



2021 Election of Directors Candidate Statement

Candidate Name: Jake Virag

Willowsford Property Address: 25824 Sandstone Shelf Pl

How long have you been an owner at Willowsford: 4 years

Briefly describe your professional and educational background, as well as any special skills or experience you would bring to the board:

Currently I am a Cisco Services Delivery Manager in US Public Sector. I lead a team of 24 engineers who provide technical expertise in Route Switch, Security, Data Center and Collaboration for the Federal Law Enforcement Region which consists of Department of Justice and Department of Homeland Security Agencies. Prior to my employment and Cisco, I worked for ECS and provided Systems Engineering and Technical Assistance (SETA) to the Defense Advanced Research Agency (DARPA). I am an Air Force Veteran who retired in 2015 at the rank of Lt. Col. During my service, I deployed in support of a number of contingency operations to include the Thailand Tsunami Rescue Operation (Operation UNIFIED ASSIST), as well as combat deployments Operation IRAQI FREEDOM and ENDURING FREEDOM. During my professional career, I've held a number of leadership positions to include IT Manager, Squadron Commander and Air Staff Officer. I have a passion for conservation that started early in the Boy Scouts where I earned my Eagle Scout Badge.



<https://www.linkedin.com/in/jake-virag-5a264710/>

Have you volunteered with Willowsford before: Yes

If so, in what capacity and for how long?

I helped build the Willowsford Archery target stands (One Day). In addition, I lead a bi-annual neighborhood cleanup for the Sandstone Shelf Cul De Sack.

If you have volunteered elsewhere, in what capacity and for how long?

For the past four years, I have led Cisco's Northern Virginia Cisco High School Science, Technology, Engineering & Math (STEM) Externship to encourage high school juniors and seniors to seek careers in STEM fields. To date, we have graduated 72 Externs who have gone on to attend technical universities to include MIT, Stanford, Berkley, Virginia Tech and University of Maryland to name a few.

I also lead the Cisco Veteran ERO team for the US Capital Region. This team offers Cisco employees who are Veterans the opportunity to give back to the community.

While Active Duty, I was a Military Mentor at the Tragedy Assistance Program and Support (TAPS) Good Grief Camp. (2014-2015)

Why do you want to serve on the Conservancy Board of Trustees?

Willowsford is beautiful and unique neighborhood that greatly benefits from the Stewardship of the Conservancy. As an avid trail rider, I love the inclusion of the 2000 acres of open space, woodlands and natural habitat. I firmly believe that it is our responsibility to not only protect these spaces, but to improve them by introducing innovative ways to monitor and manage the health and welfare of these functioning ecosystems. I believe my years of leadership uniquely qualify me to add great value to the Conservancy and I'd love to leave a legacy of serving my community while working to implement constant improvement in programs, services and transparency and accountability.

How do you feel you are qualified?

I have over 25 years of leadership experience in both the private and public sector. I have a strong background in resource management, prioritizing scarce resources, budgeting and advocacy to obtain improved outcomes and strong results.

As an avid explorer of the Willowsford trail system, I have a strong understanding of the value and condition of the existing trails and their supporting structures.

I have a passion for conservation and am a strong advocate of maintaining and increasing the health and welfare of our valuable ecosystems. I encourage the use of renewable resources and believe we can introduce better ways to ensure our beautiful neighborhood remains a model for other neighborhoods nationwide.

What are your top priorities to accomplish should you be elected?

1. Protect our shared open spaces, woodlands natural habitat and wildlife
2. Lead volunteer teams to ensure these spaces are increasingly maintained and free of trash and debris
3. Introduce a Willowsford volunteer drone core to monitor the health and welfare of the ecosystem
4. Increase neighborhood awareness of Conservancy initiatives, reduce manmade damage to these environments
5. Encourage awareness, use and participation of existing facilities trails and events