

American Association of State Climatologists' 2020 Dissertation Award Winner

Congratulations to Dr. Toni Klemm, a previous South Central CASC doctoral student, for earning the American Association of State Climatologists (AASC) 2020 Dissertation Award! Dr. Klemm earns this distinction for his dissertation titled, "Assessing User Needs and Model Accuracy of Seasonal Climate Forecasts for Winter Wheat Producers in the South-Central United States."

"I'm very honored and grateful to receive this award, especially from the AASC," Dr. Klemm said. "The goal of my research was to provide better weather and climate decision tools for agricultural produces, and getting this recognition from an organization like AASC, whose members work on the bridge between science and decision making, is a really big deal and gives me a lot of confidence in my work."

Since research is usually a collaborative effort, Dr. Klemm continued by expressing the upmost gratitude for mentors and organizations that influenced this work over the years. "They put the bar very high but were there anytime I needed advice. This award is theirs as much as it is mine."

A few of those mentors include: Dr. Renee McPherson from the South Central CASC, Dr. Jennifer Koch and Dr. Travis Gliedt from OU's Department of Geography and Environmental Sustainability, Dr. Elinor Martin from OU's School of Meteorology, and Dr. Jean Steiner from USDA's Grazinglands Research Lab. Dr. Klemm also expressed his appreciation for support from the Oklahoma Climate Survey at OU, as well as his friends and family.

Every year, the AASC Dissertation Award Committee selects one dissertation from a pool of applicants that stands out amongst its competitors. The award winner will receive a \$1,000 cash prize, plaque and a 1-year associate membership in the AASC. Normally, the award winner would also include registration and partial travel expenses to the attend the AASC's Annual Meeting and present their research. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the annual meeting is canceled, however, Dr. Klemm has the option to present his research remotely to the Association this June as part of an online meeting yet to be announced.

The American Association for State Climatologist advances the development and delivery of science-based climate services at the state and local levels. AASC works to support a society in which climate-sensitive decisions are guided by science-based information derived from historical and current observed climate and scenarios of future climate.