

## Honorary Membership Nomination Narrative

Nominee: Darla Moore  
Nominee's Address: 133B E. Main St.  
City/State/Zip: Lake City, SC 29560  
Phone: 843 374 0138  
Nominator: William T. Eubanks, FASLA

Darla Moore is a philanthropist and business woman from South Carolina who has used her wealth to transform her family's farm into a botanical garden. She also founded the Charleston Parks Conservancy in Charleston, SC and works tirelessly on the revitalization of her hometown, Lake City, SC. Through all of these efforts she has recognized and valued the profession of landscape architecture for the transformative power landscape can play in the life of a community.

Darla Moore was born in Lake City, South Carolina. She was one of two daughters and was born on a farm that produced cotton, soybeans, and tobacco. In 1972, Moore graduated from Lake City High School. She then continued on to the University of South Carolina where she received a BA in Political Science in 1975, followed by an MBA in 1981 from George Washington University.

Moore spends most of her time in Lake City in a house built on a plantation that has been in the Moore family for six generations. The botanical garden at Moore Farms was founded in 2002 to prove that her family's ancestral croplands could be transformed into a place of beauty, and an example of horticultural excellence. As her garden grew, so did Ms. Moore's vision for the future of the property. Soon she began to see the potential of the garden as a place for horticultural research and education, and as a place of enjoyment for visitors. Moreover, she saw that the garden could become a source of pride for the people of her hometown and state. The plant database for the garden contains over 6,000 unique taxa of plants. The information contained on each of these plant records is sortable, including inquiries on nomenclature, source, location and existing quantities. Garden staff record details on flowering dates, health, toxicity, propagation protocols, pest susceptibility and the preferred landscape usage for all plants in the collection. Some of the most colorful comments are personal opinions on the aesthetics or horticultural merits of each plant. The database contains thousands of such entries and images.

In 2002 Moore also founded The Palmetto Institute as an independent, nonpartisan and nonprofit research and educational organization. As originally organized, the central mission and singular goal of the Institute is to create a business, community, political and educational climate that would produce dramatic and sustained growth in the creation, distribution and retention of wealth for every person in South Carolina. The Institute seeks to accomplish this serious endeavor by providing high quality, scholarly and academically sound research and policy options on issues of importance to South Carolina.

Founded in May 2007 and supported by a regional base of horticultural and landscape professionals, the Charleston Parks Conservancy has defined their approach to parks through

collaborative efforts. The most successful collaboration occurred starting in 2007 with what would become the Windermere Boulevard Community Garden, a collaborative ongoing project between the Conservancy, the Charleston Horticultural Society, City of Charleston, and the surrounding Windermere community. I had the privilege of being involved in the redesign of Windermere Boulevard and can attest to the role Moore's fledgling group had on the project. Working with the City of Charleston and the neighborhood communities surrounding Colonial Lake produced a conceptual master plan for the renovations of this Charleston landmark park. 2009 was also a breakthrough year with the creation of the Garden in the Parks program. While renovation projects create sizable excitement, something for the community to support, this program revolves around the long term care provided by the Conservancy staff and our engaged volunteers, the Charleston Park Angels. This same year saw the creation of "Educate You", an education program comprised of online web based resources and educational classes with local professionals lending their expertise.

ArtFields started in Lake City in 2013 with a simple goal: honor the artists of the Southeast with a week's worth of celebration and competition in the heart of a traditional Southern small town. With over \$100,000 up for grabs, awarded based on the input of every visitor to ArtFields and a panel of judges made up of acclaimed artists and educators, the competition offers life-changing amounts of money to all artists in all media who live in the twelve Southeastern states. What was once one of South Carolina's most prosperous agricultural communities now becomes a living art gallery, demonstrating the best of the Southeast and recognize the incredible talent we have to offer. Lake City, as the host of the celebration also benefits from the exposure and the event aids with revitalization efforts.

In 1991, Moore married Richard Rainwater in New York City and was named president of Rainwater, Inc., in 1993. Moore has been recognized in several media outlets including Forbes, Fortune, Working Woman, Worth, Wall Street Journal, and CNN. Fortune Magazine named Moore one of "The 50 Most Powerful Women in Business" in 1998 and 1999. Her cover on Fortune Magazine called her "The Toughest Babe in Business".

In 1998, Moore donated \$25 million to the business school at the University of South Carolina. In her honor the school was renamed Darla Moore School of Business. In 2004, Moore donated an additional \$45 million with the challenge to the university to match that sum.

In 1998, Moore was presented with the Order of the Palmetto. Created in 1971, it is the highest civilian honor awarded by the Governor of South Carolina. It is awarded to persons who make contributions of statewide significance with local importance.

In 2003, Moore gave \$10 million to Clemson University's school of education which was renamed for Moore's father, a Clemson graduate who was both a teacher and principal.

In 2007, Moore was inducted into the South Carolina Business Hall of Fame.

In 2011 donated \$5 million (matched by the state) for a new aerospace center at the University of South Carolina, which was named in honor of Dr. Ronald McNair, who died aboard the Space Shuttle Challenger mission of 1986 and was originally from Lake City, South Carolina.

Moore is a hard-nosed business woman with strong ties to the land and a unique sense of place. She also has the heart and soul of a gardener. In both arenas, she likes to make things grow!



