

WEATHER REPORTERS

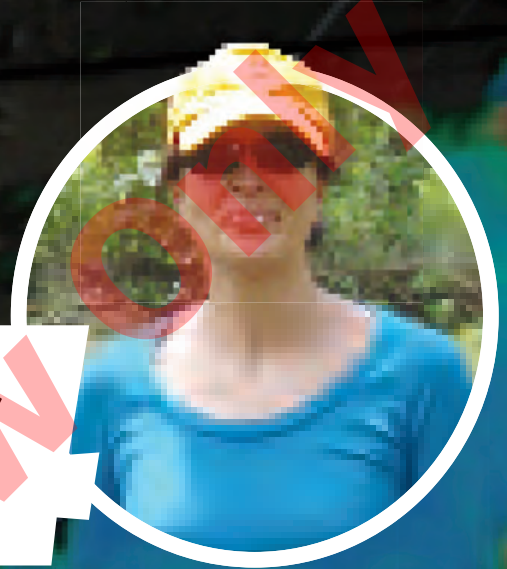
ON THE JOB

by Charles Piddock





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satellite photo
of Hurricane
Isaac



REPORTING THE WEATHER:

PEDRO MONTORO

Monster from the Sea

It was August 21, 2012. TV meteorologist Pedro Enrique Montoro didn't have a good feeling. Weather information provided by Cuba's Institute of Meteorology told him about a huge storm. It was growing larger off the coast of Africa.

Pedro knew that it would not be long before the storm became a hurricane. And it was headed for the Caribbean and the United States. During the next few days, Montoro's weather team carefully tracked the storm, now named Isaac.

As predicted, the hurricane slammed into the Caribbean, dropping heavy rain. Then Isaac hit Louisiana on the night of August 29. Powerful winds and rain pounded the state.

According to the National Hurricane Center, Isaac caused \$2.35 billion in damages. But many lives were saved. That's because weather forecasters like Pedro told people well in advance about the path and strength of the hurricane. People were able to find safe places to stay out of the storm.

Tracking Isaac

Pedro and other forecasters used many tools to track the path of Hurricane Isaac. Satellites from space took photographs. Airplanes built with special equipment flew into the storm to determine its wind speed. Instruments in floating buoys measured the storm's intensity. Computers helped predict Isaac's path.



Hurricane Basics

A hurricane is a huge storm that forms over the ocean. The Saffir-Simpson scale measures the wind speed of hurricanes. According to this scale, a storm becomes a hurricane when its wind speed reaches 119 kilometers (74 miles) per hour. The most powerful hurricanes have wind speeds of over 251 kilometers (156 miles) per hour.

Hurricanes gain energy through contact with warm ocean waters. They rotate around an "eye," a calm spot in their center. Hurricanes can grow in strength until they hit land. They bring heavy rain and strong winds. They cause large waves that damage buildings and threaten lives.



◀ Pedro went to college in Cuba.

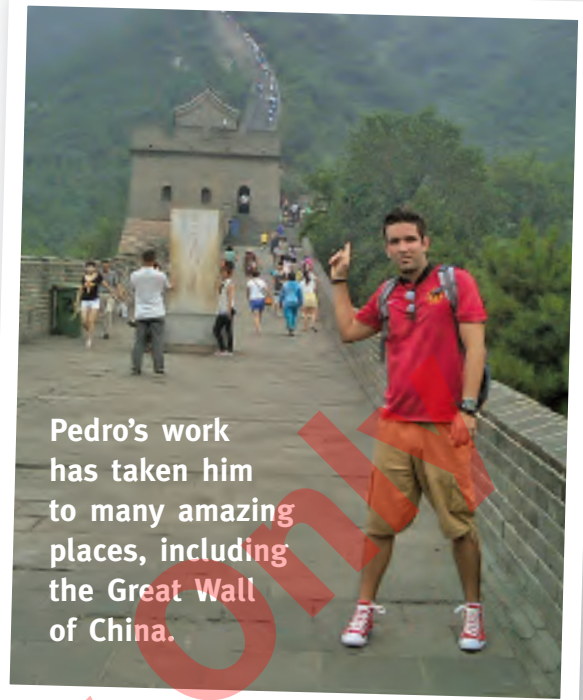


Meet Pedro Montoro

Pedro Enrique Montoro grew up in Cuba. When he was eight years old, playing baseball in a park, lightning hit a tree right in front of him. The tree was immediately destroyed. “I was terrified,” Pedro recalled.

“Then I began to think about the huge destructive forces of nature. I was amazed at the damage these forces could do.” In 2002, two hurricanes, one after another, hit Cuba. “I almost lost my house and my family. From that point on, I wanted to pursue the study of the weather to help protect human lives.”

Pedro worked hard in school and got top grades in science. In college, he studied meteorology, winning awards for his research. After graduation, he was a weather reporter for Cuba's national broadcasting agency. Pedro has been a television weather reporter in South Florida and New York.



Pedro's work has taken him to many amazing places, including the Great Wall of China.



Then Pedro studied meteorology in Germany.



A Day in the Life of a Weather Forecaster

On-camera weather reporters, such as Pedro Montoro, don't just report on big storms. They mainly give people daily weather reports. Every evening, Pedro reports the weather on television station Telemundo 47 in New York. Will it be warm or cold? Will it rain or snow?

Pedro reports the weather Monday through Friday. He is on the 5:00 p.m. and 11:00 p.m. news. He begins his report by

talking about the weather that happened during the day. Then he lets people know what the weather will be during the night. His viewers want to know whether it will be good for sleeping. Will people need to turn on an air conditioner or heater? What can they expect the next day?

We followed Pedro during a typical workday.



Pedro's Day

7:00 a.m. Pedro's day begins long before he appears on television. He wakes up at 7 a.m. One of the first things he does is check the small portable weather station at his home. His weather station gives him the temperature and other important weather information. Then he eats breakfast and exercises.

Pedro checks his home weather station in the morning and the NWS website from his office. ▼



2:35 p.m. Pedro arrives at his office at Telemundo 47. For the next few hours he collects the information he needs to predict the weather. Most of the information comes from the National Weather Service (NWS). The NWS is located near Washington, D.C. Its main job is to provide information to weather reporters all over the country. The NWS gathers the information from ships, buoys, satellites, radar, and aircraft. Then it sends the information to weather reporters.

