

Alyssa Cannistraci, Tomer Burg, Mussie Kebede and Ellie Venteicher



Mussie Kebede works on short-to-medium range forecasting and surface analysis at NOAA's Weather Prediction Center. He earned a Bachelor's in

Meteorology at Virginia Tech and a Master's in Atmospheric Sciences at Howard University.

*"I had the unique opportunity to participate in the first annual Bill Lapenta Internship program in the summer of 2017. It was here that I learned very useful work and research skills. While that experience was beneficial, it was the networking and interpersonal connections I made that propelled me toward my goal of becoming a Meteorologist at the Weather Prediction Center. It was at NCEP that I met my future academic and professional mentors. It was here that I made lasting friendships outside of work. It was here that I had the pleasure of sitting in on Dr. Lapenta's early morning NWS leadership briefings. I'm grateful for all the doors that this internship opened and will continue to open in the future."*

Alyssa Cannistraci is a final-semester geography master's student at the University of Tennessee. She earned her bachelor's degree in meteorology from Millersville University. She studies spatiotemporal diffusion of tweets during a winter storm and tornado outbreak.



*"I first met Bill while on a school fieldtrip to NCEP in 2017. He encouraged us undergraduate seniors to take risks, never settle, and show confidence in everything we do. I was then introduced again to Bill in 2019 during the NCEP Student Internship. He again shared words of wisdom and talked about the importance of work-life balance. In all our conversations, Bill reminded us to stop and appreciate life. Yes, careers are important; but there is more to life than one's job. I will carry Bill's advice with me in my next chapter. I hope to live up to his legacy through my contributions to the weather, water, and climate enterprise."*

*"My time as an NCEP intern was a truly transformative experience as it allowed me to grow as a scientist, professional, and individual. The project I was tasked with not only allowed me to develop invaluable research skills, but also witness the tangible impacts I was able to make through my efforts. This instilled me with the confidence that I could contribute to our community. In addition to research, this program also did a wonderful job providing us with opportunities to interact with diverse and interesting individuals from across the field. This not only exposed us to career paths that I had previously not known existed, but also allowed me to develop a wider professional network that has continued to present new opportunities as I further my career. I can confidently state I would not be where I am today without this internship."*

*I was accepted into the NCEP Student Internship Program at a transitional stage in my career: changing to a different university for my PhD research. The experience I gained and connections made in those short two months were invaluable. Working at the Environmental Modeling Center provided insight into the latest developments in operational modeling and knowledge that would subsequently benefit my PhD work with modeling. The networking opportunities at NCEP were plentiful; speaking with some well-known experts in the field and hearing their journeys to get to where they are now was inspiring and humbling, and motivated me to accomplish more in the first year of my PhD in spite of a challenging change of setting in a new program. As Bill Lapenta wisely said, "get comfortable with being uncomfortable."*



Ellie Venteicher is a master's student in Atmospheric Sciences at Texas Tech. Her work uses high-resolution radar and in-situ data to study rear-flank downdraft internal surges and tornado genesis. She has a Bachelor's in Meteorology from Valparaiso University.

Tomer Burg is a PhD student in the School of Meteorology at the University of Oklahoma. His thesis work is about Arctic Cyclones and Tropopause Polar Vortices. Tomer was previously a Masters student at the University at Albany, SUNY.