March 23, 2016

Bill Eubanks  
Urban Edge Studio

Dear Bill:

Thanks for reaching out to me to write to you about Darla Moore and her impact on Charleston. I have known Ms. Moore since she moved to Charleston and sought to establish the Charleston Parks Conservancy to improve the public realm in our city and to involve citizens in that effort. Since she founded the Conservancy in 2007, I have worked with her in various capacities to make it a reality. I have been Executive Director, where she continues to serve as Chairman of the Board of Directors, for the last 3 and a half years.

In our work at the Charleston Parks Conservancy, Ms. Moore's passion for landscapes and public space is obvious. Her initial gift of \$10 million that established the Conservancy was just the beginning. She is involved at every level of the organization, and takes great care in evaluating potential projects. Once she has considered the impact a park project can have on the City, she pursues it with dogged determination.

The current restoration of Colonial Lake, one of the iconic public spaces in Charleston, is a perfect example. She personally conceived of the project and has been involved at every step of the design and implementation, driving for its successful completion. She knew instinctively that the Conservancy needed a major project to demonstrate the power of a well functioning public-private partnership with the City. The design for Colonial Lake, with her help, has already won awards. And, as the project nears completion, her vision for a renewed and reinvigorated public space is being realized.

But even more importantly, the power of her idea, of an organization dedicated to connecting citizens to their public spaces by engaging them in the improvement, care and programming of parks, is having remarkable results. The Charleston Parks Conservancy is involved in the improvement, care and programming of 26 parks in Charleston, with more to come. The Conservancy has leveraged more than \$5 million in funding for parks since its founding, and the City's parks have never been in better shape. Darla Moore's leadership and passion for landscapes and design is a key reason why.

There is no one more deserving of honorary membership in ASLA.

Most Sincerely,

Harry Lesesne  
Executive Director



DesignWorks

205 ½ King Street  
Charleston, SC 29401  
(843) 723-5525

designworkslc.com

Honorary Membership Nomination  
American Society of Landscape Architects  
636 Eye Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20001-3736

Re: Darla Moore, ASLA Honorary Membership

Dear ASLA Board of Trustees,

Darla Moore is a woman of vision, with the highest intellect and moral standards, and the desire, with proven success, to improve the lives of all the citizens of South Carolina and the United States. And best of all, while not calling herself a Landscape Architect, she actually practices our art at the highest level.

Upon returning from Wall Street to her native SC Darla created the Palmetto Institute, gave 50 million to establish the DM school of Business at USC and gave 15 mil to Clemson for their School of Education. These are just a few of her higher profile donations.

More directly related to Landscape Architecture, she started Moore Farms Botanical Garden at her family farm outside Lake City, South Carolina, which has a full time staff of ten people and is dedicated to preserving native plants and education on how these plants can be utilized by the landscape industry. She has worked for many years revitalizing her native town of Lake City, which was once a thriving agricultural community. She has revitalized two blocks of main-street, created a new park, revitalized the old bean market building, and built a new hotel. Her efforts go way beyond these listed and have made this small town a desired destination within South Carolina. In Charleston, she created the Charleston Parks Conservancy. The Conservancy has made improvements in over 26 city parks, is nearing the completion of a \$6 million renovation of a large downtown park, and has over 1400 volunteers, known as Park Angels that work in the city parks. I have served on her board since the beginning. Darla's passion to make the parks better is only exceeded by her ability to achieve results. Charleston is a city that loves its historic buildings and downtown and now Charleston is a city that also loves its parks.

Darla is an outstanding candidate for Honorary Membership in the ASLA. I almost forgot, Darla is one of the first two women chosen to be members of Augusta National.

Sincerely,

W. Scott Parker, RLA, ASLA



## South Carolina Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects

President  
Kathleen Duncan

President Elect  
Josh Tiller

Past President  
Duane Christopher

Secretary  
Claudia Rainey

Treasurer  
Natasha Sexton

Trustee  
Bill Eubanks

Executive Committee  
Andrew Hargett  
Clint Rigsby  
Andy Smith  
Sarah Marrs

Ex officio members:

Section Leaders:  
Upstate  
Chris Watson

Low Country  
Maria Ghys

Midlands  
Patrick Livingston

Advocacy:  
Holley Bloss

PR:  
Jamie Hairfield

CUASLA President:  
Dani Noonan

Honorary Membership Nomination  
American Society of Landscape Architects  
636 Eye Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20001-3736

Dear ASLA Board of Trustees,

On behalf of the South Carolina Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects we offer our full support for the nomination of Darla Moore as an Honorary Member of our Society.

The Executive Board voted unanimously to support her nomination based on her long-term and on-going efforts to elevate the profession of landscape architecture in South Carolina.

Darla is a very successful business person and she has used her considerable wealth to champion projects that highlight the inherent value of the landscape and the profession of landscape architecture. Her original endowment of \$10 million started the Charleston Parks Conservancy, which has elevated the level of parks in Charleston, SC. She has supported on-going efforts to revitalize her hometown of Lake City, SC. She has transformed her family farm into a beautiful botanical garden that is open to the public.

Her on-going efforts in South Carolina are far-reaching in their scope and we think she is worthy of Honorary Membership in ASLA.

Most sincerely,

Kathleen Duncan, ASLA  
South Carolina Chapter President  
American Society of Landscape Architects