

WOMEN

In Business

PRESENTING SPONSOR:



Samantha Urbach

**Bridge Tender, By the Sea
Sanctuary, Broadway Mini Mart**



HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN IN YOUR LINE OF WORK AND WHAT GOT *you* STARTED?

"We took over the bar at the beginning of 2019. Derek and I have both been bartenders but in different lifetimes. Honestly, Derek wanted to buy it because he worked there when he was 21, so that has always been his passion. I have never wanted to own a bar, but I wanted to own the Bridge Tender. It is iconic and has a legacy I am proud to be a part of. Catie and Laroy have always been really close to us since I started dating Derek, now we are married, and they are still a part of our lives almost 14 years later for me and 16 for him. It was about taking over something like that, something that felt like family. I've always kind of imagined continuing a legacy, but we didn't really have that to do in our families, or in fields we were interested in. We hope someday to pass this legacy to our kids.

It was an amazing opportunity we were given, and we knew wanted to raise our kids somewhere good like Seaside. We were in Vegas for 10 years, and when the Bridge Tender presented itself, it seemed like the best time to do it, while our kids were young and could be raised in this amazing community. It's kind of funny that our work brought us to the lifestyle we wanted, which is usually the opposite. I don't have a lot of experience in bartending or business owning but we kind of just learned as we went and luckily had Catie and Laroy to teach us. And honestly, a lot of good positive influences in the community. I'm sure you've noticed that everybody here really is tight. I don't feel like there is a lot of competition, rather everybody trying to give each other a hand up because a successful community is better than just one good place on its own."

WHAT IS A CHALLENGE *you* HAVE HAD TO OVERCOME?

My biggest challenge is employing people that I'm friends with and very close with. Whether that be because we are such a small community, and it's hard not to know the people, or just employing people because I'm already friends with them. It's been a really big struggle that I've even talked to therapists about. It's really hard finding that fine line. You know, on the outside people think your friends are going to be better because they respect you, or worse because there is a pre-established loyalty, but it will never go the way you expect. I don't think it matters what industry you're in, it is going to be challenging. It's a lot like working with family. And I know that's the cheesiest thing to say, but our staff is like family, just like our patrons. They spend holidays in our home and we have sleepovers, and we live together, we grieve together, we celebrate together.

I love it because I love knowing that I can talk to them about anything, good or bad, but it also makes those bad conversations harder than a typical employee. Sometimes it's taken personally. I've definitely taken things personally. This year, specifically, I've had to set a lot of boundaries for myself and my employees. Not because anyone did anything wrong, but because it's healthier for the overall wellness and success of the bar. That's my biggest struggle, I don't know why, but moving to Seaside made me a bleeding heart that cared about people more. That wasn't always the case. Truly, it wasn't. So I've had to learn how to piss people off again by saying what needs to be said, and not just because I like stirring the pot. It's for their own good as an employee, and for my own good as the owner, and for the bars own good as an establishment that provides a home for its patrons and livelihood for its employees."

AS WOMEN WE OFTEN DON'T BRAG ABOUT OURSELVES. TELL ME SOMETHING YOU'VE DONE THAT *you* ARE PROUD OF.

You know, that is really hard and there are things that I'm proud of but sometimes I catch myself thinking that it's just like, I've faked it till I made it. Sometimes I wonder how I graduated with a 4.0 in college, and I'm super proud of that. But I look back and I'm like, how did I do that? Do I really know anything? Am I actually qualified to do any of these things that I think I'm qualified for? Or this piece of paper says I'm qualified to do? My accomplishments would say that yes, I am. But there are a lot of days where I ask myself, how am I pulling this off? Who is trusting me with this business and these people's livelihoods and my children/s lives, and the sanctuary too.

The Sanctuary has been a goal of mine since I was little. I've always had a heart for animals. And it's not something that I ever thought I was going to do. I never thought I'd be back in Oregon. I was in Vegas for 10 years, and we had this plan. But I am so glad it was disrupted for this life that I didn't imagine I could have.

So I'm really proud of both of those, the bar and the sanctuary. And, and I'm really proud of raising kids that aren't jerks. I mean, that seems easy, but it's really not. Especially because a lot of people know us around here and know we are not exactly the most PC people in the world. We own a bar and I definitely use that excuse to my advantage sometimes and make jokes about how my kids are worldly because they experience the bar through us. But it's true, in the line of work we're in they know a lot about a lot of things because we're really open with them. We've had a lot of people pass away that were customers at the bar, people they knew. I'm proud that we're able to take this type of work, you know, what some may consider just getting people drunk for a living, and create a community of friendships and people who count on each other. And translate that into our personal lives to teach our kids life lessons, about responsibility, loss, and a multitude of other things.

And I'm proud of being able to take what we have, as I've said before, take the bar and turn it into something that fills my heart whether it's through fundraising or philanthropy, and use it for good in the community. And I'm not saying that owning a bar is bad by any means. But obviously, there's a stigma out there and there's some truth to it, you know, it's not like we're doing healthy things in there. But being healthy physically doesn't always equate to being healthy mentally, and vice versa. So it's nice to be able to translate that into the real world and benefit more people than just people sitting at our bar stools."

WHAT IS ONE THING YOU WISH YOU COULD TEACH ALL YOUNG women?

"There's not one thing really. I mean that is hard because if you taught all them one thing it wouldn't apply to everybody. For me, the one thing is probably learning to say no and that is such a broad idea that goes from one end to the other. As you can imagine, that goes from, trauma to, you know, just saying no lunch date because you don't have time to do it. Instead of doing it and stressing yourself out and over filling your plate. Saying no is really hard for anybody, not just women.

But I think for women it's hard, because you stop being asked, or you're ridiculed or it is assumed that you can't handle it if you say no. And it's not that you can't handle it but you have to prioritize something else. Saying no doesn't always mean you can't but you don't want to. And maybe that's the lesson, learn how to prioritize. You're never going to be able to make everybody happy. Ever. Even yourself. Sometimes you have to put things above yourself to achieve long term goals.

Also don't have kids if you don't want to!"

WHO INSPIRES YOU AND WHAT DRIVES *you?*

"I mean obviously **Catie and Laroy** because we learned from them and we've kept things in the image that they wanted for the bar, because we wanted to, not because we feel like we have to. We wanted to own THIS bar, not A bar. But that inspires us to keep the bar the way it is.

It's cheesy, but my husband drives me and inspires me. He is very self-driven and it's nice to be with somebody that's similar to me. He's not a nine-to-five grind person. He's asleep until 11 and then, you know, work the latter half of the day and grind that. And he's insanely understanding and sympathetic to the struggles that I go through with my physical health and mental health. He allows me to do what I have to do in order for me to be successful because my being successful doesn't always look the same as his being successful. My success sometimes means sitting in bed and doing all my bookwork from home, and it does not look like that for him at all. He's okay with that. I don't know what I would do if he wanted me to get up and be at the bar with him every time he goes. It just doesn't work like that for me.

And what really motivates me is retiring early, and spending winters somewhere warm. I like looking at the big picture, lots of hard work now means more play later. Being able to spend my not-so-much-older years with my adult children. I don't want to have to work for however long people work till now. It's too long. And I hate that for people. People have to work like that until they die and I don't want to do that. I recognize that is a privileged thing to be able to look forward to or work towards. And I wish more people had that opportunity We shouldn't just be working to survive."

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"Advice for women? Go for it. Do your thing. Don't hold back" - Lori Lum

"Be strong, yet willing to take chances" - Julie Lum