Notable Graduates: Rachel Hakes MBA '22

Name:

Rachel Hakes

Degree Program: Professional MBA Hometown: Woodbury, Minnesota

Fun fact about yourself: I have been to 47 of the 50 states.

Why did you decide to get your master's degree?

I have always wanted to get my MBA at a world-renowned institution like Tulane. I imagined I would have to do so after entering the workforce; however, the pandemic gave me an extra year of eligibility as a collegiate athlete. When my advisor, Kim Black, worked out a plan for me to complete the two-year PMBA program in 14 months, I was sold and committed to Tulane. Before pursuing my MBA at Tulane, I received my B.S. in Finance ('21) and my M.S. in Business Analytics with a specialization in Artificial Intelligence ('22) from Fairfield University.

What was your favorite course and why?

Operations and Supply Chain Management, taught by Dr. Claire Senot, was my favorite course. I loved the relevance of the course as well as its foundation in analytical and statistical analysis. Dr. Senot is arguably my favorite professor as well. She is passionate, helpful, and extremely personable.

Who is your favorite business professor? What made them special?

Dr. Sherif Ebrahim, who taught Corporate and Cooperative Strategy, was my favorite business professor. He has remarkable industry experience and is extremely humble. Dr. Ebrahim has a knack for getting everyone in the class involved, creating a collaborative environment. He teaches students to think outside the box and synthesize meaningful insights from a mass of information. I loved exploring the topic of M&As throughout his course.

Did you participate in any extracurricular activities, community work, or leadership roles at Tulane?

I came to Tulane last June as a graduate transfer with the women's basketball team. In October, my teammates elected me as captain. Throughout the year my teammates and I volunteered with different charities, including the Habitat for Humanity house build and at local food pantries.

What do you like to do in your spare time?

During my spare time, I like to read and travel. I have always had an eagerness to explore the unknown, try new things, and experience foreign places. I specifically enjoy camping, hiking, and road trips.

What is your past work or internship experience? Include company, location, title. Due to my summer team training commitments, internships did not align with my schedule. Because of this, I elected to maximize my scholarship by taking as many summer courses as I could. Thus, I was able to complete seven years' worth of school in five years.

Where will you be working after graduation?

I have recently decided to forgo a professional basketball career in Europe and am starting my job search. I will be taking a few months off this summer and fall to travel and am looking to secure a job starting towards the end of 2023 or the beginning of 2024. I am especially interested in a consulting job that can marry the

analytical skills of my first master's with the management skills of my MBA degree. However, I am open to jobs in the finance or data engineering sector as well, as I have a background in various coding languages.

What are the top two items on your professional bucket list?

The top two items on my professional bucket list are to work abroad at some point and serve as a mentor to young graduates. I can attribute all of my successes to specific mentors, and I would like to give back to young people once I have the professional knowledge and experience to do so.

Which academic, extracurricular, or personal achievement are you most proud of, and why?

I am most proud of graduating as the valedictorian of my undergraduate class in 3 years with a Finance major, and Accounting Information Systems and Mathematics minors (Fairfield '21). I also graduated as the top student in my first graduate program – Business Analytics with an AI specialization (Fairfield '22).

If you were talking to someone who was considering Freeman, what would you tell them?

I would highly recommend the Freeman Business School to anyone who is considering it. The Tulane Alumni network speaks for itself, and being around fellow high-level thinkers has heightened my passion for learning. On top of that, New Orleans is an amazing cultural melting pot with people from all over the world.

What are your favorite things to do in New Orleans? Do you have a favorite New Orleans memory?

My favorite thing to do in New Orleans is explore the local cuisine and spend time in City Park. My favorite memory in New Orleans was experiencing my first Mardi Gras. The parade floats were so beautiful, and I had no idea it was a nearly month-long endeavor!

Where do you hope to be in five years?

I hope to be surrounded by co-workers who are high-level problem-solvers, crave a challenge, and want to pour themselves into what they do. I am interested in pursuing many different career paths, so finding the right people will be a

determining factor for me. I have been on many teams who have the talent but lack drive, and there tends to be little success. I will bet on a team with average talent but intense determination every day of the week.

What are your tips for balancing coursework, work, and your personal life?

My tip for balancing coursework and life is to make sure you weave your deepest passions through everyday life. Whether your passion is meditating, working out, staying busy, or reading, be diligent about carving out time to enjoy these pieces of yourself. Additionally, being aware of the way you operate best and creating those environments for yourself is a key to consistent success.