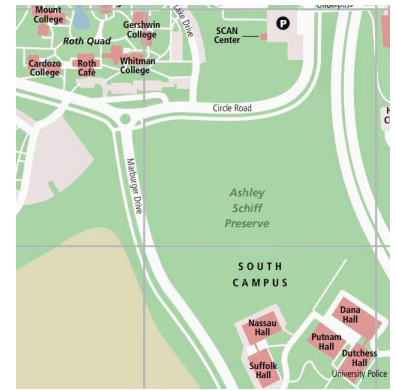


*Ashley Schiff*

## **RESOLUTION OF THE UNIVERSITY SENATE AT STONY BROOK UNIVERSITY**

Proposed by the Environment Committee  
Passed by the Senate  
March 6, 2023



*Preserve location*

Whereas,

Professor of Political Science Ashley Schiff had an immense influence on the early years of Stony Brook University, joining the University in 1964 and remaining a member of the faculty until his untimely passing in 1969.

Whereas,

Professor Schiff was deeply respected among students for being accessible, open-minded, “brutally honest”, and committed to the practice and promotion of integrity within the university community.

Whereas,

Professor Schiff, as the faculty master (advisor) of the Cardozo College residential program, was renowned for his ceaseless work outside of class to improve undergraduate life. He was credited with providing the Cardozo residents “with a seemingly unending flow of celebrity guest visitors, with a calendar of educational events unmatched by any of Stony Brook’s twenty other residential colleges” (Stony Brook *Statesman*, October 3, 1969, page 1).

Whereas,

Professor Schiff was a conservationist and expert on the politics of forest management, and took direct action on this campus to preserve outstanding natural features, donate and coordinate plantings to beautify the campus, and educate students on the natural environment by his “bramble rambles” through the college woods.

Whereas,

Professor Schiff was named as one of the five best teachers at the University by the Class of 1968.

Whereas,

When Professor Schiff passed suddenly from a viral infection in 1969 at the age of 37, leaving a wife and young family, his memorial service under a linden tree on campus was attended by five hundred students who “loved him, because they learned from him, and they learned from him because he combined his scholarship and his humanity with great integrity” (*Statesman*, *ibid*).

Whereas,

As a memorial to Professor Schiff, in 1970 the Ashley Schiff Nature Preserve was dedicated at a public ceremony by former United States Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall. SBU President John Toll wrote on that occasion "...today we dedicate a wilderness preserve to the memory of Ashley Schiff, where future generations at Stony Brook can learn to share his appreciation of nature .... of all the tributes we might pay him, I believe this is the one that would have touched him most, and best carries forward his special contributions to Stony Brook".

Whereas,

The bounds of the Preserve have been defined by a University survey conducted in 1970 and updated in 1998, comprising 26.6 acres or 2.6% of our 1,039 acre campus.

Whereas,

In the decades since its dedication, the Ashley Schiff Preserve has served as a place for education, recreation, and preservation of the natural environment.

Whereas,

More than 300 plant and animal species have been documented in the Preserve.

Whereas,

The Preserve is currently used for instruction by eight undergraduate courses, undergraduate honors research projects, and projects in music and art.

Whereas,

In 2009, University President Shirley Strum Kenny signed a letter fully supporting formal permanent protection of the Preserve, and Assemblyman Steve Englebright introduced enabling legislation in the New York State Assembly.

Whereas,

In 2009, more than 2,500 students, faculty, and community members signed a petition calling for formal permanent protection of the Preserve.

Whereas,

A resolution adopted unanimously by the University Senate in 2001 called on the forested areas of campus to be designated as "University Living Treasures", and a resolution adopted unanimously in 2019 called specifically for formal permanent protection of the Preserve.

Whereas,

Other campuses across the nation have nature preserves on their grounds, including the Binghamton University Nature Preserve that comprises 190 acres or 21% of the 897 acre campus.

Whereas,

The location, characteristics, and history of the Ashley Schiff Preserve make it uniquely suited for formal and permanent preservation on our campus.

And whereas,

On a continuously developing campus, it never gets easier to set aside an area for natural preservation.

**Therefore, be it resolved that the University Senate of Stony Brook University:**

Recognizes Professor Ashley Schiff as an exemplar of a dedicated scholar, mentor, activist, and leader.

Commends the continuing efforts of the organization Friends of the Ashley Schiff Preserve, who have worked diligently to keep Professor Schiff's legacy alive and promote appreciation and appropriate uses of the Preserve.

Endorses the importance of preserving natural areas on our campus to maintain its essential character, to be used for educational and recreational purposes, and to serve as a model and example of sustainability and harmony with the natural world.

Recognizes the unique location, characteristics, and history of the Ashley Schiff Preserve as bestowing upon it the highest priority for natural preservation on our campus.

Calls upon the Stony Brook University Administration to implement and support formal, written, and permanent protection of the Ashley Schiff Preserve as a "Forever Wild" natural area on the Stony Brook campus.

Requests a formal written response by the Stony Brook University Administration to this resolution.