



# ForeverGreen

## ANNUAL AWARDS LUNCHEON

APRIL 24, 2023 | EMBASSY SUITES | GREENVILLE, SC



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# AGENDA

## Welcome

Carol Clarke, *Host of Luncheon*  
Andrea Cooper, *Upstate Forever Executive Director*  
Lisa Hallo, *Deputy Director*

## Invocation

Richard Carr, *Assistant Director of Land Conservation*

## Recognition of Special Guests & Sponsors

Carol Clarke

## Lunch

## 25th Anniversary Celebration

Mark Taylor, *Board of Directors Charter Member*  
Wes Cooler, *Advisory Board Member*

## Presentation of 2023 awards

TOMMY WYCHE LAND CONSERVATION CHAMPION  
R. Glenn Hilliard

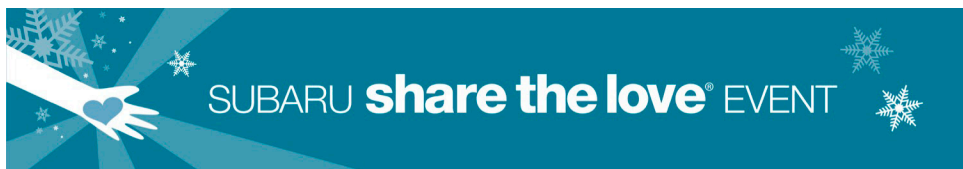
CLEAN WATER CHAMPION  
Ben Duncan, South Carolina Chief Resilience Officer

PUBLIC SERVANT OF THE YEAR  
The Honorable Chandra E. Dillard

BRAD WYCHE EXTRAORDINARY ACHIEVEMENT AWARD  
Dr. Joab M. Lesesne

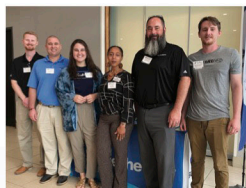
## Final Remarks

Andrea Cooper, *Executive Director*



## Family-Owned & Operated: Serving the Upstate for over 50 years!

Fairway Subaru has donated over \$300,000 to local and national charities during the Subaru Share the Love Event thanks to YOU! For every sold or leased Subaru vehicle, Upstate Forever will receive a portion of those sales. This donation will assist in keeping Greenville green, the waterways clean, and the land pristine. Support a great cause in our community this holiday season at Fairway Subaru!



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## Welcome to the 2023 ForeverGreen Luncheon!

We're here to honor some very special individuals — the 2023 ForeverGreen awardees — for their contributions to conservation and sustainable growth in the Upstate. These exceptional awardees have gone above and beyond to protect and champion some of our region's special historic and natural places.

We're also here to celebrate Upstate Forever's 25th anniversary! That's two and a half decades filled with conservation, advocacy, and programmatic achievements.

We've had a hand in so many efforts that defend and improve quality of life in the Upstate — protecting more than 30,000 acres of critical land, safeguarding drinking water, promoting clean energy, empowering citizen advocates, preserving some of the world's rarest plants, and expanding acreage for public recreation. These are just a few — you can read more about our accomplishments in this program and in the special 2023 Spring/Summer edition of our newsletter, the *Upstate Advocate*.

However, none of our accomplishments would have been possible without you — our members, funders, partners, and community advocates. You are the heart and soul of Upstate Forever.

I'd especially like to recognize the generous sponsors of this year's luncheon, listed in this program. These sponsors know how important it is for everyone in our region to have access to clean water, recreation, and green space.

Once again, thank you for your support. You are the reason we can do what we do, and we are so grateful. Here's to the Upstate and to a brighter, greener future!



