Merage School Alumni in the Spotlight

This month we get to know Bethany Semeiks, a recent grad of the FEMBA program and owner of a skatewear apparel company. She also competes and coaches roller derby.

Name: Bethany Semeiks, FEMBA 2010

Biographical Information
Partner, Wicked Skatewear
Undergrad: University of Maryland, College Park

1. **What are some of your fondest memories as a FEMBA student?**
The International and Closing residential. Also, being able to take the nuggets of information from class, apply them immediately and watch them actually work for Wicked Skatewear.

2. **How did you choose your career path?**
From mapping wildfires for University of Maryland's Geography Department to originating residential mortgages and now owning Wicked Skatewear, my career path is extremely diverse. Each point of my career simply "happened." I saw an opportunity and went for it 100%.

3. **How has earning your MBA at the Merage School helped you in your business?**
My company Wicked Skatewear would not be where it is today without the knowledge I got from my Merage School education, and the support from faculty and staff. Education from the classroom helps with many tactical strategies for Wicked Skatewear and conversations with faculty/staff are helpful to be grounded.

4. **Can you describe your company Wicked Skatewear?**
Wicked Skatewear is an apparel company out of Huntington Beach. Predominantly an online retailer focused on the roller derby market, we are opening a store Sept. 1 to take care of the general public!

5. **What particular skills do you think are critical for succeeding in the business world?**
One important skill I learned took place in my Strategic Communications course. I practiced advising the class on the number one quality that a leader must possess to be successful in the business world - to not be a jerk! I grounded the quality, provided four examples and requested action of the quality. There are the obvious skills of being a good leader, but those things don't fully encompass how to interact with everyone in all facets of a business.

6. **What are some of your hobbies and extracurricular activities that you enjoy?**
Ice hockey and roller derby!

7. **Is philanthropy important to you? If so, why?**
Yes. As a person and business owner, we have to give back to the community. Our community is roller derby. I'm the head coach of the Orange County Roller Girls juniors program team, so I teach 10-17 year olds how to play roller derby. Wicked Skatewear helps skaters raise money for their leagues by selling their merchandise on our website and giving them a portion of proceeds.

8. **How do you stay involved with the Merage School and your local community?**
To stay involved with the Merage School community I joined the Dean's Leadership Circle. In Huntington Beach, Wicked will be organizing monthly roll outs from our new retail space in September to build a local roller skating community. To stay involved in the roller derby community, Wicked travels to events across the nation, and soon internationally!

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