

Everyday Woman of Sitka - Cheri Hample



Can you please tell me a little about yourself? How long have you lived in Sitka? What types of things are you involved in here?

Born and raised in the Midwest. A graduate of the University of Minnesota with Masters in Public Health and Social Work, have lived and worked in Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota and Alaska. A lifelong volunteer, I have served on multiple boards and supported non-profits. Continue to volunteer whenever, wherever I can. (ex: Brave Heart Volunteers, Wearable Arts, Porch Fest, Sitka Fine Arts Camp, SAFV, Friends of the Library in Oregon)

I came through Sitka on the ferry in April of 1999 on my way back to Minnesota, spent 8 hours here, and fell in love with this beautiful place, and consider Sitka my "heart home". Moved to Sitka in 2002, no job, no place to live and did not know anyone, however, had been getting the Friday edition of the Sentinel for two years so knew a lot about the community. Within 2 days of my arrival I had a job at Mt. Edgecumbe High School as an academic tutor and as a business advisor. After a couple of months, I began working at SEARHC. Have served on multiple boards, commissions and community groups. Moved out of Sitka in 2007 (visited at least once a year) and moved back in 2017. In 2019 I retired from my 45-year+ professional career in health/tribal health and human services. Since 2019, have worked in Sitka as a nanny, server at the Beak, Avis Car Rental Agent, therapist, Administrative Assistant and Building Attendant for the Sitka Music Festival, and currently working part time positions at SAFV, Sitka Fine Arts Camp and Sitka Music Festival. (my resume is 12 pages long!!) I love to road trip and travel, spent the summers of 2022 and 2023 in Europe and since retiring have done approximately 25,000 miles of road travel.

What is your biggest struggle right now?

The violence and lack of civility in our world

What does a normal "Day in the Life" look like for you?

Am an early riser, when in Sitka having coffee and breakfast at one of the local coffee shops and working one or more of my jobs, spending time with friends, and my Brave Heart care receiver. When at home

in Milwaukie, Oregon I have a favorite coffee shop and explore the hundreds of trails and hikes in the area.

What makes you proud to be a woman?

My grandmothers were great role models for me, one was an education professional, the other was the hardest worker and most hospitable person I knew. My core values are the foundation for who I am.

Do you have something you'd like to say to other women in Sitka?

Live your authentic self, be willing to take risks, learn to be your own best friend and above all love yourself!

Anything else you would like people to know about you?

I am a Franciscan Associate with the Franciscan Sisters of Little Falls, MN and live the values of St. Francis, of service, compassion and social justice.