

1. Current hometown (where you are currently living):

Mount Desert, ME

2. Share more about your work – what it entails, aspects that are especially challenging or enjoyable:

My job is to help people connect to Acadia. That's really easy in one respect because Acadia is an easy place to love wholeheartedly. And, communicating from a bureaucratic government organization has its opportunities and challenges. I want people to see that the park service really cares about this place and our job is to protect this place for future generations.

3. Community work, family – other projects you're involved in outside of your job:

I am a mom to two wonderful boys and my husband is a bread baker. I spend a lot of time on my bicycle and exploring the park. I am very dedicated to bicycle commuting and I bike to work at every opportunity. I am also a member of the Town of Mount Desert Planning Board which is very interesting and sometimes complicated. Trying to preserve the quality of a community while being open to change and evolution is a delicate balance.

4. Graduate School:

Sonoma State University, CA, Organization Development

5. COA senior project:

DNA Sequencing for Biological Indicators of Mutagenesis: is there a way to figure out which species when introduced to contaminated areas would tell us about the rate of mutations (declining or increasing) for air, water, and land?

6. COA internship:

Jackson Biological Laboratory, beginning the work related to my senior project

7. Human ecology in action – in what ways does your background in human ecology influence your work with the Park Service?

Every day I think about the connections and relationship of humans and their environment. Being a systems-thinker has led me to view the world as a whole, not as parts. Human Ecology is one of the frameworks I use to make decisions and go about my work.

8. What classes, internships, or experiences at COA helped prepare you for or sparked your interest in working in national parks?

Well, the most obvious connection is that COA and Acadia are neighbors and I spent a lot of time in the park as a student. Acadia was my very first national park experience and it was absolute love at first sight when I arrived on the island in 1987. My path was set when I participated in Ken Cline's courses and he opened my eyes to the utter depth and fragility of our public lands, especially national parks and Wilderness.

9. A COA experience that was particularly significant or memorable – this could be a course, an adventure, an aspect of life in the COA or MDI community, etc.

My very first hike of my life was up the Precipice and my very first camping experience ever was at Baxter State Park, both in my first year at COA. I remember both of those experiences as a whole universe unfolding. I can't imagine a life without public lands and Wilderness.

10. Considerations for prospective students – what do you think a student who might apply to COA should know?

I started at COA 32 year ago and things have changed at the college so my perspective may be outdated. My sense back then was that you really needed to want to take your education into your own hands and not be guided by conformity or prescriptions of the right way to do anything. You had the encouragement and support to cut your own path rather than go right or left. You are taught to follow your heart in a way that makes the world a better place.

11. Considerations for current students – what do you think a student who might want to work for the National Park Service should know?

There are lots of ways to love, protect, preserve and advocate for the national parks. For some folks that may be working for a partner or a friends group at the local or the national level. There is a big difference between working for a non-profit compared to a federal agency. I would recommend getting experience in different groups and seeing which one is the best fit for you and your voice. If you are all in for becoming a national park ranger, then your first step is to get experience usually as a seasonal ranger and then find your path to permanent status. I would highly recommend finding someone on the inside to help you navigate the federal employment process, it can be a bit convoluted. I received my permanent status under a hiring rule related to having served in the Peace Corps.