Louisiana, Market 179. I gave notice to my job in New York City and drove down there and started that process. And that's been over 30 years now I've been in this crazy business.

Kelly Savoie (13:34):

Wow. I mean, I was going to say you were really lucky. Hartford's a pretty big city, that's a pretty big market for your first job.

Rob Marciano (13:44):

Yeah, I was grateful I was nervous. I was like, "Well, whatever, I just got to dive in. " And there were other people who I graduated with that did the same thing except they were just more talented. They were just better. I'm like, "Oh, Mish got a job in Boston. Wow. Lee Goldberg, you got a job out at Syracuse right straight out of school." So yeah, there are people that can do it, but I look like Doogie Hauser and I was not that good on camera. So I was grateful to get any chance and regardless of the market and the stars aligned there. I just had to wait and do some weird things along the way.

Kelly Savoie (14:25):

Well, you obviously got better because you've worked at some really great networks, major networks. So how did you progress to end up where you are today? I'm sure there's a lot in between, but if you could like - the stepping stones to landing a role at a major network

Rob Marciano (14:43):

Well, it's different now than it was then. Although you can still take the path that I took, which is start out a local market and do all the things from ripping scripts to shooting to editing to reporting and drawing and building the graphics and all the weather things and anchor things. So after three years in Lake Charles, Louisiana, I got a job in Portland, Oregon, which is a similar size market to Hartford, mid 20s for DMA, and did that for six years. And then I had an agent at the time and he calls me up and says, "CNN has an opening and they'd like to have you in for an interview." "CNN does weather?" I didn't even know that they did weather at the time. And so I jumped from Portland to CNN, did that for 10 years, amazing experience in a national level, got to talk ... And one great thing about working on the national level is you're for sure never bored because you talk about whatever the big weather story is of that day, regardless of what town it's in or what part of the country it's in.

(16:04):

So I loved that and I got the opportunity to work in the field as a field correspondent, which was scary and amazing and it's a big part of what I do now. So did that at CNN and had a little pit stop as a co-anchor for Entertainment Tonight for two years out of there. It was a time where CNN was going where they were devoting less time to weather and doing more talking heads and politics. And Entertainment Tonight gave me an opportunity that I couldn't pass up so I did it, which was another whole strange long trip. And then from there I went to ABC for 10 years and Good Morning America and that whole brand. And then from there, now I'm at CBS. So with the exception of WVIT in Hartford and KPLC to local markets, I'm running through all the networks. And my internship was at Fox in New York City with Fox Five with Nick Gregory.

([17:16](#)):

So I've had a little piece of all four networks. I guess I've never thought about that, but yeah, that's pretty cool.

Emma Collins ([17:24](#)):

So could you describe what a typical day on the job is like, at a major network?

Rob Marciano ([17:28](#)):

Well, at the network level, we're fortunate enough to have weather producers that we work with. Most every other job in this business, you're going in there and you're grunting it out on your own and you're building your forecast as a local station meteorologist and then you're building new graphics and you're producing your entire segments. And especially in morning local TV, it's multiple segments an hour. It's really, really, really a grind. So I take my hat off to all my local brethren because their work ethic and their efficiency at what they do on a daily basis to grind it out is really remarkable. So I'm very fortunate that I have a weather producer that I... is at work before I get there. I'm there later, but they're there earlier and so they'll help produce graphics and we'll work together on the story that we want to tell and how we're going to tell it and build out the graphics.

([18:45](#)):

Now on the science sort of things, I get in, I log into my computer or I'll flip through Twitter on my way in and start to brief myself on what the big weather stories are for the day. I like to throw up, the first thing I like to put up is just the water vapor, put a big northern hemisphere water vapor up. It's kind of like my lava lamp gets you eased into the day, see the flow, where thing's going. You can kind of pick everything out. It's like easy on the eyes and you can see where all of the troughs and ridges are at the upper level. So it's a nice way to kind of take in the vibe of what the atmosphere is throwing at you. And then from there, I start stepping down into models and surface maps and that kind of stuff.

