



# DURHAM COUNTY MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS 2008



Dear Citizen,

Durham County Government is pleased to present its 2008 Major Accomplishments. This annual update is designed to keep you informed about the great things happening in your County government.

As residents of this great county, you are impacted by services administered by Durham County Government each day. This update will help you to learn more about Durham County's services and the positive accomplishments they have achieved this year. Their success in turn improves your living experience in this great community.

We encourage you to become more involved in the Durham community by volunteering on boards and commissions, attending Board of County Commissioners' meetings to voice your opinions and concerns.

We love to hear from our neighbors; so, please tell us how we are doing by calling 919-560-0000. To learn more about Durham County Government's services, visit [www.durhamcountync.gov](http://www.durhamcountync.gov).

Sincerely,

Michael M. Ruffin  
Durham County Manager

## Opening New Doors: Durham Center Access

The Durham Center, manager of the public mental health, developmental disability and substance abuse vices for Durham County citizens, opened a new state-of-the-art healthcare facility in July to provide effective, community-based treatment and services to people in crisis. Durham Center Access (DCA) helps residents experiencing a mental health, developmental disability or substance abuse crisis can stabilize and connect with ongoing treatment and support.



## Strong Economic Growth Continues

Durham County helped to facilitate a \$300 million expansion of the Merck plant in northern Durham County and a new \$362 Million IBM Data Services facility. The Durham County Board of Commissioners approved \$750,000 in economic development incentives for IBM's new data center.

## Sustaining Efforts for the Environment

A Sustainability office was established and a manager hired to design and implement initiatives to support the comprehensive plan to reduce greenhouse gases. The first ever Energy Fair was held for employees and the public featuring displays from local businesses and organizations on how energy use can be reduced.

## Project Access Initiated

In 2008, Durham County invested \$488,594 to fully initiate Project Access. Project Access, a joint initiative with Duke Health System, the Durham Orange Medical Society and Durham County will help uninsured Lincoln Community Health Center patients access needed specialty medical care free of charge.

## Record Breaking Achievements

Durham County achieved a record setting tax collection rate of 98.87% and is second highest in collections among the state's 10 largest counties.

## Durham's Youth Speak Out



The 2008 Election focused heavily on the young vote. This year, citizens under 18 made it clear that they may be too young to vote, but not too young to speak out. Prior to Election Day, three students involved in Cooperative Extension's "Kids Voting Project," appeared on Nick News with host Linda Ellerbe's Kids' Pick the President on the nationally televised Nickelodeon broadcast.

## Durham County Receives Large Grant

Durham County's Open Space Program was awarded \$1,402,923 in 2008 Federal Farm and Ranchlands Protection Program (FRPP) funds to be used towards three farms in northern Durham. This award was the largest grant awarded in North Carolina under the FRPP program to date, and will go towards 50% of the estimated cost for conservation easements on Little Mountain Farm, Roger Tilley Farm and Caywood Farm.



## Stanford Library Gets the Golden Leaf

In May 2008, the Stanford L. Warren Library received a Golden Leaf Award for Community Appearance. The award, presented by the Durham City-County Appearance Commission, was given for design excellence in the category of Community Properties. Stanford L. Warren Library was one of only six honorees out of 70 contenders.



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## Best Practices Win DSS an Award for Guardianship Assistance



Durham County Department of Social Services (DSS) received a Ketner Award for the Guardianship Assistance Program by the North Carolina Association of county Commissioners and a Best Practice Award from the NC Association of County Directors of Social Services for the same program.

## Cooperative Extension Helps Military Families

Durham County Cooperative Extension Service initiated, the **Essential Life Skills for Military Families** program to help Durham's military families facing deployment.



## Sheriff's Office Reaccredited

The Durham County Sheriff's Office received reaccreditation by the United States Department of Justice FBI Bomb Data Center.

## DSS Develops New Website

Durham County Social Services redesigned its website to be a new one-stop information source to help families learn how to report Child Abuse and Neglect, find information about long term care facilities for an elderly or disabled family member, learn how to adopt a child from foster care and more.

## Health Department Connects with Mothers and Infants



Durham County Health Department collaborated with Duke Center for Child and Family Policy and the Center for Child and Family Health to provide home visits by a Public Health Nurse to women with newborns. The **Durham Connects program** visits include assessments of mothers and infants, identification of the family's strengths and provides connections with other resources as needed. By 2010, the program will have nurses to cover the entire county.

## Soil and Water Awarded for Conservation Efforts

Durham Soil and Water Conservation Department received the "Community Conservation Award" presented by the North Carolina Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

## Hollow Rock Access Area Purchased

Durham County purchased the Hollow Rock access area, a 41 acre tract, from Duke University. This collaborative partnership involves Durham County, Orange County, Town of Chapel Hill, City of Durham, Erwin Area Neighborhood Group, The Triangle Land Conservancy and the Clean Water Management Trust Fund. Over 105 acres of permanent open space has been protected as part of this project within both Orange and Durham counties.

## New Interlocal Agreement

Durham County Government, Durham Public Schools, and YMCA of the Triangle announced a joint venture initiating the redevelopment of the Lakewood YMCA. In an effort to preserve the facility, the partnership enabled the County to purchase the Lakewood YMCA property and complete renovation. The Interlocal agreement includes construction of a new middle school on the site.



## Tax Administration Unveils One-Stop Kiosk

Offering increased customer service and convenience, Durham County's Tax Administration Department unveiled a unique tax-payment kiosk. The kiosk—the first of its kind in the State of North Carolina, offers customers a convenient method to pay taxes and renew motor vehicle registration. The kiosk accepts cash, credit, and debit payments during hours of operation at Northgate Mall.

**Durham County's Mission:**  
To enhance the quality of life for its citizens by providing education, safety and security, health and human services; economic development and cultural and recreational resources.