**Jeff LaPierre**

**HERO of the MONTH**

**July 2024**

A person wearing glasses and a suit

Description automatically generated

1. What is your background?

I am currently the lead lightning scientist and Director of Research and Development at Earth Networks/AEM. This is a USA based company that owns and operates a global lightning network called the Earth Networks Total Lightning Network (ENTLN). I have been with the company for over 7 years. My team of 3 other lightning scientists work on hardware, software, and algorithm development to help improve the quality of data that is produced by the ENTLN.

Prior to AEM I was a Postdoc at University of Virgina studying lightning chemistry as it relates to production of chemicals called NOx that contribute to green house gas emissions. I combined ENTLN data with satellite based observations of NO2 to produce a large scale study of how much NOx is produced per lightning flash (something that is still misunderstood).

I earned my Ph.D in Physics at the New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology, a small but well regarded institution in the lightning research community. My PhD research was a balance of instrumentation and data analysis. I operated a network of eight low frequency electric field sensors, called the Langmuir Electric Field Array (LEFA), which I used in conjunction with many of the other lightning monitoring systems at NMT to perform some detailed studies of the most dangerous phenomena in lightning, called Continuing Current. This is a relatively long lasting current that occurs after some ground strokes and is the cause of the most damaging impacts of lightning like wildfires and electrical destruction.

Prior to my graduate studies I got my bachelor’s degree in physics at Bishops University, a school in Quebec, Canada where I am originally from. My roots in French speaking Quebec is what gave me the ability to translate for ACLENet’s monthly newsletter.

1. How and when did you hear about ACLENet?

I heard about ACLENet many years ago when I first started going to conferences. I recall Mary-Ann Cooper giving presentations on the great work they do in Africa to help protect people from the damages of lightning through valuable data gathering, education, and installation of lightning protection systems.

1. What motivated you to work with ACLENet?

They have a mighty cause and are very passionate about the impact they have on the people they serve.

1. Please describe your work with ACLENet.

I help translate their monthly newsletter into French.

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

Mostly just translations.

1. What are some of the challenges you have encountered in your work with ACLENet? How have you addressed these challenges.
2. How would you like to see ACLENet develop in the future?

I would love to see ACLENet expand to other countries. From experience I know that other countries around the world also experience difficulties with understanding the importance of lightning safety (e.g. India).

1. What do you see in the future for ACLENet regarding lightning safety?
2. Encouragement note
3. Is there anything else you would like to include – personal information, family, goals, etc? Is it ok to list your email?

I love to travel. Being a scientist, and also working for a global company, I have had the opportunity to travel all around the world. Some countries include: Brazil, France, The Netherlands, Britain, Poland, South Africa, India, Hong Kong, Japan.

Please send a photo we can use – or I will try to find one in my files –

Your answers to these questions will be posted on ACLENet’s website at:

[*https://aclenet.org/news-publications/newsletters/hero-of-the-month-column.html*](https://aclenet.org/news-publications/newsletters/hero-of-the-month-column.html)

*THANK YOU for all you do for ACLENet and for saving lives - MA*