

New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park announces appointment of new permanent ranger



A native of Ghana, Rufai Shardow gained inspiration for his career from his father, who was a corrections officer.

New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park announced that Rufai Y. Shardow has been appointed park ranger at the site. Shardow, who has been employed by the park on a seasonal basis since June of 2009, had recently served as visitor use assistant there. Shardow, a 2014 graduate of University of Massachusetts at Dartmouth, holds a bachelors degree in Criminal Justice. He lives in Fall River with his wife and young daughter.

A native of Ghana, Rufai Shardow gained inspiration for his career from his father, who was a corrections officer. "I wanted to follow my dream," Shardow said, "of being in uniform and serving people." He became a naturalized U.S. citizen,

joined the Army, and served a one year tour of duty in Afghanistan. He settled in Fall River to live near his sister, and furthered his education at the University of Massachusetts at Dartmouth, where, upon graduation, he was awarded the Emerging Scholar of the Year.

A man with an easy, friendly style and warm smile, Shardow enjoys chatting with visitors who visit the park. He has immersed himself in New Bedford's rich history and was particularly taken with the stories of Frederick Douglass, the Underground Railroad, and Henry "Box" Brown. As a young child in Ghana, Shardow lived for a time in a castle where slaves had been kept, the chains still hanging from the ceiling. For a man who had lived in a former slave prison, it is a bittersweet joy to be able to share the stories of enslaved people through talks, tours and programs.