ANDREA COOPER,  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



# UF STAFF

Sherry Barrett  
*Land Policy Director*

Joy Dickerson  
*Financial Director*

Scott Park  
*Glenn Hilliard Director  
of Land Conservation*

Ericka Berg  
*Land Stewardship Coordinator*

Grace Flaspoebler  
*Asst. Director of Development  
& Community Relations*

Steely Russell  
*Land Protection Coordinator*

Cathy Bester  
*Program & Event Coordinator*

Lisa Scott Hallo  
*Deputy Director*

Dorothy Signal  
*Land Trust Associate*

Sally Boman  
*Communications Director*

Erika Hollis  
*Clean Water Director*

Chris Starker  
*Land Conservation Manager*

Megan Burton  
*Communications Manager*

Katie Hottel  
*Clean Water & GIS Manager*

Elizabeth Swails  
*Communications Coordinator*

Richard Carr  
*Asst. Director of  
Land Conservation*

Aldon Knight  
*Director of Development &  
Community Relations*

Ava Thacker  
*Gifts Processing &  
Database Coordinator*

Megan Chase-Muller  
*State Policy Director*

Allie Martinsen  
*Land Policy Manager*

Lauren Ulich  
*Stewardship & Land  
Restoration Manager*

Michael Coleman  
*Energy Advocate*

Leigh McGill  
*Assistant Financial Manager*

Rebecca Wade  
*Clean Water Specialist*

Andrea Cooper  
*Executive Director*

Alison Miller  
*Information Systems Manager*

Brad Wyche  
*Founder & Senior Advisor*

## Upstate Forever Offices:

**Greenville:** 507 Pettigru Street, Greenville, SC 29601 | (864) 250-0500

**Spartanburg:** 201 E. Broad Street, Suite 1C, Spartanburg, SC 29306 | (864) 327-0090



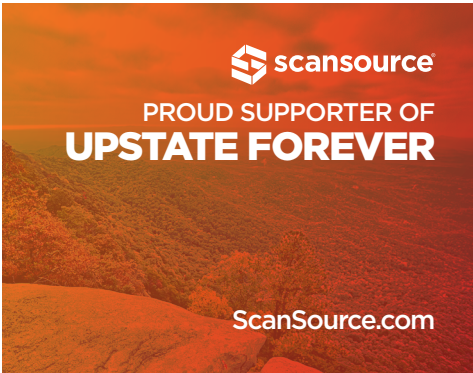
Board of Directors

John Keith, <i>Chair</i>	Mike Baur	Sam Erwin	Erwin Maddrey
Allen Jacoby, <i>Vice Chair</i>	John Bauknight	Mary Haque	Chris Richardson
Tom Kester, <i>Treasurer</i>	Louise Connell	Margaret Harrison	Jeff Tillerson
	Evan Cramer	Glenn Hilliard	Mark Wesson

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Dick Carr	Brice Hipp	Scott Montgomery	David Shi
Wes Cooler	Wes Hulsey	Betty Montgomery	Gus Speth
Allen Creighton	John Knott	Nell Newman	Brad Wyche
Dianne Culbertson	John Lane	Mike Nicklas	Kris Yon
Mike Daniel			

For more information about Upstate Forever's board & staff, visit [upstateforever.org](http://upstateforever.org)





## R. Glenn Hilliard

### TOMMY WYCHE LAND CONSERVATION CHAMPION

Glenn Hilliard is being honored for his tireless advocacy for trails, green spaces, and natural places in the Upstate, for his determined quest for excellence in conservation outcomes, and for his leadership in the Saluda Grade Trail initiative.

In 1974, Mr. Hilliard founded the Foothills Trail Conference (now the Foothills Trail Conservancy) and worked tirelessly to negotiate, route and develop the now 77-mile — 110 miles including spur trails — Foothills Trail through Upstate South Carolina and Western North Carolina. Thousands of hikers and backpackers now travel the Foothills Trail each year, enjoying the rich and diverse vistas offered. *Backpacker Magazine* has twice named it one of the best 50+ mile trails in the country.

Recently, Mr. Hilliard has been instrumental in efforts to transform the inactive Saluda Grade rail line into a vibrant, 31-mile multi-use trail corridor connecting Upstate South Carolina and Western North Carolina. Under his leadership, the Saluda Grade Trail Conservancy and coalition of nonprofit partners have reached an agreement with Norfolk Southern to sell the 31-mile rail line for use as a recreational trail.

*Named after visionary conservationist Tommy Wyche, this award recognizes a business, organization, or individual who has made a significant contribution to the protection of farmlands, forest lands, natural areas, and other special places in the Upstate.*





## Benjamin I. Duncan, II

### CLEAN WATER CHAMPION

Ben Duncan, South Carolina Chief Resilience Officer, is being honored for his determined advocacy at the state level for enhanced water quality and smart approaches to resource protection.

In 2021, Governor Henry McMaster appointed Mr. Duncan as South Carolina's first-ever Chief Resilience Officer. Ben previously served as Program Management Director with South Carolina Disaster Recovery Office. He also served as Deputy Program Management Director and Director of Support for the Disaster Recovery Office.

