

Natural Heritage Trust
Executive Staff

Allen G. Payne
Executive Director

Allen Payne is the Executive Director of the Natural Heritage Trust (Trust). Allen was appointed to this position by the Board of Directors in June 2013. The Executive Director serves under the direction of, and is accountable to, the Board of the Trust. Allen is responsible for directing all aspects of the Trust's operations, fundraising and programs.

Allen has an architecture and urban planning education and background, and began his management career working for the Design Arts Program of the National Endowment for the Arts in Washington, DC. He worked in New York City for the Parks Council, doing parks design policy and advocacy work, and then embarked on a 20-year fundraising career. Allen brings more than two decades of experience in professional fundraising and resource development for a variety of institutions and organizations including God's Love We Deliver, Gay Men's Health Crisis, the September 11th Fund, and the City University of New York School of Law. He most recently was the Director of Development & Public Relations for Grand St. Settlement on the Lower East Side of Manhattan.

Allen received a Bachelor of Architecture from Mississippi State University in 1978 and a Master of Architecture in Urban Design from Harvard University in 1982.

Paul J. Laudato
General Counsel

Paul Laudato is General Counsel of the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) and also serves as General Counsel to the Trust. He advises the Board of Directors and Executive Director on all legal matters pertaining to the operations of the Trust. Paul also served as the Trust's Chief Financial Officer in acting capacity from September 2008 to December 2014.

After graduating from Georgetown University in Washington, DC in 1974, Paul attended Albany Law School from which he received his Juris Doctor in 1978. He practiced in the Capital District in private practice for twenty-two years before coming to OPRHP in 2001. Paul's concentration in private practice was in the area of municipal, zoning and land use law.

Sarah Purcell
Deputy Director and Chief Financial Officer

Sarah is the Deputy Director and Chief Financial Officer of the Trust. She has served in these capacities since December 2014. Sarah is responsible for oversight of the Trust's administrative functions and finances.

Sarah has a background and education in policy and financial management. She started her career at the NY State Comptroller's Audit Bureau as a Program Examiner. She later worked as an Analyst for the NY Authority Budget Office. Prior to being named Deputy and CFO of the Trust, Sarah served as

a Program Manager for six years and was responsible for compliance and financial reporting on programs and projects funded through the Trust.

Sarah received a Bachelor of Arts in Economics and Sociology from Hofstra University in 2003 and a Master of Arts in Public Policy from the Rockefeller College at the State University of New York in 2005.