

Extreme Weather in the Classroom

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Few places on Earth experience the combination of high winds, heavy icing and extreme cold as frequently as the summit of New England's highest mountain. Remarkably, since 1932, there has been one organization responsible for recording these often record-breaking conditions: the Mount Washington Observatory. Weather observation, however, is not the Observatory's only mission – a mission that also includes education. As a result, in this talk I will discuss the work of our organization, how we function in such extreme conditions, and the methods we use to bring New England's unique alpine environments directly into your classroom.

Presenter's Bio

Jeff DeRosa is the Outreach Coordinator for the Mount Washington Observatory; a private, non-profit scientific and educational institution responsible for observing meteorological conditions at the "Home of the World's Worst Weather."

Prior to serving as the Outreach Coordinator, Jeff spent three years at the organization's mountaintop weather observatory where he frequently recorded winds in excess of 100 MPH and a temperature as cold as -45 °F. Deciding this was not cold enough, Jeff left the organization to serve as the Chief Weather Observer for the United States Antarctic Program's Amundsen-Scott South Pole Station. During nearly two years at this location, Jeff saw the thermometer dip to -108 °F (Wind Chill = -160 °F).

After Antarctica, Jeff served as a fill-in weather broadcaster for WGME-TV in Portland, Maine and then departed for the United Kingdom. While in England, Jeff attended Newcastle University and earned an MA in International Relations with a focus on the politics of climate change and geoengineering.

A native of Bath, Maine, Jeff now resides in North Conway, New Hampshire.