



Comité sectoriel
de main-d'œuvre
de l'industrie maritime

PORTRAITS OF WORKERS IN THE MARINE INDUSTRY

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PORTRAIT N° 1

Daniel Boisvert

Regional Director of Operations and Captain

Together, let's get to know these people who are passionate about maritime trades and responsible for the transportation and safety of thousands of passengers and millions of tonnes of cargo.

Make way for our ambassadors!

"What I really love is that every day is so different!"

Two for one

► Daniel Boisvert works for the Québec City-based shipping company Croisières AML as Regional Director of Operations and Captain on the AML Louis-Jolliet. Daniel has held his administrative position for 14 years and his position as Captain for 9. But his career started long before that! In fact, this is his 23rd year with Croisières AML. Let's take a look at his career path and what he loves about his job!

AN UNEXPECTED CAREER PATH

Graduating as a forest technician, Daniel Boisvert had no way of knowing that his summer job in the marine industry would lead to a career. He had been working as a seaman for three summers to pay for his studies. Dissatisfied with the job opportunities his forestry diploma led to, he decided to take pure sciences to get into university. At the same time, Croisières AML made him an offer to move up the corporate ladder by earning the certification required to become an officer. He was in his 6th season with the company and had been Master Seaman for 3 years. Torn between the idea of continuing his studies and spending a few years in the cruise industry, he finally chose the call of the sea. This decision enabled him to make good



money in order to begin his university studies. "I put university on hold for a long time," he says, in fact he still hasn't gone!

His first certification was Chief Mate, Limited for a Vessel of 60 Gross Tonnage or More, allowing him to hold a position as an officer on board the AML Louis-Jolliet for 7 years. He then obtained certification as Master, Vessels of 60 Gross Tonnage or More and became captain (in this category) of the AML Cavalier-Maxim in Montréal and the AML Grand-Fleuve in Tadoussac. Today, his duties alternate between those of officer and director of operations. The management courses he took at CEGEP help him in his administrative tasks.

SEASONAL WORK

"Our workload is heavy, but that doesn't mean we work seven days a week." As Daniel explains, employees can work for a few days and then have a few consecutive days off. The busiest time is from mid-June and to late August, but employees generally work from May to October. Daniel has the following advice for young people interested in pursuing a marine-sector career: "don't worry about your social network". According to him, many young people don't want to choose a maritime profession





for fear of losing their social network. Yes, our days are full, but it's not that complicated to keep our friends. The same is true for balancing work and family. A new father, he explains that the fact that his job is seasonal lets him take his holidays in the winter and enjoy a more relaxed family life. Clearly, this is harder in the summer, but he comes home every night and can take a few days off in a row, enabling him to balance his job duties and family responsibilities.

A TYPICAL DAY

What does Daniel like most about his job? The varying schedules and lack of routine. "What I really love is that every day is so different!" A summer day as a Captain begins around 10 a.m. and finishes around midnight. In the morning, he arrives on board ship and gets an update from the officers, restaurant staff, activities personnel and Chief Engineer. He makes sure everything is properly coordinated and that the ship is navigation-ready. From 11 a.m. to 11 p.m., the AML Louis-Jolliet leaves on cruises, with breaks at dockside between departures. Every boarding and disembarking involve manoeuvres requiring special attention. He must ensure that everything is in order for welcoming the passengers on board. Good teamwork is critical. His definition of the best possible work team? A team whose members' aptitudes, skills, knowledge and experience complement each other. "People look at us and think we're having fun, but they don't see all of the work behind the scenes and the duties each of us has to carry out to ensure that things run smoothly and safely."

GREAT MEMORY

Daniel told me about his most unforgettable memory: "the first time I took command as Captain", in 2008, on board the AML Louis-Jolliet. He had been very patient

over the years and was extremely proud to be at the helm. His career path—moving up through the ranks of one and the same company—was very unusual but very feasible, given his love of what he does.

ADVICE

Daniel's advice to people seeking a career in the marine sector is to be patient, work as much as possible, and get lots of experience. Book knowledge is very useful but "we learn a lot by doing". He also recommends listening closely to those who have more experience from being on the job for many years. They know how the trade works and can teach you a lot.

LOYALTY AND RELIABILITY

Pursuing his career in the same company all these years proves that Daniel loves his job and his employer. Although he didn't grow up in a maritime region, life led him to discover the marine industry, a unique, exciting world allowing him to achieve his goals, both professionally and on a human level. Not too bad for someone who started out just looking for a summer job.

By Camille Langlois
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