



Visiting Scientists at the National Hurricane Center

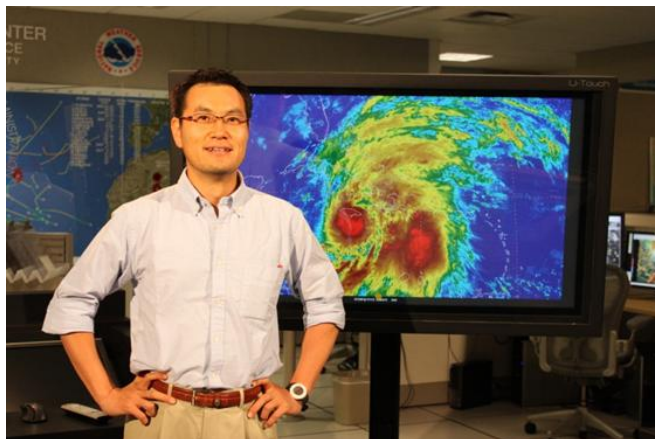
By Chris Landsea, Ph.D.
Science and Operations Officer
NOAA National Hurricane Center

During the peak of the 2012 hurricane season, the National Hurricane Center (NHC) hosted its annual Visiting Scientist Program. And once again, it was a big success.

The participating scientists included three university professors, a graduate student, one government laboratory researchers, two National Weather Service Forecast Office meteorologists, three National Weather Service national center meteorologists/oceanographers, and a private sector meteorologist.

Each had the opportunity to be at NHC during actual tropical storm and hurricane events, spending up to three days with the hurricane specialists and one day with the marine forecasters in NHC's Tropical Analysis and Forecast Branch. By shadowing these forecasters, each learned the analysis and prediction methodologies, technologies employed, observations and models used, time constraints, and ways that forecasts are communicated.

The program is designed to open additional dialog between NHC and the research and outside forecast community that could lead to improvements in our analysis and prediction methodologies. This program is restricted to scientists that have interest and expertise in day-to-day hurricane forecasting operations.



Mr. Yoshihiro Konno with Weathernews Inc. from Japan

"I have been doing tropical cyclone forecasting worldwide in Weathernews Inc. and I have been very much interested in what kind of data do the NHC forecasters see, what kind of tools do they use, and how they conduct the forecasting process. This program is exactly what I had needed" said Mr. Yoshihiro Konno with Weathernews Inc. from Japan.



Prof. Ryan Torn from the State University of New York-Albany (left) with Chris Landsea, NHC's Science and Operations Officer

Prof. Ryan Torn from the State University of New York-Albany added that “as someone who works closely with model developers, it was fascinating to speak with the hurricane specialists about how they use model data, what they are looking for from a model and what it takes for them to trust a model and what kinds of model products they would find useful. This week will provide motivation for some of my future research activities.”



Dr. Andre van der Westhuysen of the Environmental Modeling Center (left) with Lixion Avila, NHC's Senior Hurricane Specialist

Finally, Dr. Andre van der Westhuysen of the Environmental Modeling Center “applauds NHC for taking the initiative in welcoming scientists to their center in order to promote understanding of NHC's critical role and its future challenges.”

NHC's Visiting Scientist Program has been running for six hurricane seasons and has been financially supported during the last four years under the auspices of NOAA's Hurricane Forecast Improvement Program.

Contact: nhc.public.affairs@noaa.gov