

GO WITH THE FLOW

Training Tomorrow's Water Professionals Today

December 2023 Volume 26, Number 3

Operator Spotlight
A Conversation with Courtney
York

Courtney York works for Fayetteville PWC as a lab analyst at Cross Creek Water Reclamation Facility and has been with PWC since January 2021. Her duties include an array of water and wastewater analyses to aid in making sure the water treatment and water reclamation facilities stay in compliance with EPA standards and NPDES permits. Courtney says that she and her lab are "Basically a support for water and wastewater. As far as our day-to-day samples, we do more with wastewater, since we aid in process control as well as maintaining compliance. But as a whole, we're doing both water and wastewater."

In 2020, and before starting work at Cross Creek, Courtney obtained a bachelor's degree in biology, from Campbell University. Originally, she had no idea that she would end up in the water and wastewater field. She



always excelled in science- and math-related subjects, and she considered fields such as wildlife ecology, medicine, and pharmacy. But then someone told Courtney to look into a state job, due to the benefits that normally go along with such jobs. Courtney says, "They were telling me about benefits and everything, and saying it was good to work for the state or the government. PWC just happened to be hiring, and I interviewed, and I got it. I don't think I've ever heard anybody say they sought out a career in wastewater or even water. You just kind of happen upon it - and it's been a huge blessing."

The purpose of GO WITH THE FLOW is to keep you, the operator, informed of some of the training opportunities that are available for your certification needs (new and renewal). Events may be scheduled by: NCWOA, Public Water Supply Section, State Laboratory of Public Health, and other sources. This newsletter may also contain information on new regulations, news from the Certification Board, and important need-to-know resource contacts.

Check out our website!

www.ncwoa.com

If you would like to nominate an operator for a spotlight article please contact Heather Cagle at heather@ncwoa.com.

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Courtney has obtained a Grade I Physical-Chemical Wastewater, Grade I Biological Wastewater, and Grade I Wastewater Lab Analyst certifications. She is hoping to obtain the Grade II Wastewater Lab Analyst certification, by the end of this year. In the future, Courtney also wants to get C-Surface and C-Distribution certifications for drinking water.

Courtney lists having a part in public health and the protection of our most valuable resource as the two things she likes best about her job. Due to her background in biology, she is really into wildlife and ecology. She adds, "On the wastewater side, we're trying to protect the Cape Fear River that we discharge water back into, as well as protecting drinking water. So, I like having a part in public health and still being involved with being a good steward of the environment. It's very fulfilling, when you think about it like that, rather than just testing water or testing wastewater."

Courtney thinks one of the biggest challenges facing the industry is the lack of public knowledge of the water and wastewater industry, especially the wastewater side. Courtney says, "The wastewater plant I



work at is 10 minutes from my house and I passed by it pretty much every day of my life and I never knew what it was and never really thought about 'Oh, what is that?' So, I knew nothing about this industry until I got into it." Also, as far as the customers and public are concerned,

Courtney feels that there is a lack of knowledge regarding water and wastewater regulations, requirements, permits, etc. Courtney concludes, "I think it's not common knowledge, as far as how strict and regulated everything is, it's just mostly 'Don't drink the water. The water's bad.' Water treatment, especially wastewater treatment is one of those things we don't really put much thought into, and we tend to take it for granted. I would say that is a big challenge for the industry."

Courtney also feels that there is a need for more outreach to the schools, to expose students to the water and wastewater fields. She adds, "I feel like, for water and wastewater, there's something for everybody. And I think it is especially important that we pour into the next generation and let them know just how much these industries have to offer."

Courtney has been a big help to NCWOA and she has been the Chair of its Southeast Section, since April, 2022. She says that she had only been with PWC for 9 months, when Del Coffman asked for volunteers for the Fall school. Although she knew she had less experience than others, she agreed to help, and she taught lab procedures and sampling to the C-Well and C-Surface classes. Courtney adds,



"I really enjoyed it and growth really happens, when you step out and do things you think you're really not qualified to do, or even other people think you're not qualified to do." She thinks that opportunity was a big blessing. After that, she went to some meetings and Heather Cagle reached out regarding specialized training. The Southeast section needed a chair, "and again, something I didn't think I was qualified to do, I said, 'I'll do it' and they let me. They must have been really desperate, so they let me (laughs)."

