



community development partnership

Creating opportunities for people to live, work, and thrive on the Lower and Outer Cape

Chatham Fisherman Benefits from CDP Assistance to Launch His Business

"The early days of business acquisition meant rough waters, with the intimidating prospect of starting a business and concerns of getting money together looming overhead."

- Sean Connors, Owner of F/V Dawn Treader, Chatham

Local fisherman Sean Connors has embraced diverse and fruitful opportunities from generations of Cape Codders, including his Chatham lineage. Now a boat owner and captain, his Cape roots continue to grow and thrive.

After graduating from Chatham High School in 2011 (before the school regionalized), he earned a degree in business and hospitality from the University of New Hampshire. Sean's return after college and off-Cape ventures finds him following in his parents' and grandparents' footsteps. His interest in diverse food-service industries was satisfied by working at restaurants including The Pearl (Wellfleet), La Bella Vita (Orleans), and Laurino's (Brewster) – perhaps a nod to his mother's family who owned the Northport Seafood House years ago in North Chatham (now the home of Chatham Works). Sean also provided freelance raw bar services at special events for several years.

His love of the sea expanded Sean's relationship with fishing and food. But it was the work of his father Greg, a commercial gillnetter, that lured him to pursue making a living on the ocean. His career aspirations brought him back to the Cape and inspired him to take on the risk and responsibility of owning his own business. With the help of CDP's Business and Credit Programs, he is now an entrepreneur in the fishing industry as owner of F/V Dawn Treader. He and his crew gillnet out of Chatham, primarily targeting dogfish and skate.

Sean was initially referred to the Community Development Partnership by lobsterman Nick Muto from Chatham. Sean's father Greg also worked with the CDP in the past; both said tremendous things about CDP's support and Sean is happy he listened. "CDP has been hugely helpful. I was a little intimidated by starting the business in the early days," he said.



Sean Connors pictured center and his vessel Dawn Treader below.

Photos courtesy of Sean Connors.



Although Sean was “only half-searching” when a fishing boat came on the market, “it checked the boxes” and brought him one step closer to his dream. “The early days of business acquisition meant rough waters, with the intimidating prospect of starting a business and concerns of getting money together looming overhead,” he shared. Still, the CDP helped him secure a loan. Pam Andersen, Director of Business & Credit Programs, provided great advice on getting everything going and “anchoring expectations,” he said.

“I worked with Pam a lot, and she was awesome – she’s still awesome, and it has been a huge help,” Sean added. The CDP team offers comprehensive support across every aspect of starting a business, from crafting the business plan and navigating operational challenges to handling record-keeping, sales, marketing, and more. Sean created a business plan with the help of Pam as well as some of his family members, and he “ran with it.”

The next part of his dream is to buy a home and raise a family here. The CDP “helped me with the first stage of wanting to stay on the Cape and get the business. And now I think I could get help from CDP with this next stage.”