

National Weather Service Meets with Local Student

The National Weather Service (NWS) Tampa Bay Area Weather Forecast Office located in Ruskin, FL met with an enthusiastic high school student. Matt Bolton and his family met with Brian LaMarre, NWS Meteorologist-in-Charge (MIC), on Thursday February 26, 2009. Matt's interest in weather began several years ago and he has made a strong effort to attend many NWS presentations on severe weather and hurricane awareness and preparedness. Matt has also been an active participant during meetings of the West Central Florida Chapter of the American Meteorological Society: <http://www.wcflams.org/>



Student Meteorologist Matt Bolton and MIC Brian LaMarre following an afternoon tour.

Matt and his family enjoyed a tour of the NWS office and a presentation on tornado safety. Although Matt hopes to visit the NWS Storm Prediction Center and NWS National Weather Center in Norman, OK in the future – Brian provided a West Texas SKYWARN presentation for Matt as the next best thing!

After learning about deadly EF-5 tornadoes and the largest hail stone ever recorded – which occurred in Aurora, Nebraska on June 22, 2003 and measured 7 inches in diameter – Matt was given a hands-on demonstration of the Advanced Weather Interactive Processing System (AWIPS). The AWIPS is used by the NWS to forecast the weather and warn the public of hazardous conditions. Matt reviewed NWS Doppler radar imagery and identified several smoke plumes from ongoing fires across the state of Florida.



Student Meteorologist Matt Bolton using the NWS AWIPS system to monitor weather conditions.

The NWS Tampa Bay Area office will use all of its technology and radar and satellite equipment to keep a close eye on Matt Bolton, as he pursues his dream of learning about the weather.