

Representative Allison Tant joins Florida State Parks Foundation Board of Directors

Jackye Maxey, Don Philpott join Foundation board officer slate for 2024-26

TALLAHASSEE, FL, UNITED STATES, December 4, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Allison Tant, who serves District 9 in the Florida House of Representatives and who is a longtime advocate for Florida's award-winning state parks, has joined the Florida State Parks Foundation's Board of Directors, effective immediately, Foundation board president Kathleen Brennan announced today.

"We are so honored to have Rep. Tant join our board," Brennan said. "Not only is she an outstanding representative for North Florida, but she has an incredible track record of caring for and supporting our amazing state parks."

Originally from Jacksonville, Tant was named a "Florida State Parks Foundation Legislative Champion" for her role in co-sponsoring the bill that led to the creation of the Foundation's "Explore Our State Parks" specialty license plate.

The Foundation receives \$25 from each plate sold. Since its debut in 2022, nearly 17,000 plates have been purchased to support the Foundation's mission to preserve, protect, sustain and grow Florida's 175 state parks, trails and historic sites.

Tant has also helped to expand accessible amenities and experiences in state parks and was instrumental in the reopening of William J. "Billy Joe" Rish Recreation Area in 2023. Rish



Recreation Area, a 100-acre park on Cape San Blas along the Gulf of Mexico, is designated to provide recreational opportunities for people with disabilities, their families and their caregivers.

“Rep. Tant’s passion for our state parks makes her a natural fit to join the Foundation’s Board of Directors,” Foundation CEO Julia Gill Woodward said. “Her experience and perspective as a sitting member of the Florida House will be invaluable as we seek to elevate Florida’s state parks to even greater heights in the years ahead.”

The Foundation also announced today that Jackye Maxey of Lakeland and Don Philpott of Altamonte Springs have joined the slate of board officers as treasurer and secretary, respectively.

Maxey and Philpott succeeded Audrine Finnerty of Altamonte Springs and Emily Wilson of Punta Gorda, each of whom will remain on the board after completing two-year terms in their respective officer positions.

The full slate of Foundation board officers includes:

President: Kathleen Brennan

Vice President: Matt Caldwell

Immediate Past President: Tammy Gustafson

Treasurer: Jackye Maxey

Secretary: Don Philpott

“I am proud to lead a strong and active board of directors that is made up of people who are among the very best in their fields and professions,” Brennan said. “I appreciate everything that Audrine and Emily have contributed as treasurer and secretary, and I have no doubt that Jackye and Don will receive the torch from them and immediately run with it.

“With Rep. Tant now a part of our team, along with an excellent slate of officers, I believe we are better equipped than ever to support our state parks as they continue to raise the bar as the best state parks system in the nation.”

About Rep. Allison Tant: Representative Allison Tant currently serves as the Representative of District 9 in the Florida House of Representatives which includes Leon, Jefferson and Madison Counties. Tant is the ranking member of the House Post-Secondary Education & Workforce Committee, the ranking member of the Commerce Committee, and a member of the Ways and Means Rules, Health Care Regulation and Insurance and Banking Committees. Allison has

worked across the aisle as a member of the Rules Committee and the Select Committee on Hurricane Recovery and Resiliency.

Along with being a State Representative, Allison is the Founder of Independence Landing, an innovative and affordable housing option for adults with a range of Intellectual and/or Developmental Disabilities and is the Founding Chair Emeritus for KEYS (Keys to Exceptional Youth Success), a scholarship program for students with disabilities. During her tenure with KEYS, she worked to establish several programs for Big Bend residents including the TCC Eagle Connections program, the SOAR job certification program at Lively Technical College and a state-recognized ACE Summer Institute teaching life, social, independence and job skills, all for students with disabilities. She also serves as an Advisory Board member of the Florida Center for Students with Unique Abilities.

Tant has been proud to serve on the ESC Council and District Advisory Council for Leon County Schools and developed a summer program for job training and workforce placements for students with disabilities.

Tant is an active member of the Tallahassee Rotary Club, Capital Women's Network, Tiger Bay, the Board of Directors of the Challenger Learning Center and the Advisory Board for the Adult and Community Education program for Leon County Schools and is the regional representative for the Anti-Defamation League of Florida. In 2013, she was inducted into the Tallahassee Democrat's 25 Women You Need to Know. She has previously served as president, treasurer and advocacy chair of the Children's Home Society in Tallahassee, secretary of the Tallahassee Community College Foundation, chair of Holland & Knight's "Opening Doors for Children" program, board member of Big Brothers Big Sisters and Leon County Schools Exceptional Student Education Advisory Committee and District Advisory Committee. She was also a Big Sister in the Big Brother Big Sister program from 1995 to 1998. Allison has been married to Barry Richard for over 25 years and has three children: Jonathan and Jeremy (23) and Danielle (19), two bonus children: Brooke (and her husband Dave), Todd and two adorable grandchildren: Sophie & Jonah.

The Florida State Parks Foundation, founded in 1993 as Friends of Florida State Parks and renamed in 2018, is a 501(c)3 nonprofit corporation whose mission is to support and help sustain the Florida Park Service, its 175 award-winning parks and trails, local Friends groups and more than 20,000 park volunteers.

It does this through programs that preserve and protect state parks, educate visitors about the value of state parks, encourage community engagement and active use of state parks, and advocacy. The volunteer Board of Directors represents private and public sectors as well as local and statewide interests.

Tim Linafelt
Florida State Parks Foundation

+1 850-559-8914

[email us here](#)

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