Mr. Duncan and his team at the South Carolina Office of Resilience have been tasked with preparing the state for extreme weather events from the coast to the piedmont. Through the development and implementation of a Strategic Statewide Resilience and Risk Reduction Plan, the Office is working to identify major flood risks, potential impacts, and strategies for local governments to enact in order to build more resilient communities. South Carolina is one of only four states in the country with a dedicated state resilience office.

In total, Ben's career in public service spans 35 years.

*The Clean Water Champion Award recognizes a business, organization, governmental entity, or individual who has made a significant contribution to water quality improvement or water resources management in the Upstate.*



# The Honorable Chandra E. Dillard

## PUBLIC SERVANT OF THE YEAR

Chandra Dillard is being recognized for her consistent voice in support of important land and water protection issues, sustainable community development, and affordable housing in the Upstate and statewide.

Representative Chandra Dillard began her public service in 1999 as a member of Greenville City Council representing District 3, making her the first woman to serve the District. After a distinguished service record of nine years on City Council, Councilman Dillard ran for and was elected to the South Carolina House of Representatives in 2008 representing State House District 23. In the House, she serves on the House Ways and Means Committee and was the first female to hold the Chairman position on the Environmental Subcommittee of the Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee and Labor, Commerce and Industry Committee.

Chandra is a hands-on advocate for her constituents who believes in the spirit of collaboration to solve community and state challenges. Over the course of her 24-year career in public service, she has helped to secure more than \$100 million to address human development, community development, conservation, and infrastructure needs.

*The Public Servant of the Year Award recognizes an individual who holds elected or appointed office (local, state or federal) or works for a governmental agency (local, state or federal) in the Upstate and has made significant contributions in one or more of the following fields: land conservation, clean air, clean water, and sustainable development.*



## Dr. Joab M. Lesesne

### BRAD WYCHE EXTRAORDINARY ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Dr. Joab “Joe” M. Lesesne is being honored for a lifetime of dedicated service to the natural world; for his conservation efforts in the Upstate and beyond; for his dedicated service to Upstate Forever as an advocate, board member and board chair; and for his leadership throughout the state as a voice for common-sense approaches to land and water conservation.

Joe Lesesne graduated from Erskine College and earned his master’s degree and Ph.D. from the University of South Carolina. He served as president of Wofford College for 28 years (1972-2000). During his tenure, the campus doubled in size, the number of majors increased from 15 to 23, and the college’s endowment grew from \$3.5 million to over \$100 million.

Dr. Lesesne has served as chairman of the boards of the Spartanburg Area Chamber of Commerce, the Spartanburg County Foundation, and the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources. His many honors include the Neville Holcombe Distinguished Citizenship Award, the Spartanburg Area Chamber of Commerce (1992); the Daniel Morgan Award, United Way of the Piedmont (1997); the Sergeant William Jasper Award, South Carolina State Chamber of Commerce (1995); and the Order of the Palmetto (2000). He is also a brigadier general and brigade commander of the South Carolina Army National Guard, now holding the rank of major general, retired.

*Named in honor of Upstate Forever Founder Brad Wyche, this award recognizes an exceptional individual whose achievements over a number of decades have made significant, sustained impacts on conservation efforts in Upstate South Carolina.*



## HOST OF LUNCHEON

# Carol Clarke

Carol is a native of Michigan's Upper Peninsula, and got her degree in Mass Communications from Northern Michigan University at Marquette. She also spent part of her senior year at Richmond College in England, studying British Mass Media.

Carol worked as an anchor/reporter in Marquette, Michigan and Rochester, New York. A brush with frostbite in Rochester made her realize living in a warmer climate might suit her better after all, and she happily accepted an anchor job at WYFF News 4 in 1985.

Carol has won a number of awards, including a 2009 Peabody award for her work on "Chronicle: Paul's Gift." She's also won several Emmys, three National Headliner Awards, and the Champion-Tuck Economics Prize for Business Reporting for a series she did on the textile industry in Taiwan and Hong Kong. She's been inducted into the NATAS Silver Circle. In 2007, the South Carolina Broadcaster's Association awarded her one of its highest honors, the Masters Award. Carol shares the news desk with her co-anchor Nigel Robertson each weeknight and continues to report on health and medical issues through her popular feature "4 Your Health."



SPEAKER

## Mark Taylor

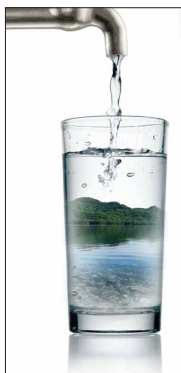
A registered professional geologist, Mark is the retired CEO of Synterra, an environmental consulting firm in Greenville. He holds a bachelor's degree in geology from Harvard University and a master's degree in geology from the University of Michigan.

