



UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTHERN MAINE
College of Education and
Human Development

Adult Education Program Alumni Career Stories

Veronica Delcourt

A serendipitous event prompted Veronica Delcourt to apply for her first position in higher education administration. While sitting in HRD 630, The Adult Learner course, a student turned to her and said, “You’re interested in distance education. You should apply for this job. You’d be good at it.” The student handed Veronica a copy of a job posting for the Assistant Dean of Academic Support Services at York County Community College (YCCC). Veronica thought, “I am interested in distance education. This position would be a stretch, but it is always good to have a challenging interview.” So Veronica applied and within weeks she was working at YCCC.

Veronica worked very hard to learn this new job. During her 3 ½ years at YCCC, she conducted institutional research in academic affairs and administered distance educational opportunities including new online courses. Veronica is excited that the adult education masters program is now offering its program online. “I’ve seen how important online courses are to reach students all over the state. I definitely see the potential for this delivery method.”

For Veronica, the adult education masters program was a natural choice. Having recently-completed her undergraduate degree at USM in linguistics, she was working as an administrative assistant for the Casco Bay Partnership Project in the College of Education and Human



Development. There she saw the work of adult educators in the area of ESL instruction. “When I applied to the adult education program I wanted to help women and empower them through education.”

During her program, Veronica made the decision to attend classes full-time. This led to the opportunity to work as a graduate assistant for Mike Brady and Desi Larson, both faculty in the Adult Education program. Veronica valued her time as a graduate assistant and praises Desi, “Desi helped me learn so much about contracts, grants, data analysis, survey construction, and program evaluation. I got state-wide exposure and networking opportunities via several research grants. The program invested in me as I was investing in myself. My time as a graduate assistant was invaluable to me.”

In her program, Veronica’s skills developed as a humanistic manager who leads with a nurturing style. At the same time she learned the hard skills of research and data analysis in EDU 600 and HRD 667- Action Research and Evaluation Methodologies. It is the combination of these

skills that have given her the confidence and ability to be successful in her career in higher education.

The adult education masters program has significantly influenced her work. Now as the Dean of Arts and Sciences at Madison Area Technical College, in Madison, Wisconsin, Veronica leads a center that serves over 12,000 students. “The Arts and Sciences Center is bigger than many small universities. I supervise over 110 full-time faculty and another 120 part time faculty. I have to empower faculty by building trust and leading with a clear vision. This is how I can frame my actions and decisions so that others will support them. These are invaluable skills I have learned from the program, which have served me well in my doctoral classes in Educational Leadership. I still have aspirations to be a college president one day.”

Veronica believes, “This is an ideal master’s program for anyone interested in the administrative side of work in the community college system. The program makes you look at yourself and understand how adults learn so you can make learning happen for others.” She adds “I never dreamed I would be able to have such an impact on higher education. I will always be grateful for the strong foundation I was able to build in this program.”

For more information about the USM Adult Education program please contact Graduate Admissions at (207) 780-43861 or visit www.usm.maine.edu/cehd/adult-education/