

It Began with a Storm

William Burkey Jr.

MU Alumni Spotlight - January 2018

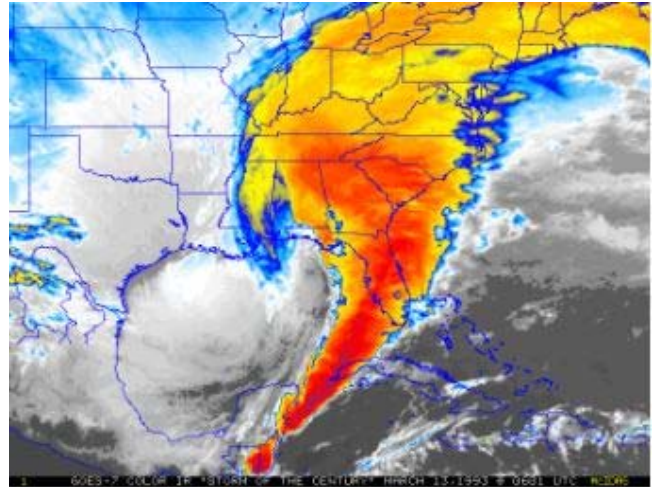
"I've always had a love and fascination for weather," says Bill Burkey '03. "Whenever the family took road trips, I would always be looking out of the car window, taking in all of the sites and staring up at the sky." Bill grew up on Staten Island, NY before he and his family moved to Blakeslee, PA in 1992. A year later, the "Storm of the Century" slammed the U.S. eastern seaboard March 12-14, 1993 causing approximately \$5.5 billion in damages. Snow fell at rates of 2-3 inches per hour and New Jersey reported 2.5 inches of sleet. Bill wondered how such a powerful storm came into existence.

This fascination in weather phenomenon inspired Bill to pursue a meteorology degree. He applied to and was accepted by six schools across the east coast, but only one stood out - Millersville University. Bill says of Millersville, "The location, the close-knit community, and the campus made me feel very welcome...much more so that any of the other schools I visited."

After completing his undergrad work at MU, Bill's meteorology career took off in 2007 when he began working for Rockwell Collins in Houston, TX. As a full-time meteorologist, Bill provided weather data analysis, forecasting and flight plans to international clientele in the aviation industry. The role also included managing and training new hires, developing training materials, and appearing as on-air talent for Ascend Weather Live, delivering worldwide aviation weather. His skill in front of the camera was no shock to his family. Bill says, "Ever since I was little, part of my morning routine was turning on the TV to the local news, anxiously waiting for the weather forecast." Bill studied not only the weather patterns, but also the cadence and demeanor of the meteorologists' communication. His undergraduate work at MU included time in front of the infamous "green screen" as well.

Bill credits more than just his career successes to Millersville. The time spent at the 'Ville helped him develop the perseverance and character needed to achieve his Executive Management MBA from Pace University in 2015. (Some of Bill's graduate projects can be viewed [here](#).) Today Bill serves as a Senior Consultant with Environmental Resources Management (ERM) in Houston, specializing in project execution, leading teams, and steering complex analytical projects in the oil and gas and telecommunications sectors. As a member of the American Meteorological Society's (AMS) Board of Early Career Professionals, Bill recently chaired a panel discussion on Effective Resume Writing during the AMS conference in Austin, TX. He is the recipient of numerous company awards, including ERM's Collaboration Award, Performance Recognition Award and the Information Solutions Sustainability Cup, of which he has won five times.

Beyond his professional accomplishments, Bill volunteers at a local food bank, serves on his homeowners' association board, enjoys managing his church softball team, and is an avid homebrewer. Bill lives in Houston with his wife, Jill, and their daughter, Stella.



NOAA Satellite Image – March 13, 1993 "Storm of the Century"



Bill Burkey (left) with Dr. Michael Jackson during the MU Alumni & Friends reception, January 8, at the 2018 American Meteorological Society's annual conference in Austin, TX.