

LAUREN HUARD

SEAPORT SHUTTER COMPANY

Since she was a little girl, Lauren Huard has watched her father, Peter Malone, build a successful company from the ground up. Huard always admired his ingenuity and the quality-oriented nature of his business, Seaport Shutter. So in 2012, realizing her father needed help running his growing business, Huard set aside her public relations career in Boston and joined the company as sales manager. “My dad was the first one to make the products, paint them, install them, handle all of the sales, and I was witness to it. It’s part of who I am.” *By Haley Cote*

CCH: What’s been the best thing about working with your father?

LH: Last summer, we had an employee that didn’t work out, and we were in a tough spot. My dad did not flounder. He literally rolled up his sleeves and got to work to fill the void on a hot summer weekend, sanding 50 shutters. When he was first starting the business, he would sand and paint products in my brother’s bedroom. It is truly special to see my dad 25 years later still doing what you have to do to get the job done. Witnessing the energy he puts into the business, sometimes at the ground level, and never compromising the quality and integrity of the products, is critical to operating a business like Seaport Shutter, and I’ve learned this from him.

CCH: What makes your company and your products unique?

LH: My dad says this business was a “chardonnay-induced decision” when he left corporate finance. He was out selling Adirondack chairs before he knew how to actually make one. He had a dream and a notion for this business, and he made it happen. This is a company that can customize all of our products. We will measure on-site and install, whether it’s interior shutters, exterior shutters, custom mahogany screen and storm doors,



or signs. We make sure the product is Architecturally Correct, which is our trademark.

CCH: Why is that aspect of your work so important?

LH: My dad’s primary focus is quality and craftsmanship. Our carpenters are highly skilled—some have boat building backgrounds. We mirror the old boat builders of Cape Cod to create authentic wood products. There’s something to be said about the thwack of an old wooden screen door—we try to recreate that in present day. We want our products to evoke a feeling. So, when you pull up to your home, it’s really important to us that our products look timeless and classic, and that is something you cannot get from a factory that pumps a product out of a machine.

CCH: As sales manager, how have you helped the company succeed?

LH: Staying on top of the customers’ needs is critical. Our business is a design business, very detail oriented. We offer custom designs, including colors, styles, hardware, paint finishes and special carvings, so it’s a general game of coordination in trying to keep all of the balls in the air. One thing I’ve realized is that customers just want to hear from you. Our lead time on all of our products is 12 weeks, so within that time period, it’s important for me to update customers on the progress and make sure their product comes out the way they want it to come out.

CCH: What advice do you have for fellow young professionals looking to succeed in the home building and design industry?

LH: Personality is really important, so be upbeat and positive. Don’t just rattle off the numbers and options—tell a story about the product, draw the customer in, and they will want to continue to work with you. Make it fun and colorful—a little sparkle goes a long way.

To read more from this interview, go to capecodlife.com.