



SARASOTA BAY
ESTUARY PROGRAM
Restoring Our Bays

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(Note: Photo of Christine Callahan included with the press release.)

CHRISTINE CALLAHAN JOINS SBEP'S CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

SARASOTA, FL – Christine Callahan of Anna Maria Island is the newest member of the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) with the Sarasota Bay Estuary Program (SBEP). The 21-member CAC provides the SBEP with citizen input and helps the organization develop programs and projects in support of its mission to restore and protect Sarasota Bay.

Christine and her family moved to Anna Maria Island in 1996 from Philadelphia. She owns her own business as a custom software developer. One of her passions is to educate elementary school children about the importance of conservation. After completing the Master Gardener Program in 2005, Christine devoted volunteer time in support of Anna Maria Elementary School.

Her efforts included starting a recycling program for ink cartridges and helping to design and install a Peace Garden featuring plants that attract butterflies. Her next project was Cultivating Kids, an education program focused on protecting Sarasota Bay. The plan included rain gardens to help reduce non-point source pollution and the creation of a path lined with native plants and student-created signage. Cultivating Kids received funding from the Tampa Bay Estuary Program (TBEP) and also won the Golden Mangrove Award as TBEP's most outstanding mini-grant project for 2008.

SBEP is seeking additional applicants for the CAC. Interested candidates can download an application at sarasotabay.org. Questions should be directed to Sara Kane at sara@sarasotabay.org.

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Note: Here is a link for profiles about all of the CAC members:

<http://www.sarasotabay.org/getinvolved-cac.html>

***The Sarasota Bay Estuary Program** is dedicated to restoring the area's greatest natural asset—Sarasota Bay. Its unique program strives to improve water quality, increase habitat and enhance the natural resources of the area for use and enjoyment by the public. Sarasota Bay is one of 28 estuaries in the United States that have been named by the U.S. Congress as an "estuary of national significance." Partners include Sarasota County, Manatee County, City of Sarasota, City of Bradenton, Town of Longboat Key, Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Southwest Florida Water Management District, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.*