

## Staff Bios

### WESTPORT

#### ***Kim Beaumont***

##### ***Owner - Westport & Rowayton***

“I’m from Downunder, New Zealand specifically, I love having a good time, a good laugh, and making people happy. The Downunder businesses allow me to do that and to share the passion, fun, adventure, and character of the Kiwis and Aussies. We’re laid back, down to earth, honest, easy going. We’re also responsible and respectful of the environment, and one another. We don’t really worry about tomorrow, or yesterday. I’m an ACA level two certified Kayak and Stand-up Paddle Board instructor - you’ll find me in the store, on the dock, and on the water! Favorite things to do - get out on the water, laze around in a hammock, hang with my family and friends, play with my dog, laugh, a lot.”

#### ***Eileen Martin***

##### ***Store Manager - Westport***

“I’m a new addition to the Downunder team, and will be there to greet you with a big smile when you come to the new Westport store. I have years of experience in the retail and service industry so you can be sure I will take great care of you. Looking forward to learning to SUP, so I can get out on the water too! I am an easy going person that loves having fun and likes being around people that do. Can’t wait to meet you!”

#### ***Brenda Harrison***

##### ***Kayak & SUP Instructor/Guide - Westport & Rowayton***

Bren originally hails from Atlanta, Georgia & has certainly done her share of paddling southeastern waters both as guide and former surfer. She is highly athletic & enjoys competing in triathlons, cycling, and marathons as well as participating in any form of outdoor recreation. Bren splits her time between teaching folks to kayak & teaching at Southern Connecticut State University. She holds degrees in exercise physiology & sport science & is a certified ACA Level 1 Kayak Instructor. Bren has over 20 years of paddling & guiding experience & her favorite paddle places are the Outer Banks of NC, the Yucatan Peninsula, the Everglades, & the Greek Isles. Bren brings a lot of skill, strength, & wisdom to Downunder. But most of all, her sense of humor and laid back nature puts our clients at ease.

#### ***Kristen Rowinsky***

##### ***Sales - Westport***

“I moved to Connecticut from Southern California in 2008. So far my favorite part about New England is the change of seasons- the colors are truly beautiful here! I love the outdoors, especially the water. I am a SCUBA diver and have seen some awesome creatures of the ocean (someday I hope to see my favorite creature, the sea horse!). I also love to camp and fish with my family, as well as enjoy a day at the beach. I’m looking forward to SUPing and kayaking this summer.”

#### ***Kristine O’Brien***

##### ***Store, Camp Counselor - Rowayton***

“Hey there! My name is Kristine and I am going to be a junior at Keene State College in the fall! I absolutely love being in the water, near water or looking at the water! I have been a swimmer since the age of six and can’t get enough of outdoor activities and sports! My family owns a kayak which we love taking out in the Long Island sound and exploring all the little islands! I am looking forward to an amazing summer at Downunder!”

#### ***Dave Featherson***

***SUP Instructor and Guide, Westport & Rowayton***

"I grew up with a 11' longboard on my shoulders, and in the open ocean, for many summers on the beaches of coastal Massachusetts. So now, I suppose I've come full circle. For the past few years, I've rediscovered surfing in the form of Stand-up Paddle boarding and I cannot express how much all-encompassing the benefits are; from core strength to sheer fun. It has become an extension of my existence. If anyone - from new customers to staff - want to experience SUP as well, contact me anytime...to literally get "on board" and discover this for yourself!" Dave has a 9-5 job in HR, but when the horn blows... he heads Downunder!

***Freddy Weber***

***Dock/Guide/Camp Counselor - Westport***

I'm a laid back guy that loves the summer lifestyle and being by the water. I have been surfing for about 7 years now and it has increased my appreciation and respect for the water regardless of the sport or activity. I want to ensure that everyone one around me is having a fun and exciting experience at Downunder!

