



We're Wearin' the World™

Member Spotlight

See the article on ellevate's site:

[Shamini Dhana, member spotlight](#)

Shamini Dhana believes in the interconnectivity of humans and the planet. Her company, Dhana Inc., focuses on creating harmony between this relationship: it is a fashion brand with ethical and sustainable values in their materials and production. Read on to learn why honoring the process is so important to Shamini, and why we should start thinking of fashion as a way to make a real difference in the world.

Introduce yourself to our audience. Tell us who you are and what you are currently focused on.

My name is Shamini Dhana and I'm the CEO and Founder of Dhana Inc., a Benefit Corporation I launched in 2008 to celebrate our global connections between people and our planet through clothing. Dhana Inc. is an ethical fashion brand committed to using clothing to better connect people and our planet. Dhana believes apparel is an extension and reflection of one's values, community, and outlook on life, and therefore ought to be influenced by and made with respect for global cultures and materials. As a leader in sustainable apparel, Dhana Inc. uses 100% organic cotton fabric and low-impact dyes for our designs. As a business, Dhana adopts fair trade, ethical and sustainable principles throughout its supply chain. From production partners in India, to headquarters in Sausalito, California, Dhana works closely with communities to celebrate and promote a more sustainable, connected lifestyle on a global scale. Dhana Inc. is a Certified B Corporation, partners with leaders in ethical fashion such as the Organic Trade Association, Fairtrade International, and Ethical Fashion Forum.

What qualities does it take for someone to be successful in your line of work?

The understanding of the complex nature of supply chains; the psychology of culture, people and work ethnics; the ability to inspire change in others; the management of time, the perseverance and discipline to stay focused and the importance of building partnerships and collaborations for success.

What are some career challenges on your radar?

Today, fashion is the second most polluting industry in the world. To bring this awareness to consumers and get them to realize they have the choice to make a difference by demanding more transparency from brands, by voting with their dollars when making a purchase and to rethink and reflect on "fast fashion" - all have serious ramifications on lifestyles and mindset but the challenge is in fact huge when it comes to the impact on people and planet.

What project have you worked on that you're most proud of? Why?

As Ambassador of Climate Ride, I've raised awareness on Climate Change and issues surrounding Sustainability by taking part in annual charity events involving bike riding over 350 miles in 5 days (I've done this 3 times) - "biking the talk" has been truly inspiring and game changing!

We'd love to hear more about your career path.

What led you to where you are today?

I always knew I would be an entrepreneur with a mandate of uniting humanity through a universal medium that would honor people and planet along the way. You see, as a child, I grew up on a tiny island, Singapore, where everything (except for human capital) was imported: food, clothes, toys, books, music, cars, etc. I've always considered the world as my community — connected on a global scale. Nature has always been my inspiration and preserving our natural playground is vital to our lives as it fuels the very essence of our spirit. In 1992, I completed my Masters Thesis in international business with a focus on businesses' responsibility in preserving and protecting the environment. I was also the President of the United Nations Association of Sacramento and we organized the first US non-profit conference in 1992 after the Rio Summit. Over 1,000 people attended and it was evident that Climate Change was a mega challenge. At this point, I knew I needed to be involved in celebrating our global connections on this planet and the medium would be Nature. The actual product did not reveal itself until 2008 after a successful 20-year career in Corporate America raising the ranks and gaining consulting, leadership, banking and management skills, and culminating in motherhood. It was then I realized that one in six people on this planet work in the apparel world and that fashion had the potential in uniting people and planet. I launched Dhana Inc.. in July 2008 as the ethical fashion brand connecting people and planet through our clothes.

| **What is the most rewarding part of your job?**

Every day I have the insight that Dhana is using business as a force for good. Through the use of organic and natural fibers, the adoption of fair trade principles, we have the ability to make conscious choices to make a difference by impacting social (people) and environmental (planet) issues - thereby becoming the trusted brand of choice in sustainable fashion.

| **What legacy do you hope to leave through your work?**

Dhana is a Force for Nature by Uniting Humanity Through Fashion
— “We’re Wearin’ the World”

| **What have you learned from your mentors?**

To have fun whilst taking on great work; To always listen to the body for signals in decision making; To stay open to all suggestions and ideas; To always go back to why you started this journey to stay grounded; To honor all people along the way.

| **What advice would you offer future leading ladies wishing to break into your industry?**

It’s crucial to do a deep dive into “why” you are pursuing this path - your motivations, depth of understanding, ultimate goal and stamina to keep to the game.

| **What is the best career advice you ever received?**

You can do anything you want as long as you believe in yourself.

| **What is one piece of advice you’d offer working moms?**

Your children will be your greatest inspiration — be open to seeing through their eyes.

| **Tell us about your favorite Ellevate Network memory or success story. Why are you a member?**

Meeting some amazing women in the network that are now good friends and collaborators. As a women owned Founder/CEO of my company Dhana Inc., I believe in the work performed by women in my own industry and my mission is to Pay It Forward by inspiring the next generation of women, and empowering all women in the workforce to B the Change.