

Application Form

Profile

Darla

First Name

Cook

Last Name

Email Address

PO Box

Valdez Mailing Address (PO BOX # or HCI BOX #)

144 E Egan Dr

Home Address

Suite or Apt

Valdez

City

AK

State

99686

Postal Code

Mobile:

Primary Phone

Business: (907)

Alternate Phone

Totem Hotel and Suites

Employer

Chief Operating Officer

Occupation

Which Boards would you like to apply for?

Valdez Museum & Historical Archive Association Board of Directors: Submitted

How did you learn about this vacancy? *☒ City Website

Interests & Experience**Why are you interested in serving on a City of Valdez board or commission?**

I want to be a part of the community of Valdez, Alaska. As a new resident with an interest in heritage tourism I know there's already a wonderful way preserve and retell many interesting stories of the community.

Please outline your education, work, and volunteer experience which will assist you in serving on a City of Valdez board/commission.

I have more than 35 years in the hospitality industry and would like to have my experience benefit the community of Valdez. My volunteer experience has been in the national parks and recreation areas in the lower 48 developing and managing community events and activities. For the past 10+ years I was vice president of public relations and special events for a large recreation and hospitality company.

[Darla_Cook_Resume_2018.pdf](#)

Upload a Resume or Letter of Interest

Darla Cook

Valdez, Alaska 99686 • 602-432-7549 • darlakcook@gmail.com • [linkedin.com/in/darlacook](https://www.linkedin.com/in/darlacook)

OPERATIONS LEADER | MARKETING & SALES | PUBLIC RELATIONS

Hospitality | Resorts | National & State Parks | Retail Merchandising | Print and Media Design

Senior Operations, Marketing and General Management Executive with 25+ plus years' experience specializing in hospitality management, sales & marketing, team development, re-branding, and promotions. Proven success in increasing visibility and profitability for the organization through team leadership, motivation of staff, corporate and community partnerships and strategic implementation of marketing initiatives. Expertise includes maximizing resources and improving revenues and profits through expert leadership in customer driven service, staff development, cost control, and marketing. Skilled at building strong teams and efficient systems to positively impact tourism, media relations and profits.

Campaign Strategy Management | Community Partnerships | Multi-Site Operations
Media Spokesperson | Logistics & Site Management | Dispute Resolution
Strategic Planning & Execution | Food & Beverage Operations | Guest Services & Satisfaction
Recruiting Staff/HR Training | Cultural Awareness | Budget Management
Vendor Management | Government Relations | LEED Methodologies | Meeting & Event Planning

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Chief Operating Officer - Totem Hotel and Suites, Inc. | Valdez, AK **June 2018 — Present**

Responsible for all aspects of the operation, guest and associate satisfaction, human resources, financial performance, sales and revenue generation intended to deliver a return on investment to ownership. Designed and implement business strategies, plans and procedures setting comprehensive goals for performance and growth. Establish policies that promote company culture and vision.

Forever Resorts | Hospitality & Resorts | 1500 Employees | \$170M in Sales **1985—2018**

Hospitality company with focus in National and State Parks, Marinas, Luxury Houseboats, and Resort operations the company owns and operates concession contracts throughout the US. Advanced through company in PR, Management and Sales & Marketing.

Vice President, Public Relations and Special Events | General Manager **November 2003 – May 2018**

Held dual responsibilities as hotel and resort General Manager and Vice President from 2011 - 2016.

Vice President, Public Relations and Special Events Highlights:

Provided executive leadership of all publicity, marketing campaigns, event planning / execution for 40+ hospitality operations including hotels, 12 marinas with 100 luxury houseboat rentals, river rafting and tour operations nationwide. Planned and conducted media and industry familiarization tours, unique annual events for each operation, and launched grand openings. Developed, evaluated and implemented short and long term strategic marketing and public relations plans & budgets for established, newly acquired and potential acquisitions.

- Drafted original content for advertising, print, digital outlets, & social media platforms.
- Negotiated & managed contracts with advertising agencies, publicists & graphic media vendors.
- Established worldwide partnerships within the tourism and destination management industry.
- Experienced corporate spokesperson and speech writer.
- Team organized first 4-day Outdoor Recreation Village event creating partnerships with more than 40 public and private organizations to form a unique team of outdoor advocates drawing 20,000+ visitors during Super Bowl XLII.

Darla Cook

Valdez, Alaska 99686 • 602-432-7549 • darlakcook@gmail.com • [linkedin.com/in/darlacook](https://www.linkedin.com/in/darlacook)

General Manager of Operations Highlights:

General Manager - Parry Lodge, UT | Team of 75 | \$2.2M Budget | 90 Rooms | 120 Seat Restaurant

Managed recruitment and training process with full accountability for daily operations and P&L for operations. Established and management of property budget and financial controls. Established Operating Procedures (SOPs) and customer service best practices.

- Increased room sales 17% and Average Daily Rate (ADR) 16% over prior owner.
- Project Manager for transformational renovation during busy season.
- Negotiated third-party contracts; consistently achieving premium terms and pricing.

General Manager – Cedar Pass Lodge, SD | \$3M Budget | Team of 90 | 1M Seasonal Visitors

Key leadership role for annual recruitment, training and coaching of seasonal staff. Responsible for budget, profitability, P&L for all operations including 3,800 square foot retail gift store, 500 vendors, 2 hotel operations, housekeeping, maintenance, 2 RV parks/campgrounds, and food & beverage in full service restaurant.

- Built strong community relationships to secure a 5-year federal grant of \$500,000 resulting in \$300,000+ in additional wages in the first year for the Lakota Tribe in South Dakota.
- Led resort and operations management for one of the largest employers in the region.
- Directed, first of its kind, \$1.5M government public/private partnership replacing assets in National Park with cabins built to Gold level LEED standards using green methodologies. Project received ISO 14001 designation.
 - Increased sales 18% over budget, improved operating profit by 25%, average daily rate (ADR) increased 76% and achieved an annual occupancy of 86.7%.

Vice President, Sales & Marketing

November 1985 - November 2003

Experienced in budgeting, sales forecasts, and implementation of the annual sales/marketing plans for each operation with focus on lodging, conferences, luxury houseboat rentals, rafting operations, tours, group and catering sales. Supported and managed local and remote sales team to accurately forecast sales performance and deliver financial results. Developed and administered \$1.5 million marketing & sales budget for 40+ operations including national and state park concessions, lodging, retail, restaurants, conference/event centers, tours, marinas, and fleet of 100 luxury houseboat rentals across the USA.

- Generated a 4% year-over-year growth on luxury houseboat rental sales.
- Recruited, hired, managed and trained 16 high performing sales, call center and administrative personnel.
- Managed insurance property loss and liability claims for corporate headquarters including placement of company property, liability, marine, and protection and indemnity insurance.

EDUCATION & CREDENTIALS

Arizona State University, Bachelor of Science in Liberal Arts

Expected Graduation: 2020

Meeting Professionals International | Hospitality Sales and Marketing Association International
Public Relations Society of America | Outdoor Writers Association of America
California Outdoor Writers Association | Trained and Audited for Environmental Management System
OSHA Hazardous Communications | Standards Evaluation and Rate Administration
Utah Travel Industry Alliance | Alliance Board of Nevada Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights