Most Exciting Discovery
I studied the role of weather and climate anomalies, such as droughts, as drivers of fires. I used a dynamical model to simulate the 1988 Yellowstone National Park wildfires. Looking at the rainfall anomaly patterns in the continental U.S., the results suggested that the wildfires may have enhanced the severe drought in the northern U.S.

When did you know you wanted to be a scientist?
I lived in China during grades K-12, which was during the Cultural Revolution. There was a newspaper called Reference News that reported important scientific news from around the world. I still remember reading a story explaining that changes in Earth's orbit had caused the ice age. That inspired my interest in science.