([19:36](#)):

I love the weather part of it. I always wish I got in earlier so I could spend more time on that because that truly is just a hobby that we all love to do. It's like we can sit and look at weather maps and soundings and read discussions all day long. But in the end, like every job, you got to do some things that you're not crazy about doing and that is putting the tie on, putting on some makeup and going down to a studio and presenting it to a television audience, which is very

strange unto itself. So most of us struggle with a lot of voices in our heads besides the ones that are talking to us from the control room.

Kelly Savoie (20:22):

I know. And you mentioned that you're reporting on weather from all over. So you've had a long career as a broadcast meteorologist. Is there any particular weather event that just you were like, whoa, that very, very memorable to you?

Rob Marciano (20:37):

Well, like everything else, when things are physical, that's when a memory really hits you hard because I've covered hundreds of storms and events that are historic from the studio or from a weather office, but the ones that really land on you and syncing your memory are the ones that you're physically at. So if I had to name two, I would name my very first field reporting assignment in a catastrophic storm or aftermath and that was the Moore, Oklahoma 1999 Cat5 that tore up more for the first time in my 15 years. And I was working at a local station in Portland, Oregon and my boss said, "Hey, I'm going to send you to Moore." I'm like, "Wow", I didn't really report. I was pretty strategic about not doing as little reporting outside the studio as possible because that required real work. You had to track people down, talk to people.

Kelly Savoie (21:50):

You had to prepare!

Rob Marciano (21:51):

Kelly, you got to report on facts when you're reporting. As a forecaster, we're forecasting the future. You may get a forecast wrong, but there's no fact checking. Okay, that's your reasoning and you have your forecast and there it is. So yeah, reporting is work and if you mess up a report, that's not good. You can mess up a forecast and people will forgive you, but if you mess up on facts, that can ruin your career and ruin somebody's life in the process. So my boss, I said, "I don't know what I'm doing. You really want to send me to an aftermath of a Cat5?" He says, "Well, you're going to go with Chris Wilkinson. He's a seasoned photographer and he'll hold your hand and you guys can just figure it out. " And so we parachuted into Moore and it was something I'd never seen before in my entire life, just a moonscape of a town wiped out by a category 5 by a F5 tornado and it was a bit shocking.

(23:00):

And then I had to go talk to people and I had no idea how to approach someone that was digging through the rubble of their home, in many cases in tears. And so I was terrified and emotionally heartbroken for these people. I had no idea how to get at them and he just kept pushing me and my photographer. And so we got enough stuff, but certainly as my first time, it wasn't award-winning stuff, but it certainly hit me hard as to what weather can do to someone's life. So that was highly impactful on an empathetic level and a visceral level. You can point to the weather map in a Doppler tornadic signature all you want, but that doesn't make you feel or see

what it actually does until you're in there. And then the second big one was Hurricane Katrina when I was working at CNN and that was my second hurricane.

([24:14](#)):

I'd gone into Hurricane Ivan the year before, but I was just kind of playing around in and I really wasn't reporting in it. I was kind of just a meteorologist that Anderson Cooper would use as a sidekick. But then Katrina as a meteorologist, as a reporter, and then being down there for two weeks like so many journalists were, that was a mess and that was a learning experience and that was another example of what a catastrophic hurricane can do to not just a community, but the economy of an entire area of the country, that's mind blowing.

([25:01](#)):

And there's been a lot in between. There's been a lot in between and I'm grateful for every one of them. And I've been fortunate enough to meet a lot of Americans in the process and I wouldn't want to change that for the world. I'm very, very grateful for the places that I've been able to go in this country. People say "You travel a lot." I'm like, "Well, there's no place exotic." But I have had the opportunity to go to places that I wouldn't go to as a tourist. And so I count myself to be blessed, not only to have lived in various parts of the country, but to have been on the ground talking to the people who live there and it makes me proud of what I do and honestly proud to be in America.

Emma Collins ([25:41](#)):

Well, at CNN, you also reported on some major stories that included the BP oil spill and you hosted a primetime special on the aftermath of that. Could you talk a little more about that?

