

**HERO of the MONTH**

**November 2023**

**Daile Zhang**

1. What is your background?

**PhD in Atmospheric Sciences and Remote Sensing**

1. How and when did you hear about ACLENet?

**Dr. Mary Ann Cooper and I met at the International Lightning Detection Conference (ILDC) in 2014. She introduced me into ACLENet. Since then, I have been helping her on a variety of things for ACLENet.**

1. What motivated you to work with ACLENet?

**I have always been interested in working to mitigate damages/loss from natural disasters. My doctoral work focused on lightning physics and lightning detection, which further inspired my specific interest in lightning safety. During my PhD time, I worked with two ACLENet members Mr. Ron Holle and Dr. Mary Ann Cooper. They introduced me to the work they have done for lightning safety in the U.S. and internationally. That was when I realized that there is still a lot to be done, especially over Africa.**

1. Please describe your work with ACLENet.

**I serve as ACLENet Board of Directors. I’m also responsible for managing ACLENet’s official social media platforms including Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook, and YouTube channel.**

1. What are some of your key achievements so far with ACLENet?

**Have a lot better understanding of how a non-profit organization works, as well as how to communicate and overcome real-world difficulties.**

1. What are some of the challenges you have encountered in your work with ACLENet? How have you addressed these challenges.

**As a science major, I had little knowledge of the business and management. Still trying to learn more about nonprofit leadership, management and fundraising.**

1. How would you like to see ACLENet develop in the future?

**To be able to bring in more stable funding to support the program. Growth of support in other countries and areas where people are most vulnerable to lightning risks.**

1. What do you see in the future for ACLENet regarding lightning safety?

**I think that we need to get more international attention and collaborations on lightning science and safety education. Education for the younger generations will definitely help their understanding of lightning science and gain their awareness of lightning risks. The success of reducing the annual lightning fatality and injuries in the U.S. in the past 30 years has demonstrated that lightning safety education really works! ACLENet will continue the hard work to save more lives. In addition, we have a lot of advanced technology that we did not have 30 years ago. The technology will help us build better affordable lightning protection facilities that will prevent potential lightning damage.**

1. Encouragement note

**Together we will make a difference. Spread the words and save lives.**

1. Is there anything else you would like to include – personal information, family, goals, etc? Is it ok to list your email?

**Daile is an Assistant Research Scientist at the Earth System Science Interdisciplinary Center (ESSIC) at the University of Maryland. Currently, she works on evaluating and assessing lightning data from different lightning locating systems, including both ground-based and satellite-based networks. Outside of her study, Daile plays piano and organ.**

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