



2024-2025 NATIONAL TRUST COUNCIL NOMINEES



Ashvin Murugesu (Chairperson)

Ashvin Murugesu is deeply passionate about the rich heritage and natural beauty of the Cayman Islands. From a young age, Ashvin actively participated in Heritage Days, fostering a lifelong commitment to preserving the islands' unique cultural legacy. Today, he continues this tradition by assisting his grandfather in the time-honored craft of rope making, a practice that connects him to the generations that shaped the islands. In his professional career, Ashvin has established himself in the financial services sector, where he has been an active member of various committees, contributing his expertise and leadership. His professional experiences complement his dedication to cultural and environmental preservation, offering a well-rounded perspective on stewardship and sustainability. An avid hiker, Ashvin regularly explores the diverse landscapes of the Cayman Islands as well as embarks on treks across the globe. His love for the environment, deep connection to his heritage, and professional acumen would make him privileged to be an inspiring leader of the National Trust for the Cayman Islands, where he would have the opportunity to champion the protection of the islands' cultural and natural treasures for future generations.



Emily DeCou (Secretary)

Em DeCou is a multi-generational Caymanian passionate about shining light on the importance of preserving our Beloved Isle's special beauty. Upon leaving a decade-long career in the Financial Services Industry and Legal sector in 2022, she founded sustainability consultancy firm TRUE.M to guide individuals, businesses, and organizations in transitioning to zero-waste lifestyles and operations after becoming the first Caymanian to gain the Total Resource Use & Efficiency (TRUE) Advisor qualification from the United States Green Building Council. In the sustainability sphere, Em is a Sustainable Cayman Ambassador, a Leading Member of Amplify Cayman, a volunteer with Plastic Free Cayman, and a proud Council Member of the National Trust for the Cayman Islands. Em served as a National Trust General Elected Council Member for 2023/24.



Fred Burton (General Council)

Fred has lived and worked in the Cayman Islands since 1979. In 1990, he founded The Blue Iguana Recovery Programme as a National Trust volunteer. He has authored a number of books including Threatened Plants of the Cayman Islands – the Red List as well as The Little Blue Book. Fred currently holds the post of Manager of the Terrestrial Unit at the Department of the Environment. He formerly worked as the Environmental Programmes Manager of the National Trust and was a key player in establishing the Cayman Islands' terrestrial protected area systems and worked on wildlife conservation habitats. In 2007 Fred was awarded an MBE for his services in conservation of endangered species. Most recently he has served as an active member on the National Trust Council, Environmental Advisory Committee and the Blue Iguana Conservation Steering Committee.



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Craig Caffarelli (General Council)

Craig and his family moved to Grand Cayman from Chicago nearly four years ago. While living on island, Craig has been an active volunteer for the National Trust at Blue Iguana Conservation, considering its conservation work essential to maintaining the biodiversity of the Cayman Islands. He also supports several other local charities. Utilizing his business background and finance and accounting skills, he is a mentor to two small local businesses. In the US, he sits on the boards of a national literacy charity and an affordable housing charity in Chicago. In 1994, Craig helped create GEM Realty Capital (gemrc.com), a Chicago-based real estate investment firm specializing in private and public market opportunities, as Chief Operating Officer and Chief Financial Officer. He now serves as the Senior Advisor to GEM and believes his experience will benefit the Trust.



Melanie Carmichael (General Council)

Melanie, raised in the Cayman Islands, has over 25 years of experience in the private offshore business sector. Her passion for community service began in 2005 after Hurricane Ivan, when she joined the "Shade Brigade" formed to help regreen the island. After a successful corporate career, Melanie shifted her focus to environmental advocacy, becoming a key figure in protecting George Town Harbour's marine life. As an active member of CPR Cayman, she supported a democratic approach to the proposed Cruise Berthing Facility Project. Melanie now works with Sustainable Cayman, focusing on the protection of mangrove wetlands in urban areas, recognizing their crucial role in biodiversity, climate resilience, and the overall harmony between development and nature. She has also been a dedicated member of the National Trust for the Cayman Islands, serving as a General Elected Council Member since 2019 and as Council Chairperson for 2022/23 and 2023/24. Throughout her career, Melanie has remained a committed advocate for balancing development with environmental conservation in the Cayman Islands.



