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U.S. Chamber and Greater Durham Chamber Call on Durham Business Community to Advance Education Reform

*Durham Part of 12-City Tour to Promote and Discuss Groundbreaking Film *Waiting for Superman**

DURHAM, NC—The U.S. Chamber of Commerce’s [National Chamber Foundation](#) today stopped in Durham, NC as part of a 12-city tour to bring together business and opinion leaders to view and discuss the groundbreaking movie on K-12 public education reform, [Waiting for “Superman.”](#)

Waiting for “Superman,” a film by Davis Guggenheim, the Academy Award-winning director of *An Inconvenient Truth*, from Paramount Vantage and Participant Media in association with Walden Media, is playing in theatres across the country. It tells the story of five children as they make their way through America’s failing public education system.

“The business community on national, state, and local levels understands that economic development and the future of our children, our families and, indeed, our society is totally dependent on how well we educate our students,” said Bill Shore, chairman of the Chamber’s Institute for a Competitive Workforce. “We must adopt the mentality as a community that we will not refuse to fail. We want to be a strong partner with all our schools to ensure that every child has access to a quality education and a productive future.”

These events will bring together business, opinion, and education leaders to discuss the actionable steps that can be taken to advance public K-12 education reform. Events will also take place in Albany, Atlanta, Austin, Denver, Indianapolis, Oklahoma City, Salt Lake City, San Diego, St. Louis, Tallahassee, and Trenton.

The Chamber is using the film as a catalyst to discuss the crisis in the nation’s schools, the forces standing in the way of needed change, and the steps toward reform in each of the 12 communities. The Chamber is also providing local leaders with a toolkit to drive effective education reform initiatives in their communities in three key areas: great teachers and leaders, more innovation, and better data—suggesting important questions to ask of local education leaders and key actions to take that can help drive improved academic achievement for all students.

The Alliance for Excellent Education estimates that the lifetime earnings in North Carolina for the 2009 class of dropouts alone would total more than \$12.1 billion. If North Carolina graduated all students ready for college, the state would save almost \$97.4 million a year in community college remediation costs and lost earnings. In addition, if the state increased its male high

school graduation rate just 5%, North Carolina's economy would see a combination of crime-related savings and additional revenue of about \$233 million each year. Significantly reducing dropouts *each* year would multiply these positive outcomes.

“Durham is the type of community that will embrace this opportunity to help its education system address the challenges it faces and that this film points out,” said Casey Steinbacher, president and CEO of the Greater Durham Chamber of Commerce. “We look forward to the community conversations in the weeks and months ahead.”

The National Chamber Foundation's promotion of *Waiting for “Superman”* is partly supported by a \$1.5 million grant from the [Daniels Fund](#), a Colorado-based foundation established by Bill Daniels, a cable television pioneer known for his generous support of innovative causes.

The National Chamber Foundation (NCF), a non-profit affiliate of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, is dedicated to identifying and fostering public debate on emerging critical issues. We provide business and government leaders with insight and resources to address tomorrow's challenges.

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce is the world's largest business federation representing the interests of more than 3 million businesses of all sizes, sectors, and regions, as well as state and local chambers and industry associations.

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