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Tiger To Gator? Huffman Taking Florida Position

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*By Annabeth Miller,
ShowMe Times Editor*

For eight years he's been the early-morning source of weather for Central Missouri - and Dexter's "own weatherman" who advised family and friends of local weather trends.

But now he's leaving CoMo ... and becoming a Gator?? Please, Jeff Huffman say it ain't so!!

Dexter native Jeff Huffman is movin' on up to become the Chief Meteorologist for the University of Florida College of Journalism and Communications in Gainesville. The university's multimedia properties includes WUFT-TV, radio stations County 103.7 and Rock 104, as well as two public radio affiliates and an AM sports radio station. .

But Huffman promises he will not become a Gator.

"I won't cheer against the Gators, let's put it that way," he said.

Huffman is a graduate of 1999 graduate of Dexter High School and is the son of Jack and Betty Huffman. He graduated from the University of Missouri with a degree in geography and minor in atmospheric science and received a second degree in broadcast meteorology

from Mississippi State University. For the last eight years he has been meteorologist with KMIZ- ABC17 in Columbia.

Huffman will be working in Florida to build a high definition local weather channel (WRUF “Gator Weather”) that will be seen on most cable systems and over-the-air in north-central Florida.

“On top of that, I will be overseeing the creation of a weather department that will someday soon service all of multimedia properties owned by the University of Florida System,” he explained. .

For Huffman, Missouri has been “home” for most of his life - his roots and allegiances are in the ShowMe State. So moving south the Florida is going to be quite a change for the energetic Dexter native.

“Leaving Columbia and the state of Missouri is going to be difficult,” he said. “After moving away from Dexter to go to college, I really haven't ever moved anywhere else. I was able to find everything I was looking for in a city and career in Columbia. It's a great city with a lot of opportunity. I will also miss the convenience living close to home (Dexter) offered.”

But the opportunity in Florida is just too great for young Huffman to pass up - a great step up the career ladder. He said he is quite excited about the opportunities the new position affords.

“The people in Florida are great. The weather, of 'course, is great most of the time. The exposure to hurricanes and other tropical weather elements will be beneficial to my career.”

But despite living and working in Florida ‘Gator country, Huffman promises to remember his ShowMe State roots.

“I will always be a Bearcat and a Tiger.”

Photo Above: Meteorologist Jeff Huffman was back in his hometown of Dexter during the Memorial Day Weekend to participate in the DHS Choirs Alumni Choir Reunion to honor MaryRuth Boone (right). Huffman was an active member of the DHS Choirs under Boone’s direction while at student at Dexter High School. (SMT file photo by Annabeth Miller)

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