

# Maura Hahnenberger, PhD

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## **Why did you become a scientist?**

I've loved science and nature since I was a kid, but wasn't sure what type of science I wanted to do. I'm also a performing artist, and, while watching TV one day, I saw a TV meteorologist. I thought, what a perfect job: I can be a performer and a scientist! That's what got me into studying weather. But, once I learned more about about being on TV, I decided that teaching and research were more in line with my interests.

## **What do you study for DUST<sup>2</sup>? Why is this important?**

I lead the atmospheric dust transport part of DUST<sup>2</sup>, which includes figuring out where dust is coming from, what weather conditions make it move, and how it impacts air quality where people live. Understanding this helps forecast dust storms and lets people know when the air might be hazardous to breathe.

## **What do you do day-to-day in your work?**

As a professor, I teach and work with students in environmental sciences and other majors. I do research, too, which involves analyzing datasets on a computer and creating graphs and charts that help people understand how dust transport is changing. I also serve on organizations helping women to succeed in careers in science and higher education.



## **What is your favorite part of what you do and why?**

I love helping students succeed and discovering new scientific insights. I love working with students in my classes and helping them move on to fulfill their goals at other universities and getting science jobs. I also really love doing science (particularly with students) and then sharing that science with other and conferences and events.

## **What advice do you have for students interested in science?**

Figure out how the science you love connects to your everyday life and share it with others. We learn the most by teaching, so share your passions with your family and friends!



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