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*****MEDIA RELEASE*****

Durham businesses and organizations honored at Business Excellence Awards

DURHAM, NC – The Greater Durham Chamber of Commerce presented several awards to local businesses and organizations at its annual Business Excellence Awards dinner held last night at the Durham Convention Center. More than 200 business and community leaders attended the event that honored small, medium and large businesses as well as non-profits and business leaders.

The Durham Literacy Center, Urban Ministries of Durham, Park West Barber School, Southern Energy Management and the Washington Duke Inn & Golf Club were recognized with Business Excellence Awards for a company program or initiative that made an impact in the community - making Durham stronger.

The Chamber presented the Connector of the Year Award to an individual who has dedicated their time and expertise in furthering the Chamber's mission. Justin Lyle-Purdy with Time Warner Cable Business Class was recognized for his work on behalf of the Chamber for its members and the business community.

In addition to the Business Excellence Awards, the Chamber presented the Sustainability Award to The King's Daughters Inn for their triple-bottom line sustainable efforts. The first-ever Entrepreneur of the Year Award was presented to Thundershirt Company for their innovation and growth as a startup company. IBM and its employees were honored with the Duke Energy Citizenship & Service Award for their volunteerism in the Durham community.

The Chamber also presented the Alfred P. Sloan Awards for Business Excellence in Workplace Flexibility to the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, American Journal Experts, LLC, Deloitte, the Durham Convention & Visitors Bureau, Hill, Chesson & Woody Employee Benefits Services, ICF International, McKinney, Rho, Inc., Shodor Education Foundation and the U.S. EPA – RTP Campus. This national award is a program of the U.S. Chamber's Institute for a Competitive Workforce, the TWIGA Foundation and the Families and Work Institute that recognizes businesses and organizations that use workplace flexibility as a way to meet business and employee goals.

About the winners:

Non-Profit Category:

Durham Literacy Center - The Durham Literacy Center (DLC) believes that adult literacy education is the way to create lasting change in lives while strengthening the community. Founded in 1985, the DLC works with community members, partner organizations and volunteers to serve some of Durham's hardest to reach residents – high school dropouts, adults with low literacy skills and immigrants. The DLC is the only organization in Durham County that devotes 100% of its effort and resources to literacy and has helped over 12,000 individuals obtain the knowledge and skills they need to improve their lives and the lives of their families.

Urban Ministries of Durham - Urban Ministries of Durham (UMD) impacts neighbors in need in Durham on a daily basis by providing shelter, food, clothing and supportive services. In addition to making a difference in the lives of the people they serve, the work they do impacts the lives of UMD's employees, volunteers, interns and the many donors, congregations, and additional community organizations that they partner with to provide the services that help those in need. This year, UMD launched the pioneering online game SPENT, raising awareness about homelessness and poverty.

Sustainability Category:

The King's Daughters Inn - The King's Daughters Inn is a 17-room inn located in historic Trinity Park. In addition to overnight accommodations, the Inn also offers three event spaces and is a AAA Four Diamond Hotel, as well as a Select Registry Inn. In 2009, the Inn underwent a renovation based on a three-fold philosophy: 1) to protect and restore the historic architecture for future generations; 2) to be as environmentally conscious as possible; and 3) to accomplish both while using the most current technology available. The Inn features a 10,000 gallon rain water cistern, pervious concrete parking lot, a gray water system that allows captured drain water to be filtered and recycled within the building, low-flow faucets and shower heads and ultra high efficiency toilets, LED lighting and energy management systems for each guest room.

Small Business Category:

Park West Barber School – Park West Barber School is a nationally accredited barber school in downtown Durham and was designed with a desire to raise the standard of education and professionalism within the barbering industry. Park West has 10 employees and has plans to expand to at least four locations in North Carolina, two of which will be open in fall 2011. Student enrollment has increased from nine students in 2006 to 145 students today. Park West provides students, who may not otherwise have one, with an opportunity to better themselves. In working with under-served populations, Park West offers skills to individuals so they may become employed.

Medium Business Category:

Southern Energy Management – Southern Energy Management (SEM) was founded by Bob and Maria Kingery in their living room in 2001. The sustainable energy company serves the Southeast, MidAtlantic and beyond with energy efficiency and solar power for home owners, residential and commercial builders, companies, non-profits, utilities and government clients. Since its founding, the team has grown to 90 employees including licensed electricians and plumbers, nationally certified building scientists and solar technicians, engineers, and home



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energy raters. SEM has a commitment to the development of local start-ups and is active in fostering the next generation entrepreneurs.

Large Business Category:

Washington Duke Inn & Golf Club - The Washington Duke Inn & Golf Club is Durham's only AAA Four Diamond full-service hotel. The self-proclaimed "living room of Durham" plays host to a wide variety of guests and events annually. For more than two decades, the Inn has been committed to the Durham community and supports a number of local charities. Many of the 270-member staff team volunteer their time and services to several organizations. In 2010, the Inn's contributions totaled \$180,000, a 20 percent increase from the previous year. The Inn also has a commitment to the environment as well, incorporating green initiatives to save energy and resources.

Duke Energy Citizenship & Service Award:

IBM - IBM is a global technology and innovation company offering a wide range of technology and consulting services. Over the past 5 years, IBM and its employees have contributed nearly \$15 million through its annual Employees Charitable Contribution Campaign to assist local non-profits. In celebration of the company's centennial, employees pledged over 45,000 hours of community service. On June 15, IBM RTP employees volunteered with over 40 service projects, helping thousands in our community.

Entrepreneur of the Year Award:

Thundershirt Company – Thundershirt Company is the developer of an innovative product for dogs, the Thundershirt. Thundershirt is a drug-free solution for dog anxiety fear and over-excitement issues. The product, which applies gentle, constant pressure to the dog's torso, offers dramatic calming effects. Since the company's inception, it has grown from four to 20 employees and revenues have increased at triple digit rates. The company has donated thousands of Thundershirts to shelters and rescue groups.