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The Kadey-Krogen Group Adds Industry Veterans in Strategic Team Expansion

The Kadey-Krogen Group, builder of Krogen Yachts, Summit Motoryachts, and American Tug, adds industry veterans Katie Astras and Jay Christopher to their in-house team.

February, 2024, Stuart, Florida — The Kadey-Krogen Group, builder of the world class series of Krogen ocean-crossing trawlers, the performance cruising series Summit Motoryachts, and the coastal cruising brand American Tug, announces the addition of Katie Astras and Jay Christopher to their in-house team as Interior Designer and Customer Care Manager, respectively. Together, they bring more than 50 years of experience in the industry, with deep knowledge not only of The Kadey-Krogen Groups' products, but with their core customer base as well.

"I started working with Kadey-Krogen in the late 90s, I was the in-house designer for Palmer Johnson working out of their refit yard in Savannah, Georgia, and we did a lot of work with the group," Katie says. "For the last decade I've been working with the team as an interior design subcontractor, so I'm very familiar with the group and I'm thrilled to join the team full time."

In her role as Interior Designer, Katie will be integral at ensuring The Kadey-Krogen Group owners truly are at home on any sea. "I think the interiors have gotten more sophisticated as the years have gone by," she said. "Everyone has higher expectations, they desire a higher level of sophistication regarding what they want and need for soft goods and interior amenities, and the team at Kadey-Krogen has met that demand."

Katie will work with clients throughout the build process, creating a curated package of soft goods and joinery to fit their individual tastes. "We have standard packages of soft goods, countertops, fabrics, things like that, but as a boutique builder we have the capacity to do just about anything," she says. "We had a potential owner ask us about putting a hot tub onboard, which would be a little atypical on a trawler. But instead of discounting it and saying 'no' the entire team put their heads together and figured out if it was possible, how to do it, and what it might cost. And that person hadn't even signed a contract yet. That's what I love about this team. The company has a culture of 'let's figure it out.' People are using their boats differently now than they were 10, 20 years ago. We get that. Whether it's onboard technology or new fabrics, Kadey-Krogen is always at the forefront of the market."

Jay Christopher, Kadey-Krogen's new Customer Care Manager, is taking the helm from Gregg Gandy, who held the role of Project Manager for Kadey-Krogen for 20 years. Jay's professional experience on the water stretches back to growing up on Cape Cod where he worked as a detailer and rigger while giving sailing lessons. His passion for boats led him to boatbuilding school in Maine, then on to the Maxi and America's Cup campaigns of the early 1990s.



Katie Astras



Jay Christopher

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“I was working for Bill Koch as one of his property and marina managers on the Cape, and I got an invite to go sailing with them down in Newport,” Christopher said. “That led to me being one of the permanent crew aboard *Matador2*, winning the ‘90 Rolex Maxi World Cup, and then being part of the ‘92 and ‘95 America’s Cup campaigns as a shore team member. For the ‘97 America’s Cup campaign I was sent over to Prada’s team. We showed up in Livorno with two boats and 15 containers, and that’s where I really started managing large projects. I’ve been doing it ever since.”

In addition to his experience in the sailing world, Jay has decades of experience in large powerboats working as a service manager, warranty representative and training captain for marinas and service yards throughout New England including the reputable Oyster Harbors Marine. “It’s rare to love both sail and power, but I really do. My sailor roots combined with years running big powerboats is the perfect blend for The Krogen Group’s expanding line of yachts,” said Christopher. Recently Jay also earned his credentials as an Associate Surveyor with the Society of Accredited Marine Surveyors.

Jay will be based out of Kadey-Krogen Group’s headquarters in Stuart, Florida. In his day-to-day activities, he will manage new boat commissioning, handle warranty issues, and help owners with all their service needs and systems issues. Additionally, Jay will assist with new build customer orientation, helping a new owner get acquainted with their boat and spending time with them onboard while they get comfortable with their new surroundings. “I want to instill confidence in our clients. I’ll walk them through everything from systems operations to docking, then be there to support them throughout the lifetime of their ownership,” he said. “I find with new owners, those first few days together are invaluable to building assurance in their boat and with us.”

“We’re incredibly excited to have Jay and Katie join our team full time,” said Tucker West, President and CEO of Kadey-Krogen Group. “Katie and Jay both bring with them not only a lifetime of experience in the industry, but a deep knowledge of our products, and our owners. Their addition will help us continue to provide the uncompromising level of service that our clients expect.”

For more information about The Kadey-Krogen Group, click [here](#).

ABOUT THE KADEY-KROGEN GROUP

Today’s generation of Kadey-Krogen trawlers are the result of a 47-year heritage of innovation and more than 650 yachts built. Founded by Art Kadey and Jim Krogen in 1976, Kadey-Krogen Yachts currently builds Krogen brand yachts from 44 to 60 feet. In 2019, the company introduced the Summit Motoryachts series of performance cruising yachts, which combine the renowned build quality and attention to detail of all Kadey-Krogen yachts with the performance hull designed by renowned naval architect Michael Peters. In May of 2023, The Kadey-Krogen Group acquired American Tugs, the La Conner, Washington-based boatbuilder, with five models ranging from 36 to 48 feet. The Kadey-Krogen Group is headquartered in Stuart, Florida, with additional sales offices in Seattle, Washington, Annapolis, Maryland, and Portsmouth, Rhode Island. For more information about the company and their latest projects, please visit [kadeykrogen.com](#), [summitmotoryachts.com](#), and [americantugs.com](#).

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