

The Conch_BeccaWilliams.mp3

Julie Kuchepatov [00:00:05] Hello. My name is Julie Kuchepatov and I'm the host of this podcast, The Conch. We are continuing our journey with this podcast, talking about seafood and the ocean. And most importantly, we're uplifting some of the incredible people working in the seafood sector, sharing their journeys, the challenges they face, and the triumphs they've achieved. Today, we are so excited to welcome one of our very own, Becca Williams. Becca is the program manager for the Gender Equality Dialogues here at SAGE. Welcome and thank you Becca for joining me today on The Conch. Let's do this.

Becca Williams [00:00:38] Thank you so much for having me, Julie. I'm so excited to be here.

Julie Kuchepatov [00:00:42] I'm really, really happy that you're here and agreed to do this and I just can't wait to learn a little bit more about you through this process. So tell us a little bit about your role at SAGE. What do you do here?

Becca Williams [00:00:54] Yeah, sure. Well, I am the program manager for SAGE's Gender Equality Dialogues called the GED. And I know we're going to talk a bit more in detail about what those are later, but sort of a summary is we're looking to create a dynamic, collaborative space for leaders within the seafood sector to come together so that together we can learn about gender equality and take a deeper dive into how that looks specifically within the seafood sector. So we're hoping to talk through kind of various barriers to gender equality and talk through some key challenges that folks might be experiencing and the companies that they are working for and to co-create some solutions and some commitments for these companies to take so that we can promote gender equality in the sector moving forward. When I think about doing this work, I think about why it's really important to talk about gender equality in the seafood sector. And I'm a bit of an outsider to the seafood sector. I spent a lot of my career working in the gender realm, and so a lot of what I have heard about the seafood industry, both from outsiders and from folks who are in the industry, is that it is a really male-dominated space. And I think for me, there's a yes and a no to that, which is important to the Gender Equality Dialogues in the program that I'm running is that women represent 50% of the workforce within the seafood sector. So in that way, no, it's not particularly a male-dominated sphere. But when we think about how women and genderqueer folks aren't necessarily present in more of the executive leadership roles and decision-making roles and perhaps their contributions aren't valued in the same way, then yes, it can be a very male-dominated space. So for me, it's really important for us to kind of get to how that happens, why that happens, and also what conditions within this industry need to exist so that everybody can thrive. Men, women, wherever folks lie on that gender spectrum so that everybody can move toward their dreams and reach their potential. And I think another important part of this that I usually catch myself when I say stuff like that is I usually add a little thing of like we should all feel really good about where we're at in work regardless of how we identify. And I do think that's important. I also think another perhaps more nuanced way of saying that is that we want to create a seafood sector where everyone, regardless of how they identify, feels like they are seen, like they are valued, and that they are heard and not held back given all of the identities that they hold so that they can bring their full selves to work every day or to wherever they're going every day within the seafood realm.

Julie Kuchepatov [00:04:11] Thanks for that, Becca. And I'm so happy to welcome you on, on the team, at SAGE and I am so excited to continue this conversation and this exploration and I think it's such a great message. You know, I try to say that too, that the

work that we're doing is for everyone. And imagine if everyone was able to work or live or thrive after their full potential has been unlocked. I mean, imagine the impact that we would all make as individuals, as a collective, as communities, as an industry, as companies, if literally everyone was unburdened of any of these challenges and these kind of intersectional challenges that people face. So, I really am excited to continue this work, and I'm so happy that we're launching the Gender Equality Dialogues. You mentioned you're a newbie to the seafood industry, which you are. You joined SAGE on March 1st and pretty much we launched right into this work. So tell me, what attracted you to this position?

Becca Williams [00:05:18] So much. I'll say first the SAGE logo was so bright and welcoming that I saw it on the position description and I was like, Oh, what is this? This is really neat. So much of what I have spent my time doing in my you know various jobs and careers that I've had has really centered on holding and building and learning from different communities as they navigate change and as they navigate new challenges, whether that's legislatively or new challenges and how we're approaching the same topic of gender equality or sustainability, for example. So when I saw this posting, I loved that it was sort of emblematic of a combination of all of the skills that I'd really worked on over the years and also all of the different parts of my previous work that I tended to really gravitate the most towards. So whether that's group facilitation or curriculum development to help folks engage with material that can be really tough to engage with, or really tough for us to think about something like gender equality or around different social justice themes. I was also really looking for an opportunity to be part of a really important movement and industry. And what I've learned in the last couple of weeks working for SAGE is that people in the seafood sector tend to really, genuinely love what they do, and that is really exciting for me to be entering into this. I was really drawn to SAGE kind of in the way that it's structured. You know, we're a small organization. We're new and to me, that means that there's a lot of room for creativity and for pivoting. If something's not working and for being nimble and these are all parts of work that I really love and enjoy the most. I was thinking earlier today that there's so many times throughout my job so far, whether that's been program planning or being at the Boston Seafood Show, where I stopped to think like-doing this stuff is how I would choose to spend my time, whether or not this was my job. I would normally want to be learning about gender equality and all the ways that it can impact how we view climate change and sustainability and I get to now do this for work. So I feel very grateful and very lucky to be able to do that.

Julie Kuchepatov [00:07:54] I stop every once in a while, too, and think, Oh my gosh, I can't believe this is actually working. Haha, so, I am very grateful and very fortunate and really, really excited. I mean, I have to say, I think I've said this before where a key goal of mine when I started SAGE was to be able to have a team again. And having a team really means a lot to me. So I'm excited that I was able to bring this forward because working alone is really hard, but working in a team is just an incredible, incredible experience. So you mentioned the Boston Seafood Show. And again, I mean, you started work on March 1st and then March 9th, we were in Boston. So not only did you meet a new team and a new supervisor, right? But you also met the Boston Seafood Show and people there, which is also really intense. So, what were some of the interesting observations you made there coming in with potentially little idea of what to expect? I did try to tell you what to expect, but it's impossible to tell you everything. So what were some of the observations you made about the show?

Becca Williams [00:09:01] I would say you did a good job kind of prefacing how the Seafood Expo is and what our experience might be, and at the same time, I think it really

is impossible to try and like quantify or categorize something as epic or intense as the Seafood Expo. I think a lot of people who maybe don't have an intimate connection to the seafood industry don't pay a lot of attention to how much goes into putting seafood on our plates and how complicated and complex of a supply chain it is, how many people are involved all over the world in this industry, in this movement. So, I was really surprised and almost overwhelmed at how massive the industry is. It didn't feel like the world. It felt more like a whole new universe. And I have since then tried to explain the Expo to friends and family and they've been like, Oh my God, I had no idea that seafood was like this. And I'm like, yeah, no it's amazing. And people are so welcoming. And it was just really incredible to see everybody come together around this common theme. One thing I really loved was that we did the Boston Bingo.

Julie Kuchepatov [00:10:23] Yes.

Becca Williams [00:10:24] Which for those of us who follow us on social media and who participated, know that it was a bingo game where folks could kind of look at the different bingo boxes and assess their experiences with gender equality or inequality and mark off those boxes as they experience those things while they're on the floor. So one box might be, you know, you were mansplained to where you were interrupted while you were explaining something. And if that happened to you, you could mark it off and hopefully get a bingo. I was so fascinated by how people seemed really excited about Boston Bingo, and a lot of people seemed really ready and willing to engage in that conversation, even if they were made very uncomfortable by it. They were you know, a lot of folks were like, I haven't really thought about this before or a lot of folks are like, Yes, thank you so much for giving me the opportunity to like talk about this and for being able to name it so well in this game. So that was really nice to see. The thing that has really stuck with me since the Boston Seafood Expo is my background is in a lot of gender-based violence prevention and response work and anti-racism work and a lot of topics that can be really kind of hard on your heart and soul. And there's a lot of burnout in those fields, and it was really refreshing to see how many people have entered into the seafood industry and they have dedicated their lives to it, like they've decided to stay and either switch jobs around or you know stay with the same company or organization that they've been working with. And that gives this sense of hope that I think, again from an outsider a lot of people don't associate hope with the seafood sector, but it was really amazing to see how many folks there seemed really invested in the long-term health and viability of whatever they were doing, whether that was production or machinery or from the NGO side. And to me, that made me really excited because I view gender equality and committing to gender equality as being something that can also contribute to that kind of long term investment and long term health of a movement.

Julie Kuchepatov [00:12:55] Those are great observations, and it really echoes the idea that people find themselves in this industry and then they tend to stay for the long term. And I had never really thought about how that can be hopeful. And, you know, we have a lot of people on the program here that say, you know, I will never leave this industry. I love that. And I myself have said that. I have myself tried to leave the industry. And haven't been successful. And I don't think I'm going to ever leave it, ever. And that's you know, you mentioned the Boston bingo. I think it's also worth noting that while we're recording this, today was the first day of the Global Seafood Expo that's now in Barcelona. And so we put a copy of the bingo on our website. And now it's Barcelona Bingo. And so we definitely will work to kind of have evolved that as a tool. You're right, People were definitely, like, thrilled about it and definitely engaging with it. And it was super interesting because it was unexpected for me. So I love those kind of unexpected moments when something really

resonates with someone. I still don't even know why. But it's fine. I think a lot of this work is about trying something and throwing something against the wall to see if it sticks. And if it does, then go for it. You mentioned your history and your work, and I'm curious more about seafood and how seafood figured in your life potentially as in your childhood. Do you have a favorite memory of eating fish from your childhood?

Becca Williams [00:14:36] I have so many, so I will try to focus in on one. This was really kind of sweet to think about. I grew up in Santa Barbara and you know, that's right on the ocean. And there's a big kind of fishing industry there. And my mom also grew up in Santa Barbara, and my dad actually grew up in Northern California, but hunted and fished all throughout his childhood and adulthood. So growing up, I spent a lot of time not fishing with my dad because he would go out really early in the morning to go fishing. But being there with my mom as we prepared the fish and ate the fish if he caught it, if he didn't catch anything we would normally hop down to the local fish market and pick something up because we were so excited at the thought of eating fish. So it was really ingrained in me from an early age you know good, healthy seafood eating habits. And when I was thinking about this, I had one memory pop up. We used to go house boating a lot when I was younger, which is a really fun vacation. And we used to go up in Lake Shasta, which is near where my dad is from, and he would set up fishing poles to catch catfish. And we would attach little bells to the poles. You know, at night we would all go to bed underneath the stars and on the roof of the houseboat. And we would hear the bells ring when a catfish-when we had hooked it. And it would be so exciting. I would hear like my brothers and their footsteps kind of pattering across the house. And by the time they'd reel it in, you know, a lot of us would be awake, standing by them, being so excited. And then we would like, fry up the catfish and eat it for breakfast the next morning. I love that.

Julie Kuchepatov [00:16:27] That's an incredible memory. I can just see, like as a mom, I would be losing my mind. I'm trying to relax on vacation and these bells and alarms are going off and kids are shrieking. But it's all good, it's all fun. It sounds, that's a really vivid, cool memory. House boating, like, I remember that from like the eighties. Do people still do that? I feel like that's a really old kind of old-school vacation thing, right?

Becca Williams [00:16:53] It is. And it's something that my parents have been doing since they were in college. And so it just kind of kept, we just kept it going and we haven't been in a long time. I think now, especially Lake Shasta it's where a lot of like college students from around Northern California and Oregon go to like party on houseboats, which is a very different vibe from family vacation vibe.

Julie Kuchepatov [00:17:17] Yeah.

Becca Williams [00:17:18] I haven't been in years. With the fires and everything the last couple of summers we haven't gone.

Julie Kuchepatov [00:17:24] Yeah, Yeah. That's an amazing memory. So I want to get back to your career path a little bit because, you know, you mentioned that you previously had worked a lot in gender-based violence or GBV for short and prevention and response. So could you share a little bit with us about your career path that took you to get where you are today.

Becca Williams [00:17:49] Yeah, I think like a lot of people that you've interviewed so far on the podcast, it seems to be a really kind of wayward or a roundabout way of getting to where we are. For me, it's been very layered and sort of a lot of concentric circles around

the common theme of gender. So I spent a lot of time in my twenties and early thirties really figuring out what I like about certain jobs and most importantly, what I did not like and trying to build a career based off of that. I studied abroad in college and that really helped me to kind of get a global perspective. And the first time I studied abroad in college was with an institute called the Institute for Central American Development Studies, and that was the first time that I really got a sense of sustainability and climate change. We worked with a women's group in Costa Rica who were harvesting clams to make and sell clam ceviche. And so we kind of came in to learn about them and what they do and to help them become more sustainable, whatever that meant for them. I know there's a lot of different definitions of that, and that sort of launched me down this path of gender and international development. So I spent some time in West Africa and then graduated college in the middle of a recession. And so I moved back home to Santa Barbara and started focusing a bit more on domestic issues, which happened to be for me around domestic violence. So I worked in a domestic violence shelter for a while as an advocate. And then sort of on a whim, I moved to Southeast Asia, where I did some work in Thailand around human trafficking prevention and response. And then from there, I moved into the realm of reproductive health and justice and back to the States. And then moved up to San Francisco and I worked at a Planned Parenthood up there. And then I decided I wanted to go back abroad. So I applied for a job and got it and worked managing a health and gender equity nonprofit organization that was based in rural Peru, where a lot of the women we were working with, we were training women from Indigenous communities to become community health workers and a lot of their lifestyle was very kind of rural and agrarian-based. So it kind of got me back to working in that realm of agriculture and sort of food-based industries. It was also there that I learned a little bit about colonization and white saviorism within the international development realm in terms of the roles that we play when we're going into a different country and explaining kind of like, this is best practice, this is what you need to do and how it can erode a lot of the work that had been being done in these communities for a long time. So from there, I went on to get my graduate degree in England in Gender and Development so I could learn a little bit more about gender and development, and also about the power dynamics at play when we talk about it and what that meant for me as a cis-gendered white woman doing this work. And then from there, I worked a bit on college campuses. That was about four and a half years of working around gender-based violence prevention and response in a really institutional setting. And like I said, kind of toward the beginning of the podcast, that can be an industry from which a lot of people burn out, and I burned out completely. It became really difficult to sustain myself and to be able to come into that work every day with that sense of freshness that could best advocate for those who have experienced violence. So I left those roles and then went in to do some work supporting social justice activists and also working in anti-racism education. So it's been a lot of different things in my time. And I think what has really helped me to kind of concretize like, oh, yes, SAGE is really what I want to do, was that I wanted to find my way back to that feeling I had when I was with that women's group in Costa Rica in 2007. And later on to that all of these years of experience doing different types of gender equity and equality work.

Julie Kuchepatov [00:22:50] That's a long and winding career path, right? I mean, like you said, it's noncircuitous to get here. You know, and I often think jokingly that the seafood sector is very much like Hotel California, right? You can check-in, but you can never leave. And I agree with you. I mean, I think that work that you just described that you kind of grew up in, in your career doing sounds like primed for burnout. And, you know, I think we also have that opportunity to burn out if we don't manage it. And so, to me again I said I really wanted to have a team and I really want to make sure that the team doesn't experience burnout from this work. And so that's why I'm happy to have you on here and

on the team and with Cameron, of course, and we can work through these things together because what good are we if we're burned out, right?

Becca Williams [00:23:45] Yeah. Yeah. And it took me many, many years to realize that and also to realize that I think to some extent I did it to myself. For a lot of the burnout that I experienced, it was about me not feeling comfortable to place boundaries around my work, which I think has a really gendered component because I feel like women are expected to-- there's that whole idea of like, you know, doing it backwards and in heels, which is very dated. But we do feel like we have to work more to get to that same point as our male or male-identified colleagues, and that has a lot of other intersections as well. But I think being able to finally put some boundaries around how I can contribute to a job and what that job is going to contribute to my life was a really important thing for me in understanding burnout.

Julie Kuchepatov [00:24:39] Yeah, that's well said, thank you. So I'm curious, you know, you kind of described a lot of the work that you did to get to this place and how you learned about putting boundaries up and all that in order to avoid burnout and a good question here is to ask, like, who's advocating for the advocates? So something like that for me is important to ask us, right? Like, who's advocating for us, right? So we need to kind of keep that question in the front of our mind to make sure that we do have the resources that we need. So I'm curious, how is the work you're doing now at SAGE, similar or different to the work you did before? And, you know, I realized there's a lot of similarities in the work you did before, but a lot of also, things that were specific to reproductive justice, while I understand that they are all interconnected, but you know what I mean? It's like you were focusing on a few different things throughout your career. So how is this similar or different?

Becca Williams [00:25:41] I think, first off, I am so new to the uniqueness of the seafood industry and sometimes that does feel really overwhelming, but it's a really good type of overwhelm. After building up a career for so long around principles that I felt really comfortable talking about it's kind of nice to be in a space where I'm like, Ooh, I don't really know, like how to talk about this industry. I feel like I'm a freshman in a really humbling and vulnerable way, so bare with me. This industry is really unique and some of the similarities are that it's also because of the society and culture in which we live is still shaped by a lot of the same forces that have shaped my other work. And these are kind of broader systems that can be really hard to understand because we can't necessarily see them. But, you know, I'm talking about things like patriarchy and white supremacy and capitalism and the ways in which that impacts our day-to-day and the community around this work. And I think because of those broader systems, it can take a long time to make change. I've heard this a lot, and it's really true. We're trying to, like, steer a really big boat into you know, we're in the same body of water, but perhaps going into a different direction. And that takes a lot of time. It's really important to build good relationships. That, to me, is like the critical piece of so much of what SAGE is doing and so much of what the GED is and so much of really any type of work around the social justice issue. You have to move at the speed of trust. You can't rush things. You know, I, I might know a lot about one specific thing, but I'm new to this realm of gender within the seafood sector, so I need to slow down to the extent that I can, and be intentional about getting to know other people's experiences and how they've navigated their jobs and their lives in this way. The other thing that is really similar is that, you know, when I was working in universities and in general, there's this understanding that gender-based violence is something that we want to figure out a way to get rid of. We all want to live in a world that is free from violence. And there is so many different, equally valid ways to get there. You know, there are folks that

approach that work from a compliance perspective, folks that approached it from a legislative perspective. People that did the work that I did, which was providing and leading programs that worked directly with individuals and communities that had been impacted by violence. There's the nonprofits, there's law enforcement, there's racial and gender justice organizations. And that feels really similar to all the ways so far that I've seen the seafood sector navigate issues of sustainability and climate change. I had been thinking a lot about my work in anti-racism and how that can be applicable to the work that SAGE is doing. And it can be kind of, it's a really complex and nuanced topic, and I feel like everything that we talk about is and I can imagine there's some listeners rolling their eyes like another, more nuance. But yet, I think there's something really important about being really specific when we're talking about gender equality. And Julie, you and I have talked about this a lot lately, is what can happen if we talk about needing to promote more women into executive leadership roles, for example, is that if we're not really specific about that, we will default then to promoting a lot of white women into these roles and we will be leaving out you know, women of color, genderqueer folks, a lot of folks from different marginalized or impacted communities who were also looking to uplift and amplify. So for me, it's really important that we are specific about that, about difference types of power that we hold on to as cis-gendered white women who are in a nonprofit setting in this type of sector that we can understand how we need to really take the time to address to how we're invested in the same systems that are keeping a lot of other people down. So it comes up you know, when we think about this idea of like, you know, women make \$0.80 to every man's dollar, if we were to really kind of dissect that it should be white women make \$0.80 to the dollar. Black women make \$0.63 to the dollar. Women from the latinx community make I think \$0.55 to the dollar. So it's really being specific about whose voices we're trying to center in this work. And that doesn't necessarily mean adding on a sentence about intersectionality to the end of everything that we say of like, yes, these things impact women and they impact women of color, trans folks, genderqueer folks even more. That is sort of additive intersectionality that doesn't necessarily consider why it is that for a long time the voices of white women, the voices of definitely cis-gendered white men have been at the center for so long. And if we're trying to put voices of other people in the center, that means that we have to get out of the center. And what does that mean for us? And how uncomfortable that can be and how necessary it is for us to do that. It's a really long answer. And I'm happy to talk more about it because it can be really difficult to be really specific about that kind of thing.

Julie Kuchepatov [00:32:18] Yeah, no. I think that answer is fantastic. And I agree with you. I mean. That's exactly the question is how do we de-center our voices and center those who are the most, historically excluded or marginalized, however term you're going to use. That's why I'm happy to have you here, because I actually don't know the answer to these questions. And so for me, you know, this is also a journey. I mean, I'm centering myself here right? I'm doing it right now. So for me, this is a journey. So I'm happy that we're all here we're ready to work through these issues and really support others, not only uplifting others, but also support others in the same journey that we're taking as well, right?

Becca Williams [00:33:02] Yeah. And I think it is interesting because for me to claim any type of expertise in this area is just me kind of bowing to these broader structures that tell me that I'm only valid if I can be an expert in something which kind of removes the sense of Black and Brown communities have been talking about this for such a long time. And in the last couple of years a lot of white-identified, white assimilated folks have just started to pay attention and then claim it as our own. So I do want to be mindful of that, I think, in this work to the centering and decentering like I don't, I don't necessarily have an answer for

that, except for something that's been helpful for me is thinking about earned versus unearned privileges. In terms of my experience and the jobs that I've had and the emotions that I've gotten or the kind of validation that I've received. There's a certain element where, yes, I've definitely worked hard for that. And also because of how I present in this world that really values whiteness, there's also an element of a lot of this has happened because of that identity that I hold.

Julie Kuchepatov [00:34:31] Yeah, that's a great answer. So let's talk a little bit more, kind of continue this thread of conversation and dive in a little bit deeper into the Gender Equality Dialogues, which you gave a good kind of high-level overview at the beginning of the podcast. Tell us a little bit more in detail about what potential participants can expect in these dialogues.

Becca Williams [00:34:57] So this is still very much and kind of moving through the planning phase, but we are planning to have 12 monthly virtual sessions which are going to comprise these dialogues. In which leaders from the corporate seafood sector are going to come together and we're going to share information about gender equality, like I mentioned before, also how it specifically relates to the seafood sector. We're going to align on some of these issues, build capacity around them. Those are really the first two phases is kind of the information sharing and learning. And then as part of the dialogs, we move into a third phase where each of the companies that are participating will develop and implement and monitor different commitments to gender equality within their companies themselves. The thing that's really exciting about this is that it's a new program, so the companies that are participating in this cohort are going to be part of the inaugural cohort. And so they'll also have access to some additional technical assistance or support from myself in terms of some one-on-one sessions where I can help them develop those commitments. I can provide some additional training for them or their staff around some of these issues and make sure that I'm fully understanding and grasping the kind of specificity of the companies that they are working in. And then we're really excited about developing and building out these commitments, it's going to be a really important part of what we do and being able to monitor our progress with those gender equality commitments so that we can move toward gender equality in the sector.

Julie Kuchepatov [00:36:53] That's a great deeper dive into what the gender equality dialogues are and I think, again, you know, we've been working on this program for it's got to be almost two years now and we were working together with the organization Women in Seafood based in France, which is no longer an organization. They dissolved at the end of last year. So I'm really excited that you've come on with your strong background and are able to kind of lead us into a new, exciting program. I'm really, really excited for it and I encourage everyone who has the ability to participate in such a program that works potentially in human resources at a seafood company and is an executive-level leader in a company to reach out to us to consider joining the dialogues. And we'll give more information in the show notes about that. So, you know, again, the GED, the Gender Equality Dialogues is really trying to come to align on some of the issues and the challenges and the inequities that we see in the sector and then in the industry. And I realize that you're, you know, again, you know, recognizing that you're a newbie to the sector, what do you think are two or three aspects of the industry and the culture that could contribute to inequality? And what are some of the things that the industry can do to lessen these inequalities?

Becca Williams [00:38:12] This is such a good question, Julie, culture is such a big word. Generally, when I think about the culture of something, whether that's like an institution or

like a realm or a sector, I think about what happens, how we think about how that system was built, and what the roots of that system are. And I know I'm talking about some like really broad sky cloud level things, but a good example of that, for me, is looking at a system around financial literacy and investing being a system that was built by white men for white men. When we think about the design of Wall Street, and that is definitely part of the reason why there is such a gap between how men invest and what they invest their money in, and the little amount of investing that women do. And that's just a very kind of binary look at that. It's really significant for people in terms of the impact of how it is when you either see yourself or you don't see yourself reflected in decision-making roles in the industry or in the industry at all. And that has a lot to do with whose contributions we value. And how we value those contributions. I'm learning about the seafood sector and I'm seeing that, like I said before, a lot of the same forces are shaping the industry that have shaped a lot of other industries before. On the flip side of that, I think we also need to pay attention to how origin stories of the industry are told and whose stories and voices get erased in that process. An example of that that I have as we talk about gender-based violence, we tend to think of it as a movement that started in the seventies, in like the Second-wave feminist movement that centered a lot on white feminism and white womanhood, when in actuality that movement was started by black women and black trans women in the 1800s, and before that Indigenous women in, you know, time and memorial who were working collectively to create systems and communities of safety. So, how we tell these stories, and whose stories we tell, it's really important and that to me is why our mission at SAGE of uplifting and amplifying diverse voices in this sector is so crucial.

Julie Kuchepatov [00:40:51] Absolutely. That is an incredible message. And again, you know, you have so much to share. And I think what you're saying is absolutely 100% critical. And I can't be thankful enough for having you come on here and share this with us. So, I want to end our conversation with a couple of questions. So one is now this podcast is to inspire people working in or thinking about starting a career in the seafood sector. So what advice would you give to someone and again, recognizing that you are very new, but what advice would you give to people already in the business or thinking about starting a career in this exciting sector?

Becca Williams [00:41:32] I remember listening to your interview with Julie Qiu, the oyster sommelier and many, many, many other things, and she said in that interview a line that has stuck with me for a long time since I heard that she said, "This industry is ripe for disruption." And I think that that is really exciting to me. It's also incredible to know that there are so many changemakers in this industry. And like we talked about before, there's so much space created for hope and there's so much room to make all of these changes and to participate in a movement that is really dynamic, that is diverse and that is going in this direction that I think is, it's challenging and also going to make some long-lasting change.

Julie Kuchepatov [00:42:33] I love that, this industry is totally ripe for disruption, so hopefully, there'll be more opportunities for that and I'd love to see more of it, honestly. So let's, let's do this, folks. This is my call to action. This is our call to action. So SAGE is about uplifting and amplifying diverse voices, as you mentioned. You know, we've talked about several times throughout the course of this conversation and this podcast is one of the ways that we are doing this. And I'd love to give you the opportunity to uplift someone. So who would you like to uplift and why?

Becca Williams [00:43:03] I know this is kind of a SAGE love fest, but I would love to uplift Cameron Moore. Our program assistant, they do a lot of the work behind the scenes in terms of keeping our organization and operations running really smoothly. Cameron also reminds me and others to stay curious and open-minded. They are one of the most highly organized people I've met and provide a lot of perspective. The perspective that Cameron provides often challenges me to think more deeply about our work and its impact. So, I'm really grateful for Cameron, and I look forward to seeing how they can continue to contribute to SAGE and to the industry as a whole.

Julie Kuchepatov [00:43:53] That's a great shout out. 100%. You can't see me. I'm clapping my hands and snapping my fingers because I also love it. Cameron has contributed so much, also in the very, you know, small amount of time they've been here, a little bit more than you, but definitely you both are such great additions to the team and together I think we are on the course to be disruptive in the best way possible and I absolutely 100% support that shout out and I give that thank you to Cameron for everything. And I also want to give a special shout out to Cameron, who, like you said, is doing a lot behind the scenes. Especially in regards to The Bloom, which is the networking group that we just launched in April, and that is for networking community. We gather once every month on the third Wednesday of the month, at noon, Pacific time. Again, it's a community for women and genderqueer people to come together and find that brave space to talk about challenges, but really focus on solutions and learn from each other. So thank you, Cameron, for helping us behind the scenes on that. And so with that, Becca, we've come to our end of our conversation, and I just want to say thank you so much for sharing about yourself and letting us get to know you a little bit better. I'm again, really fortunate to have found you and you took the chance on this industry and on SAGE, and I can't thank you enough for coming on the show and being part of the team.

Becca Williams [00:45:26] Thank you so much. It's been such an honor to be here.

Julie Kuchepatov [00:45:30] Thank you for tuning in to The Conch podcast. It would be amazing if you could take just 2 seconds to leave a review and share this podcast with your ocean-loving friends. Thank you.

Crystal Sanders-Alvarado [00:45:43] The Conch podcast is a program of Seafood and Gender Equality, or SAGE. Audio production, engineering, editing, mixing, and sound design by Crystal Sanders-Alvarado for Seaworthy. The theme song "Dilation" is written and performed by Satan's Pilgrims. Funding for The Conch podcast is generously provided by the David and Lucile Packard Foundation and Builders Initiative.