Anita Ebanks (General Council)

Anita Ebanks was the founding Director of the Cayman Islands National Museum. She retired in 2008 having completed more than three decades of service to the Cayman Islands Government as a social worker, teacher, librarian, and museum worker. During those years she also served on a number of government boards and committees, especially those relating to various facets of our Islands history, culture, and heritage.

Since her retirement she continued to actively serve on a number boards and committees. She enjoys assisting small organizations and individuals with her experience, knowledge, and love of researching, especially anything related to the Cayman Islands.

As one of the original Life Members of the National Trust she looks forward to volunteering as a General Elected Member once again.



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Laura Egglshaw (General Council)

Laura Egglshaw (née Powery) was born in West Bay and is one of the '1000' babies delivered by midwife 'Ms. Leila Yates'. Laura attended West Bay Primary School; C.I. High School; I.C.C.I., and received a scholarship from the C.I. Chamber of Commerce to attend St. Godric's College, Hampstead Heath, London. Laura is a multi-generational Caymanian whose family instilled in her a respect, love and gratitude towards the environment. Volunteering and family & community values have always played a large part in Laura's life. She volunteers for LIFE; the Neighbourhood Watch Programme and the West Bay Beautification Task Force. Laura is an executive member of the Grand Cayman Garden Club and a member of the C.I. Sailing Club. Laura has volunteered for the National Trust since the 1990's and most recently served as General Elected Council member and as Chair of the Nominating Committee 2022-24 and 2024-25 .



Mike Gibbs (General Council)

Mike is the retired President of Kensington Management Group, Ltd, where he worked from the company's inception in 1999 until the end of 2020. He has over 40 years of experience in the financial services industry and is a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants. He spent four years in Hong Kong and the rest of his career in Cayman. Mike has held various roles in accounting, audit, operations, systems, and management, including 12 years with Bank America and four years with Johnson & Higgins/Marsh Management Services. He is also a past Chairman of the Insurance Managers' Association of Cayman and a Past President and active member of the Cayman Islands Chamber of Commerce. Mike served as General Elected Member of the National Trust Council for 2023/24



Richard Harrison (General Council)

Richard is a seasoned finance professional (ACA) arriving in Cayman nearly twenty years ago and has been a long term member of the National Trust. He understands the crucial importance of the National Trust to the Cayman Islands, and is keen to support the organization. With some soft influence from his Dad and ever growing need to set an example to his kids, most notably his daughter who loves birds and wants to become the next Cathy Childs! Richard feels now is a fitting time to run for Trust Council. He has enjoyed a very broad range of sector experience including renewable energy, financial services and most recently healthcare. He is a Cayman Islands Monetary Authority approved Director, a founding Director of the Cayman Islands Renewable Association and is on the Cayman Islands Institute of Professional Accountants ESG committees. He has also consulted on TCFD (Task Force for Climate Related Financial Disclosures) and community involvement has included being a voted council member on the Chamber of Commerce. Outside of work he loves nothing more than outdoor, adventurous trips with his family as well other endorphin rousing activities such as tennis, ocean swimming and SUP.



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Brigitte Kirkconnell-Shaughness (General Council)

Brigitte graduated from Loyola University in New Orleans, Louisiana, where she earned a Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration. Upon completion of her formal education and prior to returning home, she worked for a family-owned and operated Home Centre/ Building Materials store in Pennsylvania. Since 1992, Brigitte has worked for her family primarily as the Managing Director of Kirk Home Centre and is a member of the boards of directors for various other companies. Over the years she has had the privilege of serving on various private sector and statutory authority boards such as the Civil Aviation Authority, the Chamber of Commerce, the Business Staffing Plan Board, the National Security Council and the Judicial & Legal Services Commission. She is a former member of the Meals on Wheels board of directors and in the 1990's she was a council member of the National Trust. Brigitte believes that our islands natural beauty and heritage must be protected while balanced with sensible development in order to improve the quality of life for Caymanians and residents. Her father, the late Capt. Charles Kirkconnell was one of the members of the Legislative Assembly who voted in favour of the National Trust for the Cayman Islands Bill in 1997 in order to protect Caymanian heritage.



