

University of New Hampshire



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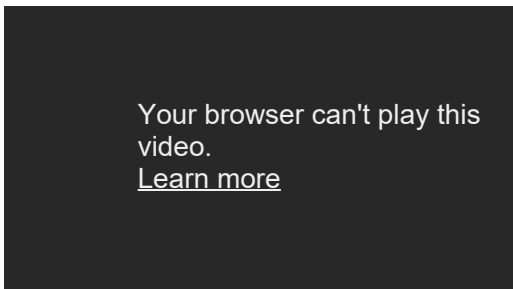
› A Powerful Call to Action and the Business Making it Happen

# A Powerful Call to Action and the Business Making it Happen

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 02, 2021

*Jason Plant '23 | Business Administration*

The  
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[Entrepreneur Hall of Fame](#) featured many powerful calls to action from inductees, who each shared a problem they saw in the world and their visions for how to solve them. One such problem is the prioritization of short-term profit over all other ideals in our financial sector. At the ceremony, UNH alumnus David J. Ferran spoke of these issues and suggested that UNH transform its endowment by making it 100% ESG. The endowment is already more than 50% ESG composition, with ESG investments in the portfolio significantly outperforming other assets. “It

is *our* money they are investing on Wall Street, and we need to take responsibility for how that money is being invested,” David emphasized, “Let’s put our money where our mouths are and be *all in* on ESG.”

The UNH [ECenter](#)’s Entrepreneur Hall of Fame Award is awarded to alumni who have achieved entrepreneurial success with ventures (for-profit or non-profit) as a founder, co-founder, or owner, while giving back to the community in a meaningful way. David Ferran has done just that, having successfully founded and run seven companies, with some of those companies going public. However, David’s proudest work is through his newest endeavor, a non-profit called Torrey Project and its affiliate investment fund, Venture-RBF. Torrey Project was created to advance stakeholder capitalism by providing entrepreneurs the education, training, and resources they need to wholistically integrate a stakeholder focus into their businesses.

David recognized that even though women and the BIPOC community represent about 70% of the U.S. population, they receive a combined total of less than 6% of venture capital financing. He created Venture-RBF to address this glaring problem, while also incentivizing socially innovative business models. Venture-RBF is an investment fund that supports social ventures run by under-resourced entrepreneurs. The fund uses a unique mix of equity and revenue-based financing to meet needs of entrepreneurs that venture capitalists have long neglected. For example, the fund’s open-ended structure eliminates the need for “forced exits,” which occur when a closed-ended venture capital fund ends, requiring the venture capitalist to force the sale of any outstanding portfolio companies, whether or not it is in the best interest of non-shareholder stakeholders.

David Ferran has been a close mentor to me for a long time, and I’m proud to say that I will be working for him at Venture-RBF this coming summer. He has already taught me a lot about what it means to be a social entrepreneur, from creating an inclusive high performance work culture to designing an impactful yet profitable business model that creates long-term value for all stakeholders. Thanks to my education at

UNH, I will be coming into the internship with a way to give back to David for his incredible support and advice. Through the Rines Angel Fund and the UNH ECenter, I have learned the fundamentals of entrepreneurship, how to evaluate a startup investment, and various strategies entrepreneurs use to go to market. Through the Social Venture Innovation Challenge and my work at the B Impact Clinic, I have learned how to integrate social innovation and a stakeholder approach into a business model to enhance its impact, by creating my own social venture and supporting other stakeholder-focused companies in achieving B Corp Certification. I am incredibly grateful for all of the experiences at UNH that have helped me get to this point, and especially for the chance to help make the vision of Venture-RBF a reality. Together, through hard work, development of knowledge and skills, and relentless compassion, we can all work together to create equal access to opportunity and build a better, more sustainable economy.

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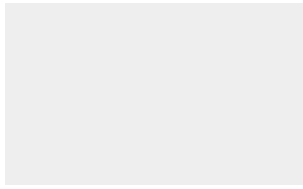
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