



community development partnership

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

A Family Business Looks to the Future of Families on the Outer Cape

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Kristen Roberts
Owner, Truro Vineyards



Truro Vineyards is a family adventure. If you get the chance to visit, you’ll surely feel the love and energy they’ve poured into making it a successful one.

Deep into a career in the beer and wine businesses—one that he escaped annually for a family vacation in Truro—Dave Roberts saw that the quaint clapboard house and its hillside vines were for sale.

Convincing his wife and children to come together to take on the business was his first ambitious goal.

In the decade since, besides running the winery and distillery together, the Roberts have made it their business to invest in helping other families on the Outer Cape.

“We see up-close that affordable housing is essential to ensuring people can live, work, and raise families here,” says Kristen Roberts, Dave’s daughter, who is now in charge of day-to-day operations. “That’s why we support the CDP.”

The Roberts first heard about the CDP as an incubator, helping get new businesses off the ground – including Truro Vineyards under it’s founding owners. But over the years, they heard more about our role in managing and advocating for affordable housing.

That got them involved because they had learned from experience: housing was going to be a major business problem. And not just for her family enterprise, Kristen explains, but for business owners across the Outer Cape.

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“It is really not sustainable for businesses to have to factor in buying housing for staff to live in during the season,” Kristen says. Some bigger business can manage it, she says, but not the small businesses local people can create. And not the kind we need to make our communities thrive.

There is a can-do spark about Kristen Roberts. Her brother, Dave Jr., who launched the South Hollow Spirits, the family’s distillery, also on the property, is intensely focused. With their dad’s experience and encouragement, they’ve managed to create a business that is active all year round.

But their high-energy success is tempered by their awareness of the seriousness of the housing challenge. It is one they know they can’t solve on their own.

“We’ve had so many talented people leave after not being able to find housing anywhere in the area,” Kristen says. “In that sense, I guess you could say our support for the CDP is self-interested. Except that we know this isn’t happening just to us. And it’s not just employees, its owners, entrepreneurs moving their ideas and energies off Cape.”

“It’s a problem that matters to everyone,” says Kristen, “because business, housing, and family life are all interconnected.”

Kristen loves living on Cape Cod. “I feel lucky every single day to have been able to start my own family here,” she says. She lives Truro and her two children go to Wellfleet Elementary School. She knows having her parents help and a multi-generational business made that possible. Maybe that’s why it comes naturally to her to nurture a multi-generational community.

“A community without children is not a healthy community,” she points out. “In the end, it’s about the sustainability of this place.”

For the Roberts that interconnectedness—linking business, housing, and sustainability—has become a family value.

When it comes to giving, the Roberts like to keep it local. The mix of nonprofit community and cultural offerings are part of what make living here interesting, Kristen says. It’s part of community life she thinks will be enriched if we can create more affordable housing for young families.

“There are so many worthwhile nonprofits here and so many rewarding things to be a part of,” says Kristen, who sits on various boards that include other parents and business peers. “But,” she adds with a laugh, “you don’t *sit* on a board out here—it’s all hands on deck.”

As for donations, the fact that gifts to the CDP of \$1,000 or more are eligible for the state’s Community Investment Tax Credit program is a bonus.

“I know giving at any level is a help,” says Kristen. “But for anyone who is able to commit a larger amount, the fact that you get such a significant a tax credit back makes giving that \$1,000 or more, make so much sense.”