



CITY OF DURHAM
Durham Parks and Recreation
101 CITY HALL PLAZA
DURHAM, NC 27701

NEWS RELEASE

Parks and Recreation Department



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Durham Receives National Award For Parks and Recreation ***National Partnership Award Presented to Durham Parks and Recreation in New Orleans***

DURHAM, N.C. - Durham Parks and Recreation (DPR) has been presented the National Partnership Award by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) during a special reception at the 2017 NRPA Annual Conference in New Orleans.

Assistant Director Jason M. Jones, CPRP, (DPR); Dr. Sarah Armstrong, associate professor of Pediatrics, at the Duke Center for Childhood Obesity Research; and Dr. Asheley Skinner, associate professor at the Duke Clinical Research Institute; were on hand to receive the award.

DPR was awarded this honor because of its successful partnership with Duke University Medical Center to treat childhood obesity at the community level. The program titled, "Bull City Fit" was established in 2012 and is designed to integrate a state-of-the-art health system with one of DPR's largest facilities, Edison Johnson Recreation Center.

Clinicians, dieticians, physical therapists, and health educators from Duke Children's Healthy Lifestyles Program worked with staff at DPR to develop a fitness program, nutrition education, gardening activities and peer support tailored towards treating childhood obesity at the community level.

"We have found that most efforts to combat childhood obesity involve clinical treatment or community-based recreation," said DPR Director Rhonda B. Parker. "Neither are as effective alone and that is why this partnership has been a win-win for the Durham community."

As a result of the partnership, two rooms at the center were renovated, a demonstration kitchen was created and the garden was expanded. Since its inception, the program has expanded the number of facility users, and helped provide a place where children with obesity, can get healthy ‘with other children that look like me’, as one participant described it. The program has increased the quality of life for the over 1,000 children involved, provided education on how families can eat healthier, and built supportive connections within our community.

“NRPA is pleased to honor our nation’s park and recreation heroes—agencies and individuals who work tirelessly and with passion to improve the lives of their citizens and make their communities great,” said Barbara Tulipane, President and CEO of NRPA.

Each year, NRPA National Awards are presented to individuals and agencies across the U.S. to honor their efforts—both professional and personal—in the field of parks and recreation. There are 10 award categories in the NRPA’s National Awards program. Recipients are selected from a pool of applicants by NRPA’s National Awards and Scholarship Committee, and are chosen for excellence in a variety of topics, including professional and voluntary service, programming, leadership, research and public outreach.

For details visit www.DPRPlayMore.org or call 919-560-4355. A full list of NRPA National Award winners is available at www.nrpa.org/nationalawards.

About Durham Parks and Recreation

Durham Parks and Recreation provides opportunities for the Durham community to Play More by connecting our whole community to wellness, the outdoors, and lifelong learning. To learn more about Durham Parks and Recreation, follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#), visit www.DPRPlayMore.org or call 919-560-4355.

About the National Recreation and Park Association

The National Recreation and Park Association is a national not-for-profit organization dedicated to ensuring that all Americans have access to parks and recreation for health, conservation and social equity. Through its network of 60,000 recreation and park professionals and advocates, NRPA encourages the promotion of healthy and active lifestyles, conservation initiatives and equitable access to parks and public space. For information, visit www.nrpa.org. For digital access to NRPA’s flagship publication, *Parks & Recreation*, visit www.parksandrecreation.org.

