

Sea Tow Captain Breaking the Industry Stigma in Sebastian, Florida

In Honor of International Women's Day, Meet Captain Amy Donaldson

SEBASTIAN, FL—Women across the country are breaking the stigma in male-dominated industries. In the field of on-water assistance, Captain Amy Donaldson is doing just that.

Captain Amy Donaldson, co-owner of Sea Tow Sebastian alongside her husband John, is known for her boating expertise and rock-solid confidence. Amy's self-assurance and fearless attitude has been a constant, enabling her to successfully conquer challenges and continuously break down barriers, a character that she learned at a young age.

Growing up in Cape May, N.J., Amy says "she's always felt like one of the guys."

"My dad was a diesel mechanic and had a passion for rebuilding Corvettes," she explains. "I wasn't the girly type, I always wanted to be in the garage with my dad. I can remember being little and turning wrenches. I started young with him and it carried through to where I am today."

Amy is a role model in her field and is confident that gender is not a barrier on the open water. "For the most part, running a boat is similar to operating a vehicle," she said. "As long as your attentive, educated and confident in what you're doing, you'll succeed. And that's in anything that you do."

From her years as a competitive swimmer, to becoming an expert diver, Amy has always had a passion for the water. She obtained her captain's license in 2005 after she and John moved to Florida. Not long after that, the couple began managing Sea Tow Sebastian in 2013 and later purchased the franchise in 2017.

As demanding as the Sea Tow life can be, sunrise and sunsets sure make it all worth it. Amy says wildlife encounters are her most magical moments on the water.

"When we're cruising along, doing a tow and creating a wake, dolphins will come up alongside the boat and you can hear them blowing air. That's really cool," she said. "Or when you're at the dock, rinsing the boats, sometimes manatees come

around for a fresh drink of water. Or when you see leopard rays stacked on top of each other like a deck of cards so thick you can't even see the ocean bottom.”



Today, Amy is the lead of operations for the franchise. From taking assistance calls, to managing the office, to working with the local community, Amy is the anchor of the operation.

In the role as dispatcher, you might call Amy the master of nautical logistics. She portrays a calm authority across a range of situations and her unwavering, take-charge approach inspires trust.

“When we get a distress call, folks are scrambling. It’s crucial to get all the facts so we are best prepared to assist. It’s just as important to reassure the boater that help is on the way so they feel confident in what’s next.”

Sea Tow Sebastian’s service area extends from Melbourne down through the Sebastian Inlet and to the southern Vero Beach waters. The operation is thriving within the Sea Tow network and it does not go unnoticed. Most recently, at the 2019 Sea Tow Annual Meeting, Amy was honored with the coveted Georgia Frohnhofer award. An award named after the Sea Tow Board of Directors Chairwoman, Georgia Frohnhofer, is one that recognizes outstanding women within the network.

The confidence nurtured at her father’s side has propelled much of Amy’s career success. In turn, she’s modeling that same assurance to her seven-year-old daughter, Fiona, who seems to be following in her mom’s footsteps.

“Fiona always wants be right by my side, no matter what we’re doing. She’s a wild child and she jumps into everything headfirst with no fear. She’s a determined little thing.”

It’s a description that could just as easily apply to Amy.