



**CITY OF DURHAM**  
Office of Public Affairs  
101 CITY HALL PLAZA  
DURHAM, NC 27701

## News Release

For Immediate Release: March 3, 2016

### News Media Contact:

Amy Blalock  
Sr. Public Affairs Specialist  
(919) 560-4123 x 11253  
(919) 475-7735 (cell)

[Amy.Blalock@DurhamNC.gov](mailto:Amy.Blalock@DurhamNC.gov)  
<http://Facebook.com/CityofDurhamNC>  
<http://Twitter.com/CityofDurhamNC>  
<http://YouTube.com/CityofDurhamNC>

## **Durham Seeks Student Essays to Celebrate National Community Development Week**

*Winners to Receive Gift Certificates & Recognition at April 18 City Council Meeting*

DURHAM, N.C. – Do you live near Southside? Do you have a relative who was a homeless veteran? Do you or a family member live in affordable rental housing or live in a house your family purchased through a City of Durham program? If so, then the City's Community Development Department wants to hear from you.

To celebrate National Community Development Week, the department is hosting a [new student essay contest](#) to involve Durham youth in thinking about how the City's use of federal program funding impacts their lives. The essay contest – "*What Does Community Development Mean to Me?*" – is open to all Durham middle and high school students attending any public or private school or being home-schooled. First, second, and third place essay winners will be selected in both the middle and high school categories and each category will be awarded \$25, \$15, and \$10 Visa® gift certificates, which will be presented before the Durham City Council at their April 18 meeting.

The purpose of the essay contest is to highlight the local importance of the federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and Home Investment Partnerships Program (HOME), which is the focus of National Community Development Week, a week-long celebration that brings together residents, government officials, businesses, and non-profit organizations to showcase the impact of the CDBG and HOME programs. Both programs are administered nationally by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Locally, the City has used both CDBG and HOME funds to help revitalize neighborhoods like Southside, build housing for homeless veterans, develop new affordable rental units, support homeownership initiatives for low or moderate-income families, and address the needs of homelessness through a variety of agency programs. Student essays should reflect on how their lives, family members, neighbors, or friends may have been impacted through programs or services that were supported using either CDBG or HOME funds.

For more information on the City's "*What Does Community Development Mean to Me?*" student essay contest, including submission rules and the April 1 deadline, visit the department's [website](#) or contact Senior Project Manager John Murphy with the City's Community Development Department at (919) 560-4570, ext. 22225 or by [email](#).

### **About the City of Durham Community Development Department**

The [Community Development Department](#) is responsible for coordinating the City's housing resources and various housing assistance programs as well as promoting affordable housing by working with investors and community housing development organizations. The department also administers the City's entitlement programs from the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development. Guided by the City's [Strategic Plan](#), the department helps to ensure that the City has thriving, livable neighborhoods by enhancing housing quality and affordability for Durham residents.

###