In the years to come, Courtney hopes to continue in the water and wastewater field, "because it has opened a whole world that I had no idea about, before I started here. So, I hope that I'm still with PWC and still enjoying this industry."

Thank you, Courtney, for all you are doing for Fayetteville, NC-WOA, and the water and wastewater fields!

Operator Spotlight A Conversation with William Tatum

William Tatum is an operator at the Piedmont Triad Regional Water Authority (PTRWA) water plant, a position he has held since September 2009. During the warmer months of spring and summer, William is responsible for routine inspection of the distribution system (fire hydrants, vaults, meter boxes), as well as weeding around hydrants and meter boxes, to make sure they're not damaged and that people can see them. William's work hours are always 5 AM to 6 PM, but the days he works varies. William explains, "I don't work weekends, but I might work Monday, Tuesday, Thursday one week and then work Tuesday, Thursday, Friday the next week. It all depends on what's going on, as far as people needing time off and things like that."

The PTRWA water plant is currently rated as a 12 – 14 MGD plant, but a planned expansion project will allow that to be increased to 26.2 MGD. The plant utilizes super pulsators, instead of sedimentation basins. William adds, "The plant has traditional filters, but we also have membranes that the water goes through after the filters, and then it goes through the GAC filters, for taste and odor." Eventually they will be adding RO filters. PTRWA sends its water to seven partnerships, the majority of the water going to the cities of Greensboro (6.8 MGD) and High Point (2.68 MGD). The other partnerships are with Archdale, Jamestown, Randleman, Randolph County, and New Market. William adds, "With New Market, it's mainly an elementary school."

William got started in the water industry after completing two degree programs at NC State. The first degree was in Forest Management, but as William explains, "After about two years of not being able to find a job, I went back and got another degree in Environmental Science. One of the professors I had was actually one of the chairs for the Rural



Water Association, but her main side of things was wastewater. So, initially, I tried to get the certification for wastewater, to work in a wastewater plant, and then, shortly after my wife and I met, she was working in a doctor's office that actually does the physicals for the lake wardens that work out here. That's how I found out about the plant that I've been at."

In addition to his college work at NC State, William holds A-Surface and an A-Distribution drinking water licenses, along with some membrane certifications, from membrane classes. He has been a member of NCWOA and AWWA, since starting his job.

When William was hired, the water plant was still being built, so he, along with the other operators, had to train and get their experience at water plants in Greensboro and High Point. When the plant went online late October, 2010, William wasn't



there, "because I was on my honeymoon. I had gotten married a week before, so I wasn't here for the actual start up, but I've pretty much been here, since the actual operation."

When asked what the best part of his job is, William laughs and says, "The fact that I only work three days a week. That's probably one of the biggest pluses for me,

aside from the state benefits." As far as the biggest challenges of his job, William says there were many of them when the plant was first put into operation, but they have decreased since then, explaining, "At this point, they're still there, but when we first started. I was literally as green as I could be when it came to doing this for a living, I lost track of how many times I called and woke my boss up at two or three o' clock in the morning, because I was working nights at the time. But (the boss) said, if something was broken or wasn't working, he wanted to know right then, because it was a brand, new plant. Probably, for the first four, four and a half years, he got woken up a lot. But as time has gone on, that's tapered off a lot. We have learned how to handle certain problems, as they arise. We know a lot more now than we did when we started. We were

all green when it opened. It was a brand-new plant."

Outside of work, William is married to his wife, Andrea. They do not have any children but have "three, very spoiled dogs": a collie, a rottweiler, and a beagle/ lab mix. William's interests include playing video games and attending live concert events. For the concerts, William elaborates, "To give you an example, I've seen Widespread Panic about 85 times, since 1993. I go to a lot of other shows, too. The money I've spent going to concerts, I probably could have paid off my house - paid off a lot of things, that I'm paying on, right now (laughs)."

