

John R. Christy

The University of Alabama in Huntsville

Dr. John R. Christy is the Distinguished Professor of Atmospheric Science and Director of the Earth System Science Center at the University of Alabama in Huntsville where he began studying global climate issues in 1987. Since 2000 he has been Alabama's State Climatologist. In 1989 Dr. Roy Spencer (then a NASA scientist and now a Principle Research Scientist at UAH) and Christy developed a global temperature data set from satellite microwave data beginning in 1979. For this achievement, the Spencer-Christy team was awarded NASA's Medal for Exceptional Scientific Achievement in 1991. In 1996, they were selected to receive a Special Award by the American Meteorological Society "for developing a global, precise record of earth's temperature from operational polar-orbiting satellites, fundamentally advancing our ability to monitor climate." In January 2002 Christy was inducted as a Fellow of the American Meteorological Society.

Dr. Christy has served as Lead Author (2001) and Contributor/Reviewer (1992, 1994, 1996, 2007, 2013) for the U.N. reports by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in which the satellite temperatures were included for studying global climate change. He has served on five NRC and NAS panels and has performed research funded by NASA, NOAA, DOE, DOT and the State of Alabama, publishing many studies appearing in, for example, *Science*, *Nature*, *Journal of Climate* and *The Journal of Geophysical Research*.

Dr. Christy received the M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in Atmospheric Sciences from the University of Illinois (1984, 1987). Prior to this career path he had graduated from the California State University in Fresno (B.A. Mathematics, 1973) and taught Physics and Chemistry as a missionary teacher in Nyeri, Kenya for two years. After earning a Master of Divinity degree from Golden Gate Baptist Seminary (1978) he served four years as a bivocational mission-pastor in Vermillion, South Dakota where he also taught college math. He has been profiled in the February 2001 issue of [Discover magazine](#), by National Public Radio in 2004 and in the *NY Times* in 2014 where his diverse background was highlighted.

Dr. Christy was married to the former Babs Joslin for almost 39 years until her death in 2014 of cancer. She was a fellow missionary whom he met in Kenya. Their two children are now married; Alison has three children and Brian has two. Recently, Dr. Christy and Ms. Sherry Upshaw were joined in marriage. Dr. Christy's favorite hobby is gold panning which he developed as a teenager in California, and he also runs, completing races from 2 miles to ultra-marathons over rugged terrain.