

Heather Nepaul, Ph.D.

Storm Surge Specialist and Meteorologist

Storm Surge Unit and Tropical Analysis and Forecast Branch, National Hurricane Center

Heather Nepaul, Ph.D., is a storm surge specialist and meteorologist with the Storm Surge Unit (SSU) and Tropical Analysis and Forecast Branch (TAFB) of NOAA's National Hurricane Center (NHC) in Miami, Florida.

While born in South Florida, Heather grew up in Charlotte, North Carolina. However, after graduating high school there, she returned home to Florida to attend Florida International University (FIU) in West Miami-Dade, where she earned a Bachelor of Science in Geoscience (2012), Masters of Science in Geoscience (2015), and a Doctor in Philosophy in Geoscience (2018), all with an atmospheric track. Her dissertation work focused on evaluating changes to natural variability in the oceans on a warmer globe.

While she was attending graduate school, Heather was a student volunteer with the Weather Forecast Office in Miami. During that time, she worked on completing her upper air certification and worked with the NHC on a project that evaluated hurricane track forecasts from 2004-2013 over the Gulf of Mexico and Florida.



After graduating with her doctorate, Dr. Nepaul began her professional career with the National Weather Service forecast office for Miami/South Florida, where her duties were to analyze and assess the daily weather to provide forecasting products for South Florida and the adjacent waters. She was also responsible for the issuance of watches and warnings, and forecasts for the public, aviation, marine and fire weather communities across South Florida

In July 2021, she accepted a hybrid position in NHC's SSU and TAFB. During the hurricane season, her duties include working closely with the hurricane specialists and coastal weather forecast office's to produce storm surge forecasts and products in land-threatening tropical cyclone situations. During the off-season, she assists with various projects and outreach events for SSU, while also working as a surface analyst for TAFB.

In her spare time, she enjoys spending time with her husband and dog, cheering for the infamous Florida Gators, and considers herself a novice vintner, having learned to make wine.



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