Mark was among the first members of Upstate Forever's Board of Directors in 1998, and continued to serve on UF's Board, including in the Chair role in 2017-2018.

Mr. Taylor's decades-long commitment to conservation led him to permanently protect the 26-acre property he owns in Pickens County through a conservation easement in 2022. The protection of the Eastatoe Headwaters tract will make a significant contribution to clean water, agriculture, wildlife habitat, and natural beauty in this critical region of the Upstate.



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SPEAKER

## Wes Cooler

Wes Cooler grew up in the mountains of Pickens County. After a 23-year career as an Army officer, he returned to live again in northern Pickens County.

Since his return, he has served for 4 years on the Pickens County Planning Commission where he was instrumental in writing the County's Development Standards Ordinance and the County's first Comprehensive Plan. He represented the SC Wildlife Federation on Duke Energy's Keowee-Toxaway Relicensing Stakeholders Team, where he helped craft significant conservation outcomes from that process and he currently represents Naturaland Trust on Duke Energy's Bad Creek Relicensing Stakeholders Team.

Wes served as Land Trust Chair while on the board of Upstate Forever. Through his continuing service on the board of Naturaland Trust and the Upstate Forever Advisory Board, he has remained active with Upstate Forever and land conservation efforts in the Upstate.



## PREVIOUS AWARD RECIPIENTS

### 2022

TOMMY WYCHE LAND CONSERVATION CHAMPION Hoyt Grant

CLEAN WATER CHAMPION The Tyger River Foundation

PUBLIC SERVANT OF THE YEAR Ranger Tim Lee

MARJORIE E. SCHMIDT STEWARDSHIP AWARD Mable Owens Clarke

### 2021

MARJORIE E. SCHMIDT STEWARDSHIP AWARD Judy Cromwell

TOMMY WYCHE LAND CONSERVATION CHAMPION Dr. Drew Lanham

CLEAN WATER CHAMPION The Southern Environmental Law Center

LAND PLANNING & POLICY CHAMPION Ginny Stroud

ENVIRONMENTAL EQUITY & JUSTICE AWARD Sustaining Way

BRAD WYCHE EXTRAORDINARY ACHIEVEMENT AWARD Dr. David Hargett

### 2020

*At the 2020 event, the Extraordinary Achievement award was named in honor of UF Founder Brad Wyche for his tremendous dedication to conservation and sustainability in the Upstate.*

MARJORIE E. SCHMIDT STEWARDSHIP AWARD Tom Kester

TOMMY WYCHE LAND CONSERVATION CHAMPION Norman Pulliam

PUBLIC SERVANT OF THE YEAR Rep. Bill Sandifer

### 2019

MARJORIE E. SCHMIDT STEWARDSHIP AWARD Dick Carr

TOMMY WYCHE LAND CONSERVATION CHAMPION Doug Harper

CLEAN WATER CHAMPION Nikki Grumbine

LAND PLANNING & POLICY CHAMPION The Northside Initiative

PUBLIC SERVANT OF THE YEAR Phil Gaines

EXTRAORDINARY ACHIEVEMENT AWARD Dennis Chastain

### 2018

TOMMY WYCHE LAND CONSERVATION CHAMPION

Spartanburg School District 6: Farm to School Initiative

CLEAN WATER CHAMPION Catherine Heigel

LAND PLANNING & POLICY CHAMPION Dean Hybl

PUBLIC SERVANT OF THE YEAR Representative Gary Clary

VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR Luther Lyle

INNOVATION IN SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS Swamp Rabbit Cafe and Grocery



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**2017**

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES CHAMPION Homes of Hope

CLEAN WATER CHAMPION ReWa (for Project Rx)

CLEAR SKIES CHAMPION Trees Greenville

THREE R'S CHAMPION (REUSE, REDUCTION, RECYCLING)

Gina McClellan the Pickens County "Traveling Trash Bash"

PUBLIC SERVANT OF THE YEAR Larry Martin

VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR Neil Batavia

**2016**

TOMMY WYCHE LAND CONSERVATION CHAMPION Paris Mountain State Park Friends

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES CHAMPION Taylors Town Square

CLEAN WATER CHAMPION Dr. Gene Eidsen

CLEAR SKIES CHAMPION Bruce Wood

THREE R'S CHAMPION Clemson University Recycling Services

PUBLIC SERVANT OF THE YEAR Matt Schell

VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR Terry Schlager

**2015**

TOMMY WYCHE LAND CONSERVATION CHAMPION Ben Geer Keys

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES CHAMPION Rocky River Conservancy & Anderson University