Rob Marciano ([25:50](#)):

Well, the BP oil spill in 2010, what a story that was. And obviously not really weather related, but so many aspects of it felt that way. And I wasn't the only reporter from CNN down there, but I was down there a lot. I was down there early and a lot and it was almost like waiting for a hurricane to make landfall. You were waiting for this oil to come ashore and it took weeks for it to do that. So you had to figure out what stories to do leading up to that. And at some point, how do we get out to the oil? We got to rent the boat. We got to find somebody that's got a boat and barter with them to get on a boat to go out there. And then when it started coming onshore, you dealt with the impact on wildlife and dealing with all those people that were rescuing wildlife and how they were heroic in their regard and the cleanup effort obviously not just on the beach, but on the water, which was ongoing for months.

([27:00](#)):

We had the idea of doing a special where I would be embedded with people who were cleaning up the beach and also who were cleaning up the oil offshore in the Gulf and that would be the Coast Guard. So I got on a Coast Guard cutter where they were cleaning up oil and I got the coveralls on and the masks and the helmets and the life vests and witnessed all that and did some of the things that they were doing. And it's a God forsaken dirty job, but they were all heroic in their efforts and getting that big old mess cleaned up. And one thing I tried to do during that assignment and what I try to do whenever I'm on a weather assignment is to have

the viewer at home who's in Kansas or California far away from whatever the story is that I'm experiencing somehow make them feel like they're there.

(28:05):

And that oftentimes requires you to get dirty and to get into it. And in a storm situation, get out there. People always ask, "Why are you standing outside when you're telling people to get inside?" Well, that's a fair point. We toe the line of a fine line of hypocrisy as weather reporters, warning people, "Don't go outside" and there we are standing outside in the stuff. And I'm aware of that and I've tried to be transparent with that, but also be like, look, this is what it feels like. I want you to feel what it feels like and so that you can garner some empathy for the people that live here that are either going through it in their homes, outside their homes, or what they're going to be going through when this storm is over. And the power of mother nature and what these storms do is hard to describe when you're not outside in it, but when you're outside in it, it's mind-blowing and it hits home.

Kelly Savoie (29:16):

Yeah. And I mean, as watching this, you're like, "Okay, I really don't want to look as miserable as this person is, out here in this terrible weather. I think I should listen to what he has to say and stay in."

Rob Marciano (29:29):

Yeah, there is that for sure. But look, my number one concern is the safety for my crew and for me. I mean, I certainly don't want ... I think it's a really bad look on the profession of meteorology if I get hurt or worse or if someone in my crew gets hurt or worse, I do not want my epitaph and my tombstone to read, "Weatherman dies of stupidity in a storm." It's funny, but it's not good for anybody, right? So my first order of business is safety and so far so good. There have been some hairy situations that were a little bit out of my control where I couldn't be where I ideally wanted to be with my team and it was dicey. But at this stage of the game, I try not to compromise at all when it comes to safety.

Kelly Savoie (30:23):

So we're going to switch gears a little bit here and talk about your book, *The Next Big Thing* and congratulations on that, by the way.

Rob Marciano (30:31):

Awesome. Thank you.

Kelly Savoie (30:32):

Did the book start as a random idea or was this something that you had been thinking about for a long time?

Rob Marciano (30:38):

Well, I don't know if you remember and they're still in print, but there was a book that came out when I was in middle school, but around the time I got into doing weather. It was put out by Nat Geo and it was called How Things Work. And it's kind of a kid's book and explained all the stuff that we use every day or a lot of it and how it works. It was fascinating to me. And when I was at ABC, Nat Geo was a partner of ABC and so I pitched a number of TV projects to them, none of which got green lit. But the book arm came to me at one point a few years ago and said they asked me if I would want to partner with them on writing a book about how things work and then how things are going to work in the future.

