

## The Second Annual NIHHIS Mid-Season Heat Safety Social Media Campaign Has Begun!

By: Kimberly McMahon, NWS Public Weather Services Program Manager

The National Integrated Heat Health Information System ([NIHHIS](#)) Interagency Communication Group will be holding the second annual **Mid-Season Heat Safety Awareness Social Media Campaign**, which will run for five weeks from **July 17, 2023 through August 18, 2023**. The NWS is among a group of participating agencies assigned to post one day each week on a rotating schedule. Each day of the week will have a different theme, with the same themes repeated for the 5 weeks of the campaign:

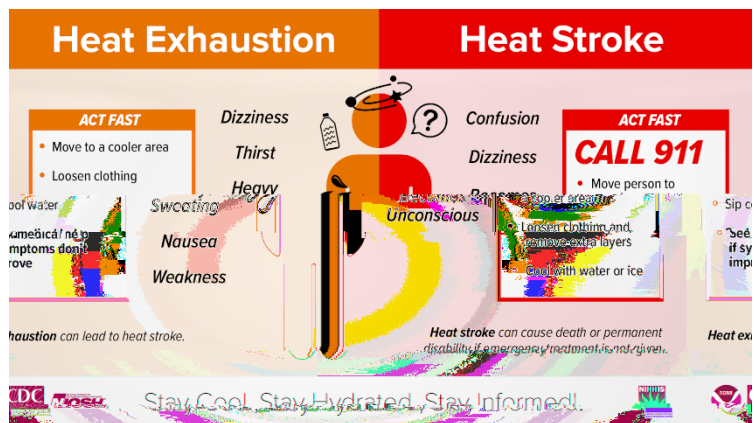
- Monday: Heat-related illness awareness
- Tuesday: Heat tools and resources
- Wednesday: Planning for future heat
- Thursday: Who is most at risk to heat?
- Friday: Prevention/preparedness/actions

As a co-lead of NIHHIS, the National Weather Service will kick the campaign off on July 17 with posts to raise awareness about heat-related illnesses and how to avoid them.

This campaign is a federal collaboration on heat communication to raise awareness about the risk of extreme heat and to provide audiences with information on preparedness and actions so that individuals can protect themselves and others before, during, and after heat events. Agencies will post their own content and share the content of the other participating agencies.

Participating agencies in this NIHHIS social media campaign include Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), and United States Forest Service (USFS).

The social media campaign will be using the hashtags #NIHHIS and #HeatSafety.



## NWS Hanford Creates Heat Safety Graphics for the Neurodiverse Community

By: NWS Staff

This spring, NWS Hanford developed specialized graphics in both English and Spanish to communicate heat safety to the neurodiverse (including Autism) community and their families and caretakers. Meteorologist **JP Kalb**, along with WCM **Felix Castro** and Lead Meteorologist **Bill South**, led the effort by focusing on his experience of being an Autistic self-advocate to help communicate weather safety information that factored in the sensory perception of the neurodiversity community.

The new graphic gained national attention on social media as one of the broadcasters on The Weather Channel En Español (Conexión Con El Tiempo) asked for the Spanish graphic, which was quickly shared. Conexión Con El Tiempo then interviewed Felix to discuss the graphics and our support of the neurodiverse community (watch on [YouTube](#)). The WFO Hanford team hopes to continue raising awareness by focusing on the sensory perception in the neurodiverse community and other underserved communities.



Graphic (English) which says “According to the CDC, 1 in 36 children are diagnosed with Autism. Here are some tips to keep Autistic family and friends safe this summer: 1) Gently encourage them to stay hydrated 2) Encourage them to wear light colored clothes 3) If you go to a cooling center, bring sensory comfort items such as sunglasses and headphones 4) Have spare batteries and portable charges on hand in case of blackouts due to the heat 5) Autistics often have health comorbidities which makes them more vulnerable to heat illnesses 6) Some autistics find being around water soothing. Drowning in cold water can occur due to involuntary muscle reactions.”

## NOAA Employees and Affiliates from More Than 11 States Participate in the 4<sup>th</sup> Florida Diversity and Inclusion Workshop

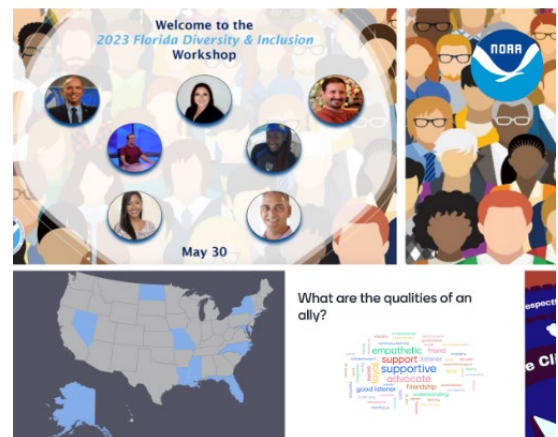
By: NWS Staff

A total of 211 participants from NOAA engaged in the 4th Florida Diversity & Inclusion Workshop on May 30 and 31, which was hosted virtually by the [National Hurricane Center](#) and organized by employees from three NOAA line offices. Twenty-three speakers participated, and sign-language interpreters were available.