In the future, William hopes to become more involved in the distribution aspect of the water industry. Because, as he says, "the more we grow and expand, that's going to be new lines, new hydrants. Kind of move towards something else, besides operating all the time. I actually like the spring and the summer out here better, because there's more that I'm responsible for besides just operating the plant."

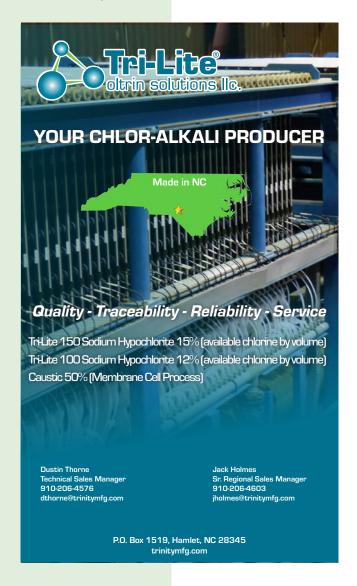
William encourages people to consider the water industry as a career, saying "If you have a chance to get in this industry and you can get in it, especially somewhere like I did, literally on the ground floor, by all means, take it. People think it's a menial

job, when it's really not. Yes, when everything's kosher, it's not a hard job, but if there weren't any possible work to it, because of problems, the states wouldn't require you to be certified, in order to do it. There's a very false narrative



that people who do what we do for a living are lazy, and that's just simply not the case."

Thank you, William, for the job that you are doing for PTRWA and for the water industry!



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Please contact:

Allen Daniels, Public Image Committee (252) 230-8424 Email: adaniels@avistatech.com

Heather Cagle, NCWOA Administrator (252) 764-2094 ext. 1

Email: heather@ncwoa.com

or check our website at www.ncwoa.com

Welcomes Christine Ricci

On October 1st of this year, NCWOA welcomed a new Education Specialist, Christine Ricci. Although Christine is new to NCWOA, she has been in the education field for almost 20 years. In addition to the Education Specialist position and prior to it, Christine was/is a biology instructor at Nash Community College, in Rocky Mount, NC. She also works part time for the Town of Nashville (NC) as an Environmental Educator.

Christine discovered NCWOA and the open Education Specialist position, when one of her friends sent her the job ad on the Conservation Listserv. She says when she saw the ad, "I was like, 'Oh, this job sounds fascinating' and I applied. I've always been interested in water treatment and all that, but I was like, 'Oh, yeah, let's apply'."

Christine has a Bachelor's degree in Biology and Environmental Science and a Master's degree in Biology. She received her Master's degree from Western Kentucky. Christine explains, "They have an online program. I was able to do a thesis with Western Kentucky online. So, I did research on the Croatan National Forest." Originally from upstate New York, Christine received her undergraduate degree from Hartwick College. "It's a small, little school, sort of in the middle of the state."

All of Christine's family lives in New York, except for a brother that just moved to Texas, but Christine



says, "I have lots of what I call 'framily' here, close by."



In the short time that Christine has been with NCWOA, she really likes the people and the opportunity to learn new things, saying "Everyone is super friendly, super helpful. They are willing to answer any questions that I may have, no matter how basic they

are. It's a great place to work and meet people (and) I love learning new things. I've learned so much in October and half of November. It's a great place to just expand my horizons. You'd be surprised to see how many people don't know where their water comes from."

Being new to NCWOA, Christine says her biggest challenge, so far, is "Just trying to keep everything straight. Like there's C-Well, B-Well, just trying to keep everything straight. Someone will ask, 'Are you offering C-Well, B-Well, or A-Well?' and I'm like, 'Wait, wait, wait. I have to keep it all straight. This what we're offering.'"