([31:31](#)):

And I said, "Well, that's awesome. I don't know why you think I know how everything works because I don't." And they said, "No, no, no, no. We're going to pair you with a brilliant physics professor and the stuff that you don't have a whole lot of knowledge on, he's going to help walk you through it. " And I'm like, "Okay, that sounds amazing." So I got to work with the physics professor, Dr. James Treffel, who I wish I had in college, because just an amazing teacher and humble, beautiful man that knows just about everything on anything and can explain it super well. So we had several meetings with our editors and publishers on how we're going to structure this book because there's so much to cover. How are we going to cover how everything works and then how are you going to predict what's going to be the technology and innovations that propel us into the future?

([32:34](#)):

And we came up with basically four tent pole topics and then we would branch out from there because we felt that these four were important to how our society lives now and how it's going to get us to where we're going. And those four are energy, basically how we get our energy from- be it now coal fired power plants, gas, solar, wind, nuclear, and what's the path forward there - that electricity that we generate. So much of what we power is powered by electrical now. So what are the best products and innovations that are there electrically and how they work and how are we going to get the electricity to what is becoming a massive demand for electricity? How are we going to do that with the current grid that we have and in many cases, a hundred years old or more and infrastructure on the... actually building things like building your house, building a skyscraper, steel, concrete, these are things that...glass...these are the things that we've used for centuries.

([33:54](#)):

They're not good on the environment. Steel and concrete pump out 8% of our carbon output each. So right there, that's almost a fifth of our carbon emissions outfit just to make steel and concrete.

([34:17](#)):

So what's going to help us go forward? Well, the brilliant minds are developing these high performance steel alloys and these concretes that self-heal and last much, much longer and don't require as much heat to make the cement as we did years ago. And then mass timber, I went and visited a mass timber building in Milwaukee, which is the tallest hybrid mass timber building in the world. And so we're building things now more out of wood. And they're probably some that are going up in Boston. They're going up in a lot of midsize cities and you see them

and they're beautiful. These wood buildings that are built, the columns are made of these massive laminated wood pylons and you can basically put these buildings together kind of like a Lincoln log set and it's a lot cheaper to make. They go up faster. They have a smaller footprint.

(35:11):

They take less of a foundation and they're surprisingly fire resistant.

Kelly Savoie (35:16):

I was just going to ask that. Are they fire resistant?

Emma Collins:

Wouldn't think that.

Rob Marciano (35:20):

You wouldn't think that. Look, a two by four is going to burn, but as far as the steel and concrete building, a lot of them, they've got a lot of wood in the build out. The actual infrastructure of it is steel and concrete, but the build out is wood. So all that stuff burns. The question is, are you going to have something that burns to the columns and that takes down the entire building and not just takes out the people in the building, but the people around the building. So these laminated pillars, they put them into a furnace for three hours and burn them at 1800 degrees and all they would do is char the outside. They're still structurally refined

(36:06):

And three hours - that's the mark because that's the number that the fire department said, "Well, that's all we needed to get there and get people out. " And beyond that, but they burned basically like a massive old growth tree in the forest. These wildfires happened. The big trees are still standing because they just get charred on the outside. Well, same thing with the mass timber column. So that's- infrastructure- was a third and the fourth tent pole topic was information, which is kind of a weird way of saying computers and robots and where we're going, hardware and software, with that. And then AI, that was the one we had to continually update. You want to talk about something that was changed because this book was done a year ago and we're like, "We got to make another update. AI is moving so fast. If we want to keep this topical, we got to keep updating it."

(36:58):

And it's mind blowing how fast AI is moving.

Kelly Savoie (37:02):

And so how long did the process take from the beginning of this project until the final completion? Did it take quite a while?

Rob Marciano (37:11):

Yeah, I mean, all in all, about three years, honestly from the brain, from the idea to breaking it down to starting to write it and then rewrite it and then having our meetings, because it was a collaborative effort, we were constantly having meetings and exchanging our scripts- I'm on the TV, so I say scripts - changing our pages that we were all assigned to write and each of us were proof of reading each other's and massaging the words and trying to make it all fit together. And then going back to the whole fact checking thing, this is a book you want to make sure the facts are right. So there was a lot of fact checking, calling experts, recalling people, following up and reporting it out much like you would report any other story on the news and you just had to make sure that things were right.