Chris Luijten (General Council)

As a Cayman Islands resident in 2020 working closely with key stakeholders in the media, government and various grassroots organisations, Chris was able to bring about a movement that helped accelerate the implementation of new legislation to protect mangroves. Together with Martin Keeley he helped form the Mangrove Rangers which launched in 2020. Aside from mangrove conservation work, Chris is an Entrepreneur in the b2b SaaS technology vertical through various companies on which he serves as Investor and Board Member. He is the CEO of ITCA, a company that helps software companies with fighting against software piracy. He and his family are very passionate about the environment, and support a variety of causes such as the Virunga National Park in Congo, Skyscanner, and the Sea Shepherd. Chris served as National Trust General Elected Council Member in 2022/23 and 2023/24.



Arthurlyn Pedley (General Council)

Arthurlyn was born and raised in West Bay. After high school, she lived overseas for 13 years while pursuing tertiary education. A sixth-generation Caymanian, she grew up in a home that cherished faith, family and a deep love, respect and desire to preserve and pass on Caymanian heritage and culture to younger generations and those who came to call Cayman home. For the past 35 years, Arthurlyn has done this largely through her involvement with the National Trust for the Cayman Islands as either a volunteer or staff member. She lends her energy mainly to supporting the Historic Preservation Arm of the Trust by serving on Trust Council and through that, the Historic Advisory Committee (HAC). This past year, she has served as chairman of HAC. Additionally, she is an active member of the West Bay District Committee. She especially enjoys helping to pass on Cayman's heritage, culture and traditions through educational presentations or living history experiences. A retired educator, in her spare time, Arthurlyn enjoys: walking, swimming, reading and traveling.



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Diana Quin (General Council)

Diana is a long time resident arriving in Cayman in 1985 with her late husband Charles Quin (who previously served on the NT Council as Legal Advisor). She initially worked as a physiotherapist before becoming a full time mother to three sons. In 2004, she opened her own business selling handmade Oriental Rugs, in which she spent 17 years before retiring. She has previously volunteered with the PIN programme through St Georges Church and is a member of the Garden Club of Grand Cayman. She is very keen to work to help save the natural environment of Cayman, with an especial interest in local birds. When not chasing after grandchildren she loves to garden, grow vines, nurture Whistling Ducks on her natural pond and 'dabble' in watercolours.



Jordan Rivers (General Council)

Jordan Rivers is a passionate trailblazer and prominent voice advocating for change across a plethora of areas in the Cayman Islands' tourism arena. As a Generational Caymanian he is committed to sustainability and creating a positive impact on both the industry and the environment. Jordan is a former Cadet Corps Corporal and embodies honesty, integrity, discipline, compassion and love of country. He is a vocal advocate for environmental issues, particularly focused on conservation and protection, and he has fostered a virtual community of like-minded individuals who share his enthusiasm for creating a better world. Jordan most recently served as National Trust General Elected Council Member for 2023/24.



Candy Whicker (General Council)

Candy was raised in London and worked as an investment banker there until moving to Cayman in 1989. She worked for Barclays Private Bank in Cayman for 10 years and served as a director of various Cayman based investment funds. Since leaving Barclays she has embarked on a second career in the world of documentary film. Her most recent project is a feature length documentary about the Cayman charity Beacon Farms, which premiered in Cayman in February 2023. Over the years she has volunteered for a number of organizations and charities including Riding for the disabled, Cayman Prep and High School, the Cayman Islands Sailing Club, the Pink Ladies and CPR. Candy is a keen gardener and champion of the natural world. She loves reading, sailing, traveling and planting trees wherever she can. Candy served as National Trust General Elected Council Member for 2023/24 as well as the Chair of the Public Relations Committee.