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**KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT**

## NEWS RELEASE

### *Katie Koester, Homer High School, Class of 1998* **KPSBD graduate #inspirations**



***“There are people in our lives who will believe in us more than we believe in ourselves. By listening to their words and trusting their encouragement, we can be pushed out of our comfort zone to accomplish more than we ever thought possible.”***

—Katie Koester, Homer City Manager

“Many of the people who have influenced me live in Homer,” said Katie Koester, Homer High School Class of 1998. “When I was a kid, my junior high P.E. teacher and volleyball coach Deb Lowney gave me the gift of self-confidence. Coach Lowney was the first person who believed I could overcome my shyness to become a competitive athlete in junior high all the way through college.”

Koester, now city manager in her hometown, attended McNeil Canyon Elementary, Homer Middle School (in the 1990s it was Homer Junior High), and graduated from Homer High School. Her post high school studies took her to Massachusetts where she majored in Government and Latin American Studies at Smith College, and then to Chile where she earned her master’s degree in political science at the Pontific Catholic University of Chile as a Rotary Ambassadorial Scholar. She is currently completing a Master of Public Administration at the University of Alaska Southeast.

**KPBSD: ONE DISTRICT, FORTY-FOUR DIVERSE SCHOOLS**

**The mission of the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District is to empower all learners to positively shape their futures.**  
ANCHOR POINT COOPER LANDING HOMER HOPE KACHEMAK SELO KENAI MOOSE PASS NANWALEK NIKISKI NIKOLAEVSK NINILCHIK PORT GRAHAM  
RAZDOLNA SELDOVIA SEWARD SOLDOTNA STERLING TUSTUMENA TYONEK VOZNESENKA

**FOR RELEASE JANUARY 21, 2019**

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Katie said the person who cheered her on in her professional corner was Homer's former Mayor Beth Wythe—also a Homer High Graduate! She explains, "I was working as Homer's Community and Economic Development Coordinator when Mayor Wythe encouraged me to apply for the City Manager position. She believed in me. It is remarkable to think that April 2019 marks four years serving as Homer's City Manager."

**"I was born and raised in Homer and did not see myself as a leader. It took others believing in me that got me here. When we continue to raise each other up, we all get to enjoy the beautiful views."**

### **Local government**

"Some people assume my position is more powerful and influential than it really is. In local government, power lies within its people and the neighbors and friends you elect to serve on city council. As city manager, my job is based on a lot of hard work and relationship building. There is no "magic" needed to be a city manager, but the position does require dedication and connecting the dots within our community. I was born and raised in Homer and did not see myself as a leader. It took others believing in me that got me here. When we continue to raise each other up, we all get to enjoy the beautiful views."

### **What does this City Manager celebrate?**

"I celebrate the people of Homer—the families who have made it here for generations along with the new families who come to the *end of the road*, fall in love with this place, and figure out how to make it in this town. This community's underlying determination to live and persist in Homer means people here are interesting, creative, and diverse. I celebrate the people of Homer because they are problem solvers, because they make Homer the place for their life's work.

### **Best hangout spot**

"Hands down Bishop's Beach is my favorite spot! In high school my best friend Krista and I played Spice Girls in the parking lot and danced to, "tell me what'chu want what'chu you really, really want." Bishop's Beach is a wonderful spot to meet up with friends, go for walks, and crank some tunes—Spice Girls or not."

I was appointed city manager under Mayor Wythe who had an *open for business* theme for Homer. I work really hard to continue this vision because I want Homer to be a town with *family-sustaining jobs*—jobs where someone can raise their family while also being professionally satisfied. Families thrive when our local businesses thrive."

### **Links**

- [Three cities, three decades, three leaders](#) KPSBD graduate #inspiration Part 1 of 4
- [Katie Koester, Homer High School Class of 1998](#)  
City Manager, Homer, Alaska [www.cityofhomer-ak.gov](http://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov)
- [Paul Ostrander, Soldotna High School Class of 1986](#)  
City Manager, Kenai, Alaska <http://www.ci.kenai.ak.us/>
- [Stephanie \(Arbelovsky\) Queen, Kenai Central High School Class of 2000](#)  
City Manager, City of Soldotna <https://soldotna.org/>

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