

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

NATHANIEL SMITH



An Atlanta native, Nathaniel Smith serves as founder and chief equity officer (CEqO)/CEO of the [Partnership for Southern Equity](#) (PSE), which pushes for balanced growth and inclusive prosperity in metropolitan Atlanta and beyond.

Nathaniel is the co-author of “Moving to Opportunity: The Case for Transportation Equity in Metropolitan Atlanta” and “Growing the Future: The Case for Economic Inclusion in Metropolitan Atlanta,” two PSE reports. In 2014, PSE led a diverse coalition to support the initiation and passage of a \$13 million referendum to expand Atlanta’s metropolitan transit system into a new county for the first time in 45 years. Prior to his role at PSE, Nathaniel served as director of partnerships and research for equitable

development at Emory University’s Center for Community Partnerships, working closely with external and community organizations to achieve balanced, sustainable and inclusive growth throughout the metropolitan Atlanta region.

Nathaniel earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in urban studies from Morehouse College, and a Master of Science degree from the Robert J. Milano Graduate School for Management and Urban Policy at the New School. Nathaniel received the prestigious Woodrow Wilson Fellowship for Public Policy and International Affairs while at Morehouse, and a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Fellowship while at Milano.

Nathaniel is one of 50 international leaders participating in the inaugural German Marshall Fund’s Bilbao Urban Innovation and Leadership Dialogues to discuss strategies for leading equitable growth in cities. The Atlanta Business League listed Nathaniel among its 2014 “Men of Influence,” and both the Huffington Post and Grist Magazine have highlighted him as a leader in reshaping the climate movement.

RANDALL WELLS



Randall Wells directs the Chicago Zoological Society’s [Sarasota Dolphin Research Program](#), the world’s longest-running study of a wild dolphin population. He began studying bottlenose dolphins in Sarasota Bay in 1970 as a high school volunteer at Mote Marine Laboratory, engaging in behavioral studies as well as dolphin tagging.

Randall earned his bachelor’s degree in zoology from the University of South Florida in 1975, his master’s degree in zoology from the University of Florida in 1978, a doctorate in biology from the University of California, Santa Cruz in 1986, and earned a post-doctoral fellowship from Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution in 1987. He has worked with the Chicago Zoological Society since 1989, where he is currently a

senior conservation scientist. Wells is a professor of ocean sciences (adjunct) at the University of California, Santa Cruz, and adjunct professor of marine mammal science at the University of Florida, through which he supervises master’s and doctoral students.

Randall’s current research uses a collaborative approach to examine the behavior, social structure, life history, ecology, health, and population biology of bottlenose dolphins along the central-west Florida coast, with studies focusing on five concurrent generations of a locally resident, 160-member dolphin community. Recent research topics include the effects on coastal dolphins of human activities, such as boat traffic, fishing, human feeding of wild dolphins, and environmental contaminants. He has been involved in the development, refining, attachment, testing, and deployment of dolphin tags, including telemetry tags, since 1970.

2017 Sustainable Communities Workshop Speakers



INVITED SPEAKERS

Kathy Black



Kathy Black is a professor of aging studies and social work at the University of South Florida, Sarasota-Manatee. She earned her doctorate's degree from the State University of New York, Albany, and holds master's degrees from the University of Southern California and the University of California, Los Angeles. Dr. Black's expertise is in advanced planning for end-of-life care, geriatric mental health, and aging in community. She has received multiple honors in her 40 years working with older adults and their families as geriatric case manager, medical social worker, and geriatric nurse in acute and long-term care, hospital, nursing home, and community-based settings. She also has authored more than 40 articles for peer-reviewed journals.

Join Dr. Kathy Black at [twitter.com/@kblackphd](https://twitter.com/kblackphd)

Holly Bullard



Holly Bullard serves as director of financial stability initiatives at United Way Suncoast, where she oversees financial stability programs, strategies, and collaborations in the Sarasota-Manatee and Tampa Bay areas. She holds a master's degree in public policy from Georgetown University, and a bachelor's degree in political science from Emory University. Holly previously worked as legislative aide for former U.S. Rep. Rubén Hinojosa (D-Texas), serving as his lead advisor on financial services and housing issues, with a focus on financial empowerment for low-income Americans.

