

RWE

POWER

LOOKS GOOD

ON YOU

#3 ISSUE

Embracing  
yourself

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to be a certain way.

SAMANTHA

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POWER LOOKS GOOD ON YOU. Samantha Mullin, O&M Implementation Manager, RWE Offshore, USA.

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## Samantha Mullin talks embracing her full self at RWE.

**Samantha is soft spoken, but she commands the conversation. She's someone you want to tune in to. Her responses might be quiet and considered, but what she says? That's truly loud.**

### **Tell us about your background.**

I grew up on a small, family-owned farm in the middle of rural Pennsylvania.

I was fortunate to do really well in school and receive a scholarship

to a private engineering university in New York. Wow – I was in for a surprise when I got there! Everybody was the best in their class, and I wasn't special anymore. There were folks from very wealthy backgrounds, and I had a pretty humble upbringing. But I embraced it, even when it was uncomfortable.

When the schoolwork was difficult, I dug into my extracurricular activities. And it ended up working out. I graduated with honours.





**How did you get into the energy industry?**

During my studies, I did an internship with a local wind turbine company. That was my springboard to join what is now RWE (but was EON Climate and Renewables). I started in Austin, Texas as a Data Analytics Engineer.

**What did you think about wind power?**

The US has been slower to adopt offshore wind, so I joined onshore, and I've moved to offshore recently.

First, I wrestled with moving 3000 miles away to Austin without any friends or family nearby. I knew I'd make my way, but it was scary. I lived in the heart of downtown – which, as a farm kid, was somewhere I never thought I'd be! Noise at all hours was definitely an adjustment.

But my colleagues really took me under their wing. Now, that's how I like to welcome new joiners – especially people who've come to a new city. Because you might be the only person they connect with in those first few weeks.

**Did you think you had to fit a certain mould?**

Being a female Engineer, you always feel like you're sticking out. You're either too feminine to be taken seriously, or you're too edgy.

At first, I was really careful about how I was perceived. But as I've grown, I've embraced being both. I can be feminine; I can be caring, empathetic, and slow to anger, but still effective. Then I can lean into decisiveness, leadership, and strength – sometimes, that's

even physical strength with my farm background.

Today, I own my power by not having to fit into a particular box. Whether it's me in high heels or hi-vis, it's still me.

**What made you see that?**

I took a three-month, offshore secondment to the UK. I had to leave my family, my husband, and my dog. I even had to drive on the wrong side of the road!

Any other operations experience has always felt 'out-of-body' – like it wasn't me. But over three months, I didn't have that luxury of not being myself. I needed to be the girl with my nails done and hair nice because that's how I felt as a full human. And there were female technicians who made me feel seen and understood. It's super important to have those people you can look to and see, "Oh, they're doing both, so why can't I?".

It pushed me out of my comfort zone, but it teed me up for success. I was fortunate to be selected as the O&M Lead for the US, which I've been doing for the last two years.

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**“What you may see as a weakness could be exactly what a team needs.”**





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**What would you say to someone who’s stepping out of their comfort zone?**

What you may see as a weakness could be exactly what a team needs. What someone is dying to experience. To fit, or to have the courage to do something they never thought they could. You could bring something to the table that’s not even been noticed as missing.

**How do you use your different skills to your advantage in your work?**

I grew up as the eldest of five sisters. I was always looking out for everyone else. Now, having the chance to mentor graduates is extremely fulfilling. To be somebody that folks want to come to, that’s a kind of superpower.

**What’s the key to being accessible?**

Taking a real interest in what people care about. When new people come, there’s a tendency to give them the work that’s falling off the sides. But helping them pursue what’s important to them is the best way to connect.

**Would you say your own experience has helped you mentor others?**

Absolutely. I’ve hit the jackpot with every manager. It’s one of the reasons that I’ve been here my entire career. I’ve had the support of people who want to see me grow.

Now, I’m taking that torch up and being that person for others. I can’t believe I’m here already. I still feel like I’m trying to figure it out every day.



# “If you’re not supported for everything you are, you need to see yourself out of that situation.”

## What advice would you give to someone with your skills and expertise?

To really lean into every part of what makes you, you.

There’s a bunch of pieces of me which, on the surface, don’t fit. Hard-working, dirty environment, farming background – and now, I work in a skyscraper in Boston. But people with different life experiences connect with me. It’s about not shutting out one piece.

Also, it’s important to find mentors to explore the areas that don’t appear as flashy or glamorous. For a while, I had “Dairy Herd Manager” on my resume. As I progressed, I wanted to take it off. I spoke with a mentor, and she said, “Don’t ever take that off, that’s such a unique experience that very few engineering graduates will have.”

## How do you find the confidence to open up?

A lot of it comes from being in a safe space. If you’re not supported for everything you are, you need to see yourself out of that situation. I’ve been fortunate to have fantastic managers that gave me the space to share, but if I hadn’t, I wouldn’t be here. Being able to share your background is educating – and that’s kindness.

## Why did you choose RWE?

Fundamentally, I was behind RWE’s vision. They were a big company with

strong foundations, but they were positively impacting communities like mine. Lots of our onshore operations were in cornfields and cotton fields – exactly the environments I’d grown up in.

## What excites you about the future?

There’s such a space to develop. As we’ve taken on offshore wind, the challenges have got even more exciting. So, on one hand, it’s the engineering problem; on the other, it’s a people issue. We’ll hopefully be active offshore for many, many decades. That means a LOT of people are going to wear RWE logos, go home to their families, and provide for them because of what we’re doing today.

## If there’s one misconception that this campaign could change, what would it be?

It might seem like you need to choose between one or the other, feminine or assertive – or later down the road, a mom, or a leader. But I want folks to know that you can be all of those things and be successful.

**There aren’t many Dairy Farmers turned Engineers in this world. Samantha is proof that what you bring to a role can’t be written in a job spec. Instead, it’s found in unexpected, seemingly ill-fitting experiences. Magical qualities that help us break new ground.**

