



Dara has just been promoted to Director of Programs and Donor Services. We sat down to talk about her new role at the Foundation. She also shared her thoughts about Amazon, what makes her 10% happier, the best thing she learned in her twenties, and the places that are on her bucket list.

THE HUB: You grew up in Phoenix and the Chicago suburbs, and received your B.A. in sociology from the University of Colorado in Boulder. What brought you here?

DARA: My family's been coming here since I was little, so the Cape's always been the IT place for me. I've never lived near the ocean, so in 2011, I decided to pack the car, grab the dog and drive across country to spend the summer here. I went to the beach every day and waitressed at Trevi Wine Bar in Mashpee at night.

THE HUB: Sounds like a dream summer.

DARA: It was. That's why I decided to stay. But, while the summer was heaven, the winter was *ROUGH*. Everyone I had met had gone home, and I didn't really know what to do professionally. So, I reached out to the Cape Cod Young Professionals group for advice, and that's when the doors started opening up.

THE HUB: You started as a CCYP volunteer, then they hired you as Office Administrator, and now you're Vice President of the Board of Directors. From volunteer to VP. Nice!

DARA: Thanks. CCYP made me part of the Cape community. I dove in further when I came to the Foundation.

“There’s no algorithm on the back-end of giving. Giving is personal. Very personal...”

THE HUB: You started as the Foundation's Program Officer in 2013, and were recently promoted to Director of Programs and Donor Services. How has your role changed?

DARA: Well, on the Program side, I'm still focused on the nonprofit organizations across the Cape. My job is to learn what services they provide and what challenges they face. In my expanded role, I'm now working directly with our fund holders and other individuals who want to support these very same nonprofits. I help match them to causes they care about.

THE HUB: There are over 1,000 nonprofits on the Cape with a labyrinth of projects and programs in play. I can see why that would be overwhelming to a donor.

DARA: Exactly. And sorting through the choices might be easier if, say, the nonprofits were categorized like books on Amazon so that each day you received recommendations on philanthropic projects you might like to support in your in box. There's no algorithm on the back-end of giving. Giving is personal. Very personal. I get to know our donors, find out what matters to them, what inspires them, then match them with the right project, the right organization.

THE HUB: And, while donors benefit from your personal involvement with them, they also benefit from your objectivity.

DARA: That's right. Because we are a community foundation, we view the nonprofit organizations across the region through a unique, objective lens. We know where the needs are in the community; We also know which nonprofits are meeting them—or could meet them with additional support.

THE HUB: Are we making a difference?

DARA: You bet. Last year we distributed over \$3.4 million back into the community—an increase of more than \$500,000 compared to 2016. We're impacting so many different areas: education, health and human services, education, conservation, elder services, youth development--you name it.

THE HUB: Final word. What do you want current and prospective donors to know?

DARA: The Foundation is a powerful resource. We're here to help you power up what matters to you.

Take ten.

10 QUESTIONS

10 MINUTES TO ANSWER

If you were a superhero, what would your super power be? Time control. Sometimes I want to stop it, slow it down, speed it up or hit the rewind button.

Best year so far? Definitely 2016. I got married and bought a house.

Favorite Quote? "How far you go in life depends on your being tender with the young, compassionate with the aged, sympathetic with the striving and tolerant of the weak and strong. Because someday in life you will have been all of these." —George Washington Carver

What was the last book you read? *10% Happier* by Dan Harris. It taught me to ignore that incessant inner chatter that sometimes holds you back.

What's your guilty pleasure? Travel. I'm always wondering what's beyond the horizon. My husband, Sean, and I were in Iceland in the photo above. Hawaii's next. Peru, Thailand, Italy, South Africa, and New Zealand are all on the bucket list.

Best thing you learned in your twenties? Write down your goals, say them out loud, and don't forget to celebrate when you accomplish them.

Best thing you learned in your thirties? Too soon to tell.

Favorite Cape spot? Crowes Pasture in Dennis. It's tidal, so when you go and when you leave are not really in your control.

When you aren't at work, you're usually...? Outside. We have two Black Labs and a Belgian Malinois, so they need a lot of exercise! I also like to hike, ski, and swim.

Best piece of advice you ever received? Volunteer! It's the best way to build your skills and network while giving back to a cause you are passionate about.