



Photo: Geoff Hansen

Meet

Zoe Courville
Polar Researcher

Age: 33

Current Hometown:
White River Jct., VT

Other Jobs Held:
graduate student, ski coach, waitress

Hobbies/Interests:
skiing, hiking

Strengths: easy-going, sense of humor, hard working, don't get cold easily

How do you use your strengths in your job?

In my field of work, Mother Nature dictates a lot of what can happen in any given day. Being able to roll with the punches really helps deal with stressful situations out of my control-like planes not being able to land and equipment breaking.

What was your biggest learning challenge in school?

My biggest challenge when I was in school was deciding what I really liked doing most. I loved art classes, history, math, science and writing. Especially in college, I think I went through phases where once a week I wanted to change my major from engineering to something else.

What motivates you to go to work?

There are a lot of days at work where I feel like I'm a little kid again, playing in the snow. I get to study something I find fascinating, and go to amazing and beautiful places like Greenland and Antarctica. The people I work with in my field are very passionate about the work that we are doing, and they are also usually really fun and extremely talented.

Every job has specific skills. What do you need in yours?

For my job, I use all of my engineering background to conduct field and lab work, and to fix things when they go wrong! These skills are also useful to analyze all the data we generate in the lab. I need to be able to convey what I do to different audiences, and that take communication skills. I use the lessons of teamwork and perseverance I learned growing up skiing to be able to work well with other people in difficult situations, especially when it's cold and tiring and everyone just wants to be home.

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