***Drew Schouder***

***Kayak Instructor/Guide/Camp Counselor - Westport***

*"If I am not on the water then I am thinking about it. It is my life's mission to educate others about the oceans and the connection we all have with them. I started paddling in 1990 because it felt like I could extend my summer and time on the water beyond September. Kayaking is more of a necessity for me than an leisure activity. I became an ACA certified instructor to share my passion with others. My off water time is spent with my wife and dogs, and I have a great job teaching oceanography and chemistry. A few years ago I met Kim out on the water and I've been Downunder ever since!"*

***Mike Markstrom***

***Guide/Camp Counselor/Fisherman***

***David Bernstein***

***Guide/Camp Counselor - resident Videographer! Westport***

My Dad took me camping for the first time at eighteen months, disregarding my Mom's understandable concern. I've been obsessed with the outdoors ever since. In the last few years, I've come to realize our environment's potential as a playground for outdoor activities and adventure sports like rock climbing, kayaking, mountain biking, and backpacking to name a few. I am constantly juggling activities and chasing the last adrenaline high. This summer I'll be settling down at Downunder's new location on the Saugatuck, taking on roles in the store and out on the river. I plan on spending a lot of time on the water this Summer, whether I've got a paddle in hand or a fishing rod. I'm an aspiring filmmaker, dabbling with photography and screenwriting in my free time. My favorite part about camping trips, climbing expeditions and outdoor adventures are being able to capture those epic moments through the lens of a camera. The finer details of life are often lost in recollections and faulty memories, film captures and reveals the little things that make those moments memorable. "Everybody dies, but not every one truly lives"

***TJ Altieri***

***Dock Manager, Guide/Camp Counselor - Westport***

"I'm an avid kayaker originally from Long Island, New York who enjoys paddling because of the exercise, ability to explore, and its unique way of connecting me with nature. Kayaking truly changed my life for those reasons as well as for the friends I've made who share my passion to paddle. I love to kayak lakes, rivers and even do some coastal touring. I kayaked across LI Sound twice with Kayak for a Cause and like to go on long paddling adventures. When I'm on the land, you'll find me hiking, writing, or cooking. It means a lot to be able to share my passion for water sports with everyone who comes to

Downunder, whether you're looking to challenge yourself or have a laid back good time on the water. You'll find me down by the dock or on the water."

## **ROWAYTON**

### ***Patti Cuomo***

***Store Manager, Rowayton***

***SUPDiva (Yoga and Fitness Instructor - Rowayton & Westport)***

Patti is a RYT 200 Yoga instructor and began her exercise career as a group fitness instructor (step, aerobics, kickboxing, etc.) some 20 years ago. Overuse injuries brought her to yoga and her enthusiasm for teaching and the outdoors provide the extra inspiration and energy to bring SUP board yoga and fitness training to Downunder. "Teaching at studios is great – but being able to take that experience from the mat to the SUP board, is an awesome combination! The serene glide of the board, the sun dancing on the water, being surrounded by light, AND doing yoga!!? Now that's nirvana—hope to see a lot a people give this a try . . . And honestly, if you're into fitness training, wouldn't you want to do it on the water?" Patti is also a gifted Marketing Director on hiatus, we're stealing her for the summer!

### ***Louisa Lima***

***Watersports Manager, SUP Instructor, Guide - Rowayton***

"Hi, my name is Louisa. I'm from Bermuda, and Downunder kind of reminds me of home - right on the water! I'm an avid kayaker, and that's how I met Kim, through a private class. We quickly became friends, and I joined the Downunder family. I love the environment, the people, the children - probably my favorite thing to do at Downunder is take the 6-8 year old kids out in camp - they are adorable and so excited, even though they are young they learn a lot quickly. Stand-up paddle boarding has become my new passion. I am an ACA certified instructor and looking forwarding to share the finer details of this sport with clients this year."

### ***Grace Hawkins***

***Store, Camp Counselor - Rowayton***

Grace is an enthusiastic student studying Community Development at the University of Vermont. Has been working at Downunder Kayaking for three years now and is a fun loving, energetic edition to the staff. Mainly in the store, making sure customers get what they need, Grace is all eyes and ears to local and visiting customers. "Can't wait to play this summer!" *Grace*

### ***Abby Beaumont***

***Store, Camp Counselor - Rowayton***

I've worked at DownUnder for the past few years with my amazing Momma as my boss. I love being on the water and having the opportunity to work outdoors. The best part about my job is being a camp counselor watching as they become expert kayakers. I plan on studying sociology at University of South Carolina in the fall and returning to DownUnder each summer

### ***Jimmy Murphy***

***Guide, Camp Counselor - Rowayton***

"Hello out there. My name is James Murphy, a native son of Norwalk, CT and a senior camp counselor here at Downunder. I am a certified lifeguard and CPR administer, also serving as one of Downunder's many guides. I've always had a love of the outdoors, from the thick forests of CT to the open waters of the sound. Nature and travel reveal our true self, and here at Downunder we combine the best of both. The past four years I have been studying English Lit and playing lacrosse at the University of Western New England. This fall semester I will be taking what I like to think of as my Victory lap, in Barcelona, Spain. There I will complete my degree and return to the states for grad school. In addition to working at Downunder this summer I will be interning in NYC at a public relations firm. I am a Yankee fan, soccer enthusiast, and always a good time. So come hang out with me this summer at Downunder, and let the fun begin!"

