



James Van Allen discussing Earth's radiation belts.

Sophie's Planet #4: Chapter 5 (Univ. Iowa) & Chapter 6 (Japan)

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James Hansen

Becoming a scientist is not simple. You don't go to school, get filled up with education, and come out a scientist. The best that can happen is that you get pointed in the right direction.

Becoming a scientist is a process, not easy to explain, but I will try by relating my experiences. I had unusual opportunities, even if I did not recognize how remarkable the situation was. I took my first steps, at the University of Iowa and in Japan ([Chapter 5 & 6](#)), as a result of a peculiar requirement imposed by Professor James Van Allen.

I opened a Twitter account @DrJamesEHansen, (<https://twitter.com/drjamesehansen>), but will minimize interactions until the book is finished.