



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

## News Release

For Immediate Release: March 7, 2016

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## Durham Hosts Women's Forum March 24

*Event Celebrates Four Women for their Contributions to the Durham Community*

- What:** [14<sup>th</sup> Annual Women's Forum – "Celebrating Women's History Month"](#)
- Who:** [City of Durham Human Relations Division with the Neighborhood Improvement Services Department](#)
- When:** Thursday, March 24, 2016, from 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
- Where:** City Hall Council Chambers  
101 City Hall Plaza, First Floor  
Durham, N.C. 27701

### Fast Facts:

- Four successful Durham women will share their personal experiences and insights on how they mastered challenges and overcame obstacles on their roads to success. Event attendees will also have an opportunity to ask questions of the panelists.
- Panelists include [Duke University Nuclear Physicist and Professor Dr. Haiyan Gao](#); [Spectacular Magazine Chief Executive Officer and Publisher Phyllis D. Coley](#); [American Underground Director of Corporate and Community Partnerships Jesica Averhart](#); and [EarthShare North Carolina Executive Director Heather Beard](#).
- The forum is free and open to the public. Parents and youth are encouraged to attend this forum to learn about potential career choices. For more information, or to RSVP to attend

this event by March 15, contact Women's Forum Coordinator Tannu Gupta by [email](#) or call (919) 560-4107, ext. 34246.

### **About the Human Relations Division in the City of Durham Neighborhood Improvement Services Department**

The [Neighborhood Improvement Services Department](#) works to preserve and improve quality of life conditions for Durham residents, and to encourage active participation in neighborhood redevelopment and public policy and decision making dialogue. The department is responsible for enforcement of quality of life ordinances and state statutes including the City's Minimum Housing Code; Nonresidential Code; Weedy Lot, Abandoned & Junk Vehicle ordinances; and the State of North Carolina's Unsafe Building Statute. The department's rapid responders, known as the Impact Team, remediate non-compliant housing properties; abate public nuisances, such as litter, graffiti, illegal dumping, and abandoned shopping carts; and conduct neighborhood service projects. The department's Community Engagement staff provides outreach and education to Durham residents and community organizations. The department's [Human Relations Division](#) strives to improve race and human relations in the City by working to eliminate housing discrimination and by prioritizing community outreach and educational activities to meet the needs of Durham's residents. The division is responsible for enforcement of the City of Durham Fair Housing Ordinance and the federal Fair Housing Act. HUD provides funding annually for the Division to investigate housing complaints in the City of Durham that allege discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex (gender), religion, national origin, physical or mental handicap or familial status (families with children). The Human Relations Division also provides oversight to the [City of Durham Human Relations Commission](#), which is comprised of 15 Durham residents who meet monthly to work on activities designed to improve human relations and promote harmony throughout Durham. Guided by the City's [Strategic Plan](#), the department helps ensure that Durham has thriving, livable neighborhoods by providing the highest quality of services to engage and educate the community, eradicating blight, ensuring safer neighborhoods and enhancing neighborhood revitalization.

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