([38:10](#)):

So a long three-year process and then getting the beautiful illustrators at Nat Geo, they made this book only the way Nat Geo can do, which is with amazing illustrations, pictures and graphics, which helped me understand things. I don't like to read or to write any book that doesn't have at least some pictures.

Kelly Savoie ([38:36](#)):

Yeah. Well, it sounds like it was a very exciting experience and I'm sure you learned a lot and congratulations again on that. That's awesome.

Rob Marciano ([38:47](#)):

Well, it's something, I mean, I could tell you this, I did learn a lot. It was like going to grad school. I want everybody to feel what I feel now because as scientists, we're supposed to be skeptics, right? So I was that tenfold for a long time and a cynic in many ways. And my view of the future wasn't all that bright. Much like it is, I think for a lot of people right now, I think it's that the conversation's going a little bit negative. And so I want everybody to feel what I feel right now, which is I feel a little bit smarter. I feel like I can go into a cocktail party and if one of these topics comes up, I can hold my own. I feel a little bit smarter, but I also feel a lot more hopeful and optimistic for the future, which is something I couldn't say before I started this project.

([39:39](#)):

And it's a nice feeling to have. I sleep better at night, quite frankly. The future's a lot more bright than it used to be in my eyes.

Emma Collins ([39:48](#)):

Oh, I'm definitely sold. Now that you're well established in your career, do you have any advice for students and early career professionals who are hoping to land a position at a major network? What are some things you know now that you wish you had known earlier on?

Rob Marciano ([40:04](#)):

Well, I can tell you, well, I wish I was more aggressive on all fronts earlier on, but that's easier to say when you're older than when you're younger and more timid and less confident. But what I can tell you, the advice I would give now, seeing what I'm seeing now with the younger

generation that's wanting to explore getting into this business, which has changed dramatically and there's different ways to do what I do now and arguably much better ways to get to network television or YouTube success But just you have to get out of your comfort zone and especially now with how we all communicate with phones and texts and phone calls. I remember one college kid of a friend of mine, a son of a friend of mine, he wanted advice on how to get into this business and I said, "Okay." And we exchanged, I got his number and he texted me and I got texting back.

[\(41:04\)](#):

I said, "I'm going to have some time, end of this week, Thursday or Friday and these windows and we'll talk on the phone." And he didn't really know what to do with that. He kept asking me questions over text because he wanted to have a text conversation about it. And I'm like, "No, no, no. We're going to do this over the phone. I don't have time or wherewithal the texts back and forth about it I got a lot to share with you, I want to help you here." And the kid never called me or never called me back. And that was heartbreaking to me for that generation because it showed me how crippling having a face-to-face or phone conversation is for the generation that was brought up with smartphones. So I would just suggest, I would implore you, get away from the phone and please talk to any mentor or somebody that you think could be a mentor to you and get out of your comfort zone and meet with them face-to-face or talk with them over the phone. They want to help you.

[\(42:17\)](#):

I so badly cheer for the people in my business that are 10 and 20 years younger than me and I want them to succeed. And for most of us, all you have to do is ask and be a person and we want to be there for you and help.

Kelly Savoie [\(42:36\)](#):

Yeah. And I'm sure that you need to learn how to talk face-to-face. These people are going to have to go on an interview and they're going to need to get some skills, some better communication skills. So I agree with you. I see that happening too. We are all pretty bad about it these days with electronics.

Rob Marciano [\(42:59\)](#):

Sure, right. Yeah, sure. We all do it and we all have to remind ourselves...humans thrive. We're tribal. We thrive on being with each other and interacting with each other and helping each other. And the more we remind ourselves of that, the happier and more successful we'll all be going forward at it. But it's tough to do. When you got one of these phones in your pocket, it's so easy to cut yourself off. Don't do it, guys.

Kelly Savoie [\(43:30\)](#):

Well, we're so grateful for everything you've told us about your career. However, before you go, we always ask our guests one last fun question at the end of our show.

