

AUGUST 13, 2026 | NEWS

Ronald A. Christaldi Named Chair of New College of Florida Board of Trustees

SARASOTA, FL. — Ronald A. Christaldi, a New College of Florida alumnus, practicing attorney, and longtime Florida civic and business leader, has been named Chair of the New College of Florida Board of Trustees.

Christaldi succeeds Debra Jenks and assumes the chairmanship after serving as Vice Chair of the Board. He was initially elected Vice Chair before the significant changes in the Board's composition and was subsequently unanimously reelected to that position by the reconstituted Board.

"I am deeply honored to serve as Chair of the Board of Trustees of an institution that has meant so much to me personally and that has such an important role to play in the future of higher education in Florida," Christaldi said. "New College gave me an extraordinary education and helped shape the way I think, lead, and approach complex challenges. I am grateful for the opportunity to give back to this remarkable institution."

Christaldi assumes the chairmanship at an important moment in New College's history. Over the past several years, the College has undergone significant changes in its leadership, academic direction, and institutional priorities as it seeks to strengthen its distinctive liberal arts mission and establish itself as a national model for public higher education.

"As Chair, my focus will be on the future—on academic excellence, student success, responsible stewardship, and ensuring that New College provides an exceptional education that prepares its graduates to think independently, engage thoughtfully with differing perspectives, and lead lives of purpose and consequence," Christaldi said. "Our responsibility as trustees is to create an environment in which students can thrive, faculty can excel, and the institution can continue to grow in stature and achievement."

Christaldi emphasized that the Board's work will remain centered on the students and families New College serves.

"Universities are strongest when they encourage rigorous inquiry, intellectual curiosity, civil discourse, and the free exchange of ideas," he said. "New College has always had an independent spirit. I believe we can

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preserve the very best of that tradition while continuing to build an institution that welcomes talented students from across Florida and the nation and equips them to succeed in an increasingly complex world.”

A practicing business attorney, Christaldi is a partner at Shumaker, Loop & Kendrick, LLP and serves as President and CEO of Shumaker Advisors Florida. His legal practice focuses on complex transactions, business matters, public policy, and resolving significant challenges for businesses and organizations throughout Florida and nationally. *American City Business Journals* named Christaldi to its national list of 100 most influential attorneys, recognizing attorneys having an impact on business and legal matters in communities across the country.

In addition to his legal practice, Christaldi has held leadership roles in numerous statewide and Tampa Bay civic, business, and cultural organizations. His service has included leadership positions with Leadership Florida, the Tampa Bay Chamber, the Tampa Bay Economic Development Council, the Tampa Museum of Art, and other organizations dedicated to strengthening Florida’s economy and communities.

Christaldi earned his bachelor’s degree in history from New College of Florida. He later earned both a Juris Doctor and a master’s degree in international affairs from Florida State University.

“New College has been part of my life for decades, and I care deeply about its students, its faculty, its alumni, and its future,” Christaldi said. “I look forward to working with my fellow trustees, President Richard Corcoran, the faculty and staff, our students, alumni, and the broader New College community to build on the progress underway and to help ensure that New College’s best days are ahead.”

About New College of Florida

Founded in 1960, New College of Florida is the state’s designated public honors college and is known for its rigorous liberal arts education, individualized academic programs, and commitment to developing independent thinkers and leaders. Located in Sarasota, New College serves students from Florida and across the nation.