**Steve Annunziato (Nunz)**  
**Guide/Camp Counselor/Fishing Guide - Rowayton & Westport**

"WaSUP man, how ya doin?" is the first thing you'll hear out of Nunz, and you'll immediately wonder whether you've met him before, because he'll treat you like a long lost friend. We LOVE Nunz. He's a tad shy writing about himself, so let me tell you - Nunz was an escort with a girl scout troop that came out with Downunder in 2006. I hired him on the spot, and he's been showing my clients a good time ever since. He's an avid fisherman and sea kayaker, and a teacher at Brien McMahon school for many years - so yeah, maybe you do know him - and you can be sure he'll remember YOU.

**Becca Dombrowski**  
**Guide, Camp Counselor - Westport & Rowayton**

"Hey all! Becca here. I love being outdoors, especially on the water, hanging out with people of all ages, listening to various types of music, and living life to the fullest. Who knew I could find a summer job being paid for doing just that? During the school year I teach English at Brien McMahon High School in Norwalk, but once the last bell rings in June I spend most days (and evenings) at Downunder. This is my fourth summer leading our children's program. There is a lot of work that goes into this program both on and off the water, but every staff member who works with us does so because we know there is nothing better than being a kid on the water. We are all kids at heart. Hope to meet you soon at our sunny slice of paradise."

**Piper Garner**  
**Guide**

"Hi, My Name is Piper... Kim and I have been kayaking on the Five Mile River since before the inception of her dream come true "Downunder Kayaking!" I'm a local resident, Realtor, volunteer in the Darien/Rowayton communities, mother of two DHS students as well as an enthusiastic, passionate and experienced kayak guide. Feel free to 'Just ask Piper' about anything to do with where to go, what to see and how to get the most out of enjoying an active, healthy lifestyle around and about the Five Mile River in lower Fairfield County CT. Good food, local hot spots, and great places to live are some of my topics of knowledge... favorite kayak tours - moonlight paddle and yoga/paddle on Fish Island! Hope to see you out on the water soon, best Piper."

**Claire Wilson,**  
**Store/Camp/Guide Assist**

"I love sports and have played them my entire life - field hockey, basketball, and lacrosse. And I love kids and nature - I am a camp counselor at the Darien Nature Center. In the summers, I love being on the water, and I spend as much time as possible kayaking, at the beach, tubing and fishing. Something you would never know about me - I am a certified elephant handler, a certification I received from working at an elephant rescue center in Thailand for 6 weeks. In college, I am going to be an environmental engineer, and I can't wait to join Engineers without Borders, an association dedicated to solving environmental and structural problems in third world countries with engineering solutions."

**Connor Beaumont**  
**Dock/Camp/Guide Assist**

"I'm a senior at DHS, where I've been on the wrestling team for four years, and rugby for three. I'll be going to Northeastern in the fall, and my first semester is abroad - you guessed it - 'downunder' in Melbourne Australia. Two summers in a row, I'm stoked! This is my third year working at Downunder, and I love the paddleboards! I'm really looking forward to the Westport location where we will be selling [Kahuna Creation longboards](#) and sticks - oh yeah, I LOVE to longboard. Can't wait to get on the water with the kids this summer."

***Maddie Love***  
***Store/Camp/Guide Assist***

"Hey everyone! I'm Maddie Love and I am originally from Malibu, California where I developed my love of water sports, especially surfing and kayaking. I am so excited to share my passion with anyone who steps on board! I am also a cheerleader so I will always be there to root on and encourage our clients to do their best and most importantly, to have fun! When I'm not out on the water, you can find me in Below Deck Surf Shop selling the latest swim and surf-wear. Looking forward to a fantastic summer at Downunder!"

***Elizabeth Searight***  
***Store/Camp/Guide Assist***

"Elizabeth is an 18 year old student attending Syracuse University in the fall of 2011. She has years of experience with children of all ages and loves being on the water. She's a new employee and is ready to share her enthusiasm with all those ready to emerge themselves in the Downunder experience."

**Other Staff include:**

Mike Markstrom, Mike Foresta, Abby Beaumont, Kristine O'Brien, Elizabeth Seabright