Rob Marciano [\(43:39\)](#):

All right.

Kelly Savoie ([43:40](#)):

What is your favorite movie, Rob?

Rob Marciano ([43:44](#)):

Okay. Oh, I have five top fives. Okay. I won't go through them all, but the formula typically is Man is wronged early on in the movie and then he seeks the next revenge over the next two hours. But in my current favorite movie, it's more recent and it's not quite that formula. My current favorite movie is Top Gun Maverick, so the sequel to Top Gun. I am a Tom Cruise apologist. When I worked at Entertainment Tonight, I had the opportunity to meet hundreds of celebrities, many superstar celebrities, including Tom Cruise and nobody impressed me more than he did upon meeting him and watching him work fans, watching him work executives, watching him work people behind the scenes and how he treated people and his work ethic. And when you talk to insiders in the business, other superstars like Hugh Jackman or whoever, they'll agree with you wholeheartedly that he may have some things going on in his side life, in his personal life, but in the business, he's just phenomenal.

([45:02](#)):

But that movie's ... I had got in an argument with somebody the other night. I was playing cards with some guys and we were talking about ... I said, "Top Gun Two or Top Gun Maverick, that's the best sequel of all time." And I was so wound up and they said, "What are you talking about? Better than the Godfather Two?"

Emma Collins ([45:22](#)):

That's good to say the Godfather.

Rob Marciano ([45:23](#)):

And I'm Italian. So of course the Godfather, Godfather, two of them, they're in the top five. But I know I was all wound up. I got Tom Cruise jumping on the couch with Oprah and me and I said, "No, it's Top Gun Maverick."

Kelly Savoie ([45:37](#)):

It really was pretty good, I have to say. I had low expectations, but when I saw it, I was like, "This is not that bad." And I think it got nominated for an Oscar.

Rob Marciano ([45:49](#)):

It did.

Kelly Savoie ([45:50](#)):

Didn't it? Yeah. I think it was on the list for Best Picture.

Rob Marciano ([45:55](#)):

It was, it was, and seriously being considered. And I come from a family of aviators. One of the reasons I got into meteorology also is that my dad was a pilot. My brother was older than me. He was taking that route. He became an Air Force pilot, airline pilot. And the first Top Gun came out when I was in high school. So my brother wanted to go to Naval Academy and be a Naval aviator. And so do I. I want to be Maverick. But I wore glasses and at the time you couldn't, even if you just had to use them to see the blackboard, you couldn't go in the military. So I'm like, "Well, if I can't fly in the clouds, I'll at least study them." So being a meteorologist seemed to be the next best thing.

Emma Collins ([46:41](#)):

Well, maybe I'll be convinced to see it now. I have not yet seen it.

Rob Marciano ([46:45](#)):

Well, you should. And let me take an opportunity to give you both props. I've been a member of the AMS since I was a student. What y'all do in Boston for all of us, supporting all that we do as students, as professionals, you're invaluable. What an amazing society we have and we're so fortunate to have the AMS. So thank you for what you guys do. We really appreciate you.

Kelly Savoie ([47:13](#)):

Thank you so much.

Emma Collins ([47:14](#)):

Yeah, thank you. Thank you for being on. Thank you so much for joining us and sharing your work experience with us. This has been amazing.

Rob Marciano ([47:20](#)):

Super fun for me. I appreciate you getting the word out, keep an eye to the sky and keep a lookout for the next big thing. It's - the future's looking bright guys.

Emma Collins ([47:29](#)):

Well, that's our show for today. Please join us next time, Rain or Shine.

Kelly Savoie ([47:33](#)):

Clear Skies Ahead. Conversations about Careers in Meteorology and Beyond is a podcast by the American Meteorological Society. Our show is edited by Johnny Lay. Technical Direction is provided by Peter Killelea. Our theme music is composed and performed by Steve Savoie and the show is hosted by Emma Collins and Kelly Savoie. You can learn more about the show online at www.ametsoc.org/clearskies and you can contact us at skypodcast@ametsoc.org. If you have any feedback or would like to become a future guest.