



Anita Scott Neville
Director
Hayti Reborn
United Way Autonomous Power Project

The Durham VOICE, a 12-year-old community newspaper serving people of color in central Durham, is a collaborative public service media outlet dedicated to lifting up what Dr. King called “the beloved community.” Launched in 2009 by the UNC-CH School of Journalism and Media, our community partners include N.C. Central University, Durham Public Schools, Durham Tech, civic and church leaders, and local youth development NGOs such as the Durham Children’s Initiative (formerly Partners for Youth Opportunity).

We at the Durham VOICE believe the key to meaningful long-range social change involves reaching local teens with hