

Get to Know Karen Alvord of Roseville

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Roseville resident Karen Alvord became a mom of four when she was just 24 years old. Her sister was going through a tough time, and Alvord and her husband didn't think twice before adopting the children to ensure they had a safe, loving place to call home. "We were very young and naive," she says with a laugh. "It worked to our advantage." Now the mother of seven children—both adoptive and biological—and a grandmother of eight, Alvord wouldn't have it any other way. And although she'd always been passionate about child welfare, the experience of adopting children gave her special insight into the importance of ensuring that all children have a stable, permanent home from which to flourish.

Alvord is now the CEO of Lilliput Families, a nonprofit that provides foster care, adoption and kinship services throughout Northern California. She's been with the organization for over 27 years—and in her current role for 11—and has seen first-hand how important early intervention can be in a child's life. "I love hearing stories of success," she enthuses. "It's really cool to see kids from traumatic places turn around and thrive." She's also a past board member and president of the California Alliance of Child and Family Services and has won numerous awards for her work over the years. Yet for Alvord, the biggest reward comes in making her community a better place to live. "It's about prevention," she explains. "Experiences in childhood set the course for adulthood. If we keep kids safe [while they're young], when they leave their teenage years, they have a strong base from which to [flourish]."

Q&A

What advice would you give to your younger self?

There will always be more ideas than time; enjoy the moment.

What's your biggest pet peeve?

Hating on millennials. I love the way young people view the world and social issues, and believe their generation will change the world (for the better).

Are you high or low maintenance?

I want to say low, but if you witnessed my Starbucks orders it would suggest otherwise.

What are you most proud of?

My kids.

Favorites

Escape

The ocean

Guilty pleasure

Lattes

Meal in town

Burgers at The Monk's Cellar; breakfast at Four Sisters Café

Local landmark

Tower Theater

Musician/band

John Legend

Place to buy a gift, locally

Pairings

Saying

"Be a rainbow in someone else's cloud."—Maya Angelou

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