



The University of Vermont

Graduate College

Student Profile: Dana Gulley

MBA Candidate, Grossman School of Business Sustainability Entrepreneurship MBA (SEMBA)

10-06-2016 By Daniel Joseph Harvey



Our featured student in the October 2016 issue of IMPACT is Dana Gulley, who is enrolled in the Grossman School of Business's Sustainability Entrepreneurship MBA program (SEMBA).

IMPACT: Dana, tell us where you are from and what you studied as an undergraduate.

Dana Gulley: I was born and raised in Garrison, New York, on the shores of the Hudson River. I grew up playing in the woods and along the river. When I was in high school, I had an amazing opportunity to study in the Bahamas at the Island School, a sustainability-focused experiential learning program. These experiences opened my mind to the critical importance of lessening our impact to the planet and the possibilities that exist for doing so.

I knew I could hit the ground running when I came to study Environmental Studies at the Rubenstein School of

Environment and Natural Resources here at UVM, and indeed, my undergraduate education afforded me much learning and many opportunities to test out my environmental passions in practical settings.

IMPACT: So you are already a UVM alumnus — that's great. What inspired you to go to graduate school at UVM?

Dana Gulley: I spent the past five years working for Riverkeeper, an environmental non-profit dedicated to protecting the Hudson River and protecting the drinking water supply of nine million New Yorkers. As the Director of Community Engagement, I was fortunate to work with colleagues from across the organization as well as volunteers and community partners from throughout the Hudson Valley and New York City.

Pretty early on I discovered that I had as much of a passion for supporting Riverkeeper's continued growth and development as an organization as I did for helping it achieve its mission. At some point, it became clear to me that a Master's in Business Administration would offer me significant skills in order to positively influence environmental organizations.

From there, the new Sustainable Entrepreneurship MBA at UVM was really the only choice for me, as its focus is on transforming business as a force for good in solving some of the world's most pressing social and environmental challenges.

IMPACT: The SEMBA program has been very popular! Tell us about your experiences in graduate school so far.

Dana Gulley: Being in the SEMBA program is truly a gift. Not only is it a high-energy, innovative program, but it has been carefully curated to maximize our learning over the next twelve months. It is enriched by extremely passionate faculty, a robust network of advisors and mentors, great staff, and arguably most importantly, a highly dynamic, motivated and passionate cohort of twenty-two fellow students.

The program is highly focused on developing our ability to work effectively in teams. This has created what I consider an amazing opportunity to learn more about my strengths and weaknesses as a leader, with the goal of growing as a competent and dependable colleague.

IMPACT: Are there any faculty members in the Grossman School of Business that have been particularly important to you?

Dana Gulley: Stu Hart and David Jones, the co-directors of the SEMBA program, are not only experts in their respective fields, but they have come together to develop and lead one of the most transformative MBA programs in the country. I am grateful for their vision and dedication.

IMPACT: Tell us where you are in your graduate education and what you plan to do after graduating.

Dana Gulley: I am one month into a twelve-month program. When I first started the program, my goal was to graduate with skills that would allow me to consult with mission-driven businesses and non-profits to help them develop their strategies for growth and how to sustain themselves. As I learn more about entrepreneurship and the opportunities that exist to be more innovative, I am beginning to challenge myself to think about whether or not I might want to start a sustainable business or organization of my own.

IMPACT: Dana, tell us about any general interests you may have or why you like going to graduate college in Vermont?

Dana Gulley: I love hiking, backpacking, kayaking, traveling and being in nature. It is absolutely amazing being back in Vermont!