CLEAN WATER CHAMPION Dr. Jack Turner

CLEAR SKIES CHAMPION Dan Powell

THREE R'S CHAMPION Joseph McMillin

PUBLIC SERVANT OF THE YEAR Cathy Reas Foster

VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR Cary Hall

**2014**

TOMMY WYCHE LAND CONSERVATION CHAMPION John Garton & Ben Sill

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES CHAMPION Eleanor Dunlap

CLEAN WATER CHAMPION Edward Enggasser

CLEAR SKIES CHAMPION WSPA-TV

THREE R'S CHAMPION Spartanburg County, Spartanburg Men's Gardening Club

and the Spartanburg Master Gardeners

PUBLIC SERVANT OF THE YEAR Greg Lucas

VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR Jim Buschur



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## PREVIOUS AWARD RECIPIENTS (Continued)

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### 2013

TOMMY WYCHE LAND CONSERVATION CHAMPION Shea Airey  
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES CHAMPION Greenville Health System  
CLEAN WATER CHAMPION John Lane  
CLEAR SKIES CHAMPION Furman Community Conservation Corps  
PUBLIC SERVANT OF THE YEAR Paul Agnew  
VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR Jon Schultz

### 2012

TOMMY WYCHE LAND CONSERVATION CHAMPION Bettina George  
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES CHAMPION City of Spartanburg  
CLEAN WATER CHAMPION Partners for Trout  
CLEAR SKIES CHAMPION City of Greenville  
PUBLIC SERVANT OF THE YEAR John Frampton  
VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR Jim Gossett

### 2011

*In 2011, the land conservation award was named in honor of Tommy Wyche for his extraordinary leadership in protecting more than 100,000 acres of the South Carolina mountains.*

TOMMY WYCHE LAND CONSERVATION CHAMPION Naturaland Trust  
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES CHAMPION Dr. Frank Powell  
CLEAN WATER CHAMPION Dr. Dave Hargett  
CLEAR SKIES CHAMPION Pickens County  
PUBLIC SERVANT OF THE YEAR Rick Danner  
EXTRAORDINARY LEADERSHIP AWARD Tommy Wyche  
VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR Rick Huffman

### 2010

LAND CONSERVATION CHAMPION Dianne Culbertson  
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES CHAMPION Mary Black Foundation  
CLEAN WATER CHAMPION Dr. Larry Dyck  
CLEAR SKIES CHAMPION City of Clemson  
PUBLIC SERVANT OF THE YEAR Mike Pitts  
EXTRAORDINARY LEADERSHIP AWARD Dr. David Shi  
VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR Jennifer Kouyoumjian

### 2008

LAND CONSERVATION CHAMPION Alice and Fred Stanback  
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES CHAMPION Todd Usher  
CLEAN WATER CHAMPION Save Our Saluda  
PUBLIC SERVANT OF THE YEAR Mike Caston  
VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR Donna and Lou Astle

## PREVIOUS AWARD RECIPIENTS *(Continued)*

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### 2007

LAND CONSERVATION CHAMPION Concerned Citizens for Conservation  
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES CHAMPION Johnson Development Associates  
CLEAN WATER CHAMPION Bill Brown  
PUBLIC SERVANT OF THE YEAR Gene Smith  
EXTRAORDINARY LEADERSHIP AWARD Dr. Billy Campbell  
VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR Frank Holleman

### 2005

LAND CONSERVATION CHAMPION Madelon Wallace  
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES CHAMPION Milliken & Company  
PUBLIC SERVANT OF THE YEAR Burnie Maybank  
EXTRAORDINARY LEADERSHIP AWARD Carlton Owen  
VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR Dan Roberts

### 2004

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES CHAMPION Jeff Randolph  
PUBLIC SERVANT OF THE YEAR Graham Rich  
VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR Carolyne Groves

### 2003

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES CHAMPION Furman University & Craig Gaulden Davis  
PUBLIC SERVANT OF THE YEAR Governor Mark Sanford  
VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR Virginia White

### 2002

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES CHAMPION Scott Johnston  
PUBLIC SERVANT OF THE YEAR Stephanie Monroe  
VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR Jean Graves  
ENVIRONMENTAL ADVOCATE OF THE YEAR Mary Lou Jones

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