The workshop began with a land acknowledgment provided to commemorate Florida’s past and present native tribes. Representatives from NOAA Employee Resource Groups (ERG), such as [Mindful NOAA](#) and the [Asian American](#), [African American](#), [Latinos@NOAA](#), and [FUSION](#) ERGs, gave presentations revealing their importance and impact on the NOAA organizational culture. In addition, delegates from the [Department of Commerce Women in STEM](#) presented about being a champion for women in the workplace.

There were two segments on the subject of Allyship on the first day of the workshop. [Sirajah Raheem](#) (Founder and Organizational Accountability Facilitator, [Groundsheet](#)) discussed Allyship as the workplace climate barometer and engaged the audience by creating a word cloud that describes the qualities of an ally. The second segment was a panel facilitated by [The Village](#) on what allyship looks like.

Dr. Ngozi Butler-Guerrier (Director, NOAA Office of Inclusion and Civil Rights) gave the opening remarks on the second day of the workshop. The importance of working with native peoples and diverse coastal communities was highlighted by [Dr. Mary Allen](#) and a panel moderated by [Brian LaMarre](#), which described NOAA’s collaboration with the Pointe-au-Chien Indian Tribe. Accessibility topics were discussed by [Orlando Bermudez](#), who presented about the Multimedia Assistance in Spanish Program, and by [Alexandra Kent](#), who provided a guide to making social media and products accessible for everyone. Additionally, [Dr. Emily Osborne](#) talked about the Workplace Violence Prevention and Response [Volunteer Assistance Liaison Program](#).



Workshop survey results indicated a preference for seeing more NOAA collaborations with diverse communities in the workshop.

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# NWS Forecaster Exchange Program Builds Knowledge, Connections, and Support

By: NWS Staff



The spring season witnessed a cross-regional forecaster exchange program between the Western and Central Regions. Although the NWS functions as one, challenges can arise not only within individual offices but also when forecasters venture across regions. To address these challenges, WFO Spokane Forecaster **Krista Carrothers** and WFO Quad Cities Forecaster **Peter Speck** joined forces to address the intricacies faced in different regions after Krista was paired with the WFO Quad Cities MIC **Ed Holicky** for the NWS Mentorship. Through a mutual exchange, they spent two full days at each other's offices, fostering a collaborative approach to overcome regional hurdles. This experience enabled them to gain profound insights into diverse forecasting techniques and exchange local knowledge, which they subsequently brought back to their respective offices, enhancing overall forecasting operations.

In April 2023, Krista headed to Davenport, Iowa, where she encountered flooding and the aftermath of severe storms that impacted the region. This immersive experience provided her with invaluable insights into the complexities of managing flood events along the Mississippi River, a challenge less commonly encountered in the Pacific Northwest. Additionally, Krista actively participated in a storm survey that revealed the damaging effects of an EF-1 tornado. The knowledge and expertise she acquired during her time in Davenport have already been put to use in her office, continuing to benefit forecasting operations even in the months that followed.

Peter traveled to Spokane, Washington in June 2023, where he had the opportunity to witness the increasing heat and dry conditions of the region. This experience provided Peter with a firsthand understanding of how WFO OTX (Spokane) handles fire weather conditions. Peter actively engaged with the fire weather focal point and joined on a trip to Newport, Washington, where he contributed to providing a fire season outlook and refreshing the knowledge of various partners. Additionally, Peter gained insights into the operational practices of WFO Spokane, which he subsequently shared with his colleagues at WFO Quad Cities.

Overall, the forecaster exchange program yielded numerous benefits, demonstrating the potential for learning and collaboration across the entire agency. One notable advantage of the exchange was the establishment of meaningful connections among forecasters, where they can now readily reach out to each other for assistance and guidance. Establishing the groundwork for offices to potentially support mutual aid becomes particularly important with the integration of AWIPS into the cloud. Fostering these partnerships is crucial for laying the foundation to explore and evaluate mutual aid concepts that cross regional boundaries. This exchange program has not only enhanced forecasting capabilities, but also cultivated a culture of camaraderie and knowledge-sharing within the agency.



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