

Laura Turner Seydel



Eco-awareness has always been a way of life for Laura Turner Seydel. Years of earth-friendly living and community involvement have fueled her inspiration to always “live green.” As a national environmental activist and eco-living expert, Laura is committed to educating families, youth and individuals alike about the opportunities and benefits of earth-friendly living.

Growing up, Laura was more aware of environmental issues than most children. As daughter of CNN founder and philanthropist Ted Turner, she was exposed at an early age to how ecologically desperate some areas of the world were. From leading environmental voting initiatives to finding new ways to protect the Chattahoochee River, she began her commitment toward working to improve the environment in every way she could.

Laura makes environmental philanthropy a priority in her life. You will often find Laura handing out compact fluorescent light bulbs, leading recycling initiatives or teaching Girl Scout Troops how to compost. She serves as Chairman of the Captain Planet Foundation, a partner program to the highly successful environmentally focused Saturday morning cartoon, Captain Planet and the Planeteers. The Captain Planet Foundation acts as a national educational conduit to place funds in the hands of groups conducting environmental projects with elementary, middle, and high school students. The Captain Planet Foundation has funded projects locally, nationally and internationally impacting over 625,000 youth from a wide variety of socioeconomic and ethnic backgrounds.

In 1993, Laura and her husband, Rutherford Seydel, founded the Upper Chattahoochee Riverkeeper Fund, an environmental advocacy group who works to raise public awareness of issues related to the Chattahoochee River and secure measurable improvements in its health. Laura has guided Riverkeeper’s fundraising efforts from its inception and has served as a key advisor to the organization in policy-making and strategic planning. In 2004, she co-founded Mothers & Others for Clean Air to raise awareness about the link between asthma and air pollution. The organization gives mothers access to vital information concerning the effects of air pollution, allowing them to make informed decisions about how to protect themselves and their children.

Laura is active on the boards of many other local and national groups including: Earth Share Georgia; The Nature Conservancy of Georgia; the North Georgia Water Planning District Board, Defenders of Wildlife; Waterkeeper Alliance; Atlanta Ballet; Oglethorpe University and The League of Conservation Voters Education Fund. Laura is a Trustee of the Turner Foundation, a private family environmental grantmaking foundation created in 1990. In her capacity as Trustee, she is involved in all aspects of the Foundation’s operations, from reviewing funding requests and establishing policy to identifying funding priorities and overseeing special initiatives. Laura is also a Trustee of the Jane Smith Turner Foundation, a private family grantmaking foundation, whose funding priorities include the arts, children’s health and education and the environment.



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In the fall of 2006, Laura and her husband Rutherford unveiled EcoManor, the first LEED certified (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) residence in the Southeast. EcoManor will illustrate the opportunities and benefits of earth-friendly, energy-efficient homes. The home will serve as a showcase to demonstrate life in a green, eco-friendly way through the use of eco-friendly products, energy efficient products, and environmental options. More importantly, EcoManor will serve as an educational tool to builders, architects, designers, landscapers, educators and homeowners in an effort to promote green living, conservation options and improved residential building practices.

A Georgia native, born in Macon, Laura holds a Bachelor of Arts from Oglethorpe University. In 1997, Laura was awarded the Conservationist of the Year Award from the Georgia Wildlife Federation and was selected as one of ten Outstanding Young Atlantans. In 2003 Laura and her husband Rutherford were presented the Distinguished Conservationist Award from The Georgia Conservancy.

Laura resides in Atlanta with her husband, Rutherford and their three children, John R, 13, Vasser, 11 and Laura Elizabeth, 8.