Lee Hayes Byron



Lee Hayes Byron is the sustainability manager for Sarasota County, overseeing sustainability improvements within government operations and the efforts to create a sustainable community across Sarasota County. Her responsibilities include promoting energy efficiency to residents and businesses, ensuring sustainability improvements in county facilities and fleet, employee education, and legislative review.

Paul Caragiulo



Paul Caragiulo, chair of the Sarasota County Commission, joined the board in 2014, after serving as a Sarasota City Commissioner from 2011 to 2014. During his time as a city commissioner, Paul used his perspective as a small business owner to advocate for strong economic development in the area. He welcomes investment to the community and has not been afraid to tackle difficult issues, from the city's sound and noise policy to the elected mayor question. He is known for his careful study of issues and strong work ethic.

Paul was named by The Business Review as one of the area's "Best Bureaucrats," was runner-up for "Best Citizen" in Sarasota Magazine's "Best Of The Best 2013," and SRQ Magazine three times named him "Best City Commissioner."

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INVITED SPEAKERS (cnt'd)

Shelli Freeland Eddie



Shelli Freeland Eddie is the mayor of the city of Sarasota, appointed in 2017 two years after winning her campaign to represent District 3 on the city commission, a result that earned her the distinction as the first African-American ever elected to the commission outside the city's predominantly minority District 1. Shelli has practiced law in Florida since 2004, and opened the Freeland Eddie Law Group, P.A., in 2012, in the Newtown community in north Sarasota. Shelli provides pro bono legal services to The Women's Resource Center of Sarasota County and More Too Life, Inc., and helped establish the Law Academy at Booker High School. She was named to Biz(941) magazine's "2014 People to Watch" list; received the "Women of Light" award in 2016 from the West Coast Center for Human Development; and in 2016 earned a Presidential Award for Community Service from the President Barack Obama administration.

Stevie Freeman-Montes



Stevie Freeman-Montes is the sustainability manager for the city of Sarasota, leading efforts to increase process efficiencies and conserve natural resources within city operations, as well as supporting community-wide efforts toward resiliency and sustainable development. Among her current responsibilities are conducting a climate change vulnerability assessment, facilitating energy efficiency upgrades for city facilities, integrating climate adaptation into the comprehensive plan, and collaborating on code improvements related to sustainability.

A former Peace Corps volunteer (on the island of Yap, Micronesia), Stevie holds a bachelor of science degree in zoology and a master's degree in sustainable development.

Jane Grogg



Jane Grogg is neighborhood services manager for Sarasota County, and lead strategist for community engagement. Integral to the 2003 creation of the program, Jane leads a team that oversees neighborhood aspects from planning to public engagement, and from capital improvements to crime prevention. She also has been involved community development, charrettes, and infrastructure projects with challenging community dynamics.

Jane and her family love the sun – from installing photovoltaic panels and solar water heaters at home to kayaking, swimming, beachcombing, snorkeling, and hiking around the Sunshine State.

Emily Hall



Dr. Emily Hall manages the oceanic acidification program at Mote Marine Laboratory. In her role, she has developed experimental systems to study the effects of global and local variables on coral reef ecosystems and other marine organisms. Her research also includes a focus on coastal and marine habitats potentially able to withstand or ease the effects of global changes. Dr. Hall joined Mote in 2005, studying the link between harmful algal blooms and nutrient patterns on Florida's west-central coast. She also serves as an adjunct professor at Ringling College of Art and Design, helping develop new methods to heighten coastal and marine awareness, and as courtesy faculty at the University of South Florida Sarasota-Manatee, as a chemistry and research methods instructor.

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INVITED SPEAKERS (cnt'd)

Bill Johnson



Bill Johnson, owner and president of Brilliant Harvest, LLC, was born in Denver. He moved to Sarasota in 1975 with his family, and grew up with solar hot water and solar pool systems on his roof. He holds an undergraduate degree from Emory University in Atlanta, and master's degrees from the University of South Florida, Tampa, and the University of Florida. Bill founded Brilliant Harvest in 2009 to serve solar hot water and solar electric clients, and earned certification by the North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners.

Bill is an active community volunteer, has served on a number of not-for-profit boards, and is past chairman of the board for The Florida Center for Early Childhood and past president of the Pine View Foundation.

Vickie Oldham



Vickie Oldham is a storyteller and journalist who has produced multiple community-themed documentaries and shorts. Her latest work is a groundbreaking preservation project called "Newtown Alive." Begun as an initiative to trace the 100-year history of the African-American community of Newtown, it allowed residents and guests to view the neighborhood through the lens of its rich history. The project (see more at newtownalive.org) earned an outstanding achievement award from the Florida Trust for Historic Preservation.

Vickie started her career as a reporter at WWSB, Sarasota's ABC television affiliate, after earning a bachelor's degree from the University of Florida and master's degree from Florida State University.

PHOTO CREDIT: Evelyn England / Westcoast Woman

Sean Sellers



Sean Sellers is the volunteer chair of the Sarasota Climate Justice Coalition. The Coalition comprises more than 15 community, faith and student groups working together to foster resiliency and promote a just and equitable transition to a low-carbon society. The Coalition has been the driving force behind the "Ready for 100" renewable energy campaign in the city of Sarasota.

Terry Root



Terry L. Root, a Sarasota resident, is a senior fellow emerita in Stanford Woods Institute for the Environment at Stanford University. She was a lead author, focusing on biological impacts, on the third and fourth assessment reports of the Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change, the latter of which shared the Nobel Peace Prize in 2007 with Vice President Al Gore. Her research, beginning with her pioneering large-scale research examining continent-wide ranges and densities of wintering North American birds using National Audubon's Christmas Bird Count Data, focuses on large-scale ecological consequences of climate disruption.

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INVITED SPEAKERS (cnt'd)

Drew Smith



Drew Smith is the chief operating officer of Two Trails, Inc., a premier sustainable building certification and verification company. Drew formed the company from a desire to help builders, developers and homeowners understand the green building process, and to provide them with the knowledge to easily bring their green projects to life. To date, Two Trails has completed more than 500 LEED projects, and achieved myriad firsts in the industry, including the first LEED Platinum-certified public school in the nation, the highest-scoring LEED Platinum home in the nation, and four of the six highest-scoring LEED homes in the world. Drew is the first and current governor-appointed green building commissioner for the state of Florida, the national director for the National Association of Home Builders, and has served with numerous other building- and green building-related organizations.

Arlene Sweeting



Arlene Sweeting is director of the Fogartyville Community Media and Arts Center, a non-profit space operated by the Peace Education and Action Center. With her partner David Beaton, Arlene co-founded WSLR 96.5, Sarasota's community radio station, and served as station manager from 2005 into 2014. A former public school teacher, Arlene was a candidate for the Florida State House of Representatives in 2000 and 2002. She has served as chair of the Manatee-Sarasota Sierra Club and conservation chair for the Florida Sierra Club.

A Florida native, Arlene spent her early years in the Bahamas. She holds a bachelor's degree from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, and a master's degree from James Madison University.

EMCEES

Don Hall



Don Hall serves as co-director of Transition US, a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that provides inspiration, encouragement, support, networking, and training for more than 160 grassroots Transition initiatives nationwide. The international Transition movement focuses on cultivating just, sustainable, and conscious local communities from the bottom up, by growing local food systems, strengthening local economies, and reducing fossil-fuel dependence. Don founded Transition Sarasota and directed the organization from 2010 to 2016, and spearheaded a Local Food Shift campaign that featured an annual Eat Local Week, an Eat Local resource guide, and the Suncoast Gleaning Project, which harvested nearly 250,000 pounds of organic produce for those in need. Don earned a master's degree in environmental leadership from Naropa University.

Cooper Levey-Baker



Cooper Levey-Baker is an associate editor at Sarasota Magazine and has written about food, politics, civic issues, the arts, and music in southwest Florida for a decade. His work has won an honorable mention from the Julia Child Foundation, a bronze award for best in-depth reporting from the Florida Magazine Association, and he was named a finalist for best public service reporting by the Florida Society of Professional Journalists.

Cooper lives in Sarasota with his wife, Rachel, and two sons, Theo and Felix.