

# Alumni Spotlight

## **Kari Hagenow - Double Major - Environmental Science & Biology/Master's in Environment Science & Policy (emphasis Ecosystem Studies)**

### **Describe your experience at UWGB.**

My experience at UWGB was more than I could have ever imagined. As I moved into my upper level courses, it became so much more than just going to class. I met faculty who inspired me and made me want to learn more, which led to independent study opportunities (and later paid internship opportunities). I explored many facets of the sciences, all of which I enjoyed, but ultimately found my calling in ecology. On top of my studies, I played tennis for UWGB and met a ton of awesome women and men through the sports programs. Ultimately it was the experience I had at UWGB that led me to pursue my Master's degree there – I literally didn't look at another school because I knew that I wanted to continue to work with the amazing faculty who had inspired me.



### **Who was your favorite lecturer and why?**

My favorite lecturer was Ganga Nair, who unfortunately is no longer with us. To say his Plant & Forest Pathology and Conservation Biology courses were tough was a complete understatement, but he broadened my world view and challenged me. He always kept us on our toes and often laughing. Even though I rarely need to draw back on some of the technical information I learned in his lectures, I find that I remember most of it - likely because of the man who taught us.



### **What was your most memorable moment as a student?**

My most memorable moment was giving my thesis defense. I don't think I've ever been so nervous in my life! My committee asked tough questions, but I realized that I was confident and that over the course of two years I had really mastered my subject matter. The sigh of relief when it was over was memorable too.

### **What do you do for a living now?**

Since getting my Master's degree five years ago, I have been working for a non-profit conservation organization, The Nature Conservancy, in Door County, Wisconsin. I get to put a lot of the knowledge that I learned during my time at UWGB to good use as a land manager overseeing about 5,000 acres of natural

area and educating others about invasive plants. It's a job that's different every day and I really enjoy it.

### **Do you think your time at UWGB helped you to pursue this? If yes, how?**

I think that UWGB gave me the knowledge base, experience, and connections to make this job a reality for me. It was the kind of job that I knew I wanted as I learned more about ecology while I was attending UWGB.

### **Where did you live when you were a student?**

For most of my undergraduate program, I lived in campus housing. Starting in the dorms (Warren) and then moving into what we called the traditional apartments before finally moving up in the world to the "new" apartments and a room of my own!

### **What is your best advice to current UWGB students?**

Find what you love. That might mean stumbling through a bunch of classes that you find don't interest you, or going out on a limb to participate in a research project that you don't feel qualified to help with. I took opportunities to do independent studies and research, and even though some of them were never pursued further each provided me with skills and insights that continue to carry over into life today. You'll know when you find that right subject or degree for you, but until then, don't be afraid to explore it all.