One of Christine's first goals as Education Specialist is to expand what NCWOA does for the ORC (Operator Resource Center – previously known as Moodle), to make it more user-friendly, easier to use, and running smoothly. Or more smoothly, Christine says, "because Heather does a great job and Mike did a great job, as well. But I look forward to just learning more and more and working with everyone and making the load easier on Heather. She's been doing it alone for a little bit."



In her free time, Christine likes gardening, reading, baking, hiking, and hanging out with friends. Additionally, she adds, "I fancy myself an amateur beekeeper, but I don't have any bees, anymore."

Christine hopes that she will stay with NCWOA until retirement, enjoying the flexibility of the job. She explains, "I like the fact that I can work from home. I can travel. It will take me to different areas of the state, where I can work from. I'm excited to travel and see any place they (NCWOA) want me to go. It's a good job."

Christine is really looking forward to working with NCWOA and getting things done. She concludes, "I'm really excited to get the year started and meet everyone. You know, I sort of started in the off-season, but I'm excited to get things started and take people's suggestions – I'm always open to suggestions – to start the year off and get rolling."

When you see Christine at an NCWOA event, feel free to say hello and introduce yourself. Welcome to NCWOA, Christine!

(Picture to the left: garden that Christine helped design)

Interested in Specialized Training?

NCWOA will bring the training to you!

Training specifically designed on subjects you request
6.0 hours of continuing education

Dual credit if requested

Great economical way to provide your operators with knowledge and expertise!



If interested please contact Heather Cagle at (252) 764-2094 or heather@ncwoa.com

NCWOA Upcoming Workshops & Training Events

(tentative schedule and could be subject to change)

All NCWOA training is pre-approved by the NCWTFOCB for treatment and distribution operators. Some of the training will also qualify for wastewater contact hours. Individuals that attend training will receive a Certificate of Attendance for credit applicable hours. Please see each individual training agenda or description for details. Training and locations are tentative and may be subject to change.

Regional Certification SchoolsA,B,C Surface and C Well

Greenville Utilities Commission - Greenville

A/B Surface Combined January 29-30, 2024

C-Surface January 31-Feb 1, 2024

C-Well February 5-6, 2024

Registration and more information available on website at www.ncwoa.com

Future Regional certification schools:

A/B/C Surface / C Well March 2024 in Hickory A/B/C Surface / C Well April 2024 in Huntersville Registration will be available soon (*limited space*)

WHY CHOOSE A REGIONAL SCHOOL?

Classes held at Treatment Facilities

Smaller Class Size

2 Days of Onsite Instruction

Balance of instruction completed online through Newly Developed Operator Resource Center (ORC)

Treatment Plant Tours Included

Access to Additional Online Training Modules

Fall Certification School A,B,C Surface and A,B,C Well

September 23-27, 2024 McKimmon Center - Raleigh, NC

Advanced Day - September 25 - 9am-5pm Topics to be determined

(6 hours water & wastewater credit)

More information and registration available in July 2024

Continuing Education

Our sectional training will be offered across the state in all sections. Advanced Day will be September 25 at the fall school in Raleigh. Virtual and in-person training options will be scheduled.

NCWOA 2024 Sectional Training

(tentative schedule and could be subject to change)

All sectional training will be offered from 9am-12noon (unless otherwise notated) and is open to anyone regardless of your particular section.

Training agendas and dates are tentative and may be subject to change.

Virtual and in-person training will be planned.

Western Sectional Training

March 12, May 23, August 13, October 17

Questions/RSVP to Brendan Kelley at <u>BKelley@ashevillenc.gov</u>

North Piedmont Sectional Training

March 7, June 6, August 1, October 15

Questions/RSVP to Blake Slaughter at <u>bslaughter@ci.reidsville.nc.us</u>

South Piedmont Sectional Training

April 4, June 27, August 22, October 3

Questions/RSVP to Alex Anderson at <u>aanderson@kannapolisnc.gov</u>

Northeast Sectional Training

March 5, May 9, August 8, October 8

Questions/RSVP to Ryan Gregory at gregorrm@guc.com

Southeast Sectional Training

February 20, April 23, July 12, October 11

Questions/RSVP to Brittany Odom at Brittany.Freeman@faypwc.com

If you are interested in hosting or sponsoring a sectional training meeting please contact
Heather Cagle at (252) 764-2094 ext. 1 or heather@ncwoa.com

Virtual Training Requirements

Participants must have broadband internet access, computer audio with microphone (or the ability to dial in by phone) and a web camera. We must be able to see the participant at all times during the sessions.

Must be an active member to receive credit hours.

North Carolina Waterworks Operators Association MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

MISSION STATEMENT: To provide knowledge, skills & educational opportunities for drinking water professionals; develop working relationships with other water treatment organizations; project a positive image and communicate the importance of safe drinking water.



Membership Application ANNUAL DUES ARE \$60.00 FOR 2024

First Name:	Middle Initial:	Last Name:		
Nickname:	Social Security # (last 4 digits): xxx-:	xx If Renew	al, what is your NO	CWOA Member #:
YOUR Individual Operator Certific	ation #: (Issued by NCWTFOCB)			
Certificate(s) Held:				
A-Surface B-Surface	e C-Surface A-Well	B-Well C-Well	D-Well	
A-Dist B-Dist 0	C-Dist D-Dist Cross-Conr	nection		
	Was	tewater #'s		
None Yet You are r	not an Operator & do not plan to be	come Certified.		
PLEASE SELECT YOUR PREFERRE	D ADDRESS (This is where confirm	nations & membership	o info will be sen	nt.)
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City:	State	Zip	County:	
Employer Name:				
MAILING Address:				
City:	State	Zip	County:	
Work Phone	Ext: Fax:			
Email Address:				
	ur issues of Go With The Flow? Post	al Deliverv	<u>OR</u> Email	
	ur Section Meeting notices? Posta			
NOTE: Memberships are based umembership number, and memb	upon a calendar year. Membership ership expiration date.	cards will be mailed wit	th receipt. These o	cards will contain your name,
	able to "NCWOA" or "North Carolina ay be mailed, faxed, or scanned but		s Association." We	do NOT accept Purchase
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Email: spope@ptrwa.org

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Email: adaniels@avistatech.com

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Email: del.coffman@faypwc.com

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Email: BKelley@ashevillenc.gov

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Email: courtney.york@faypwc.com (Vice Chair - Mike Hughes, City of Raleigh Secretary - Brittany Odom, Fayetteville PWC)

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Dail Booth

Craven County Water Phone: (252) 636-6615

Email: dail.booth@cravencountync.gov

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Heather Cagle, Administrator N.C. Waterworks Operators Association PO Box 5466 High Point, NC 27262 www.ncwoa.com

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Important Phone Numbers & Websites

Main Phone # for Certification Board	919-707-9040	https://deq.nc.gov/about/divisions/water- resources/operator-certification/drinking-water- operator-certification/dw-operator-certification- wtfocb
Rebecca Sadosky, PWS Section Chief	919-707-9096	
Miranda Harper, Compliance Services Branch	919-707-9092	
Eric Hudson – Protection & Enforcement Branch	919-707-9088	
Bethany Goodwin, PWS – Consumer Confidence Reports	919-707-9079	
Public Water Supply Offices:		https://www.deq.nc.gov/about/divisions/water- resources/drinking-water
Central Office	919-707-9100	
Asheville	828-296-4500	
Mooresville	704-663-1699	
Winston-Salem	336-776-9800	
Raleigh	919-791-4200	
Fayetteville	910-433-3300	
Washington	252-946-6481	
Wilmington	910-796-7215	
NC State Laboratory of Public Health	919-733-7308	
SDWA Hotline	800-426-4791	
EPA SDWA Website		www.epa.gov/safewater
EPA Drinking Water Data & Reports		https://www.epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinking water/drinking-water-data-and-reports
NC Waterworks Operators Association (NCWOA)	252-764-2094	www.ncwoa.com email: heather@ncwoa.com
NC Rural Water Association	336-731-6963	www.ncrwa.com
NC One Water	919-784-9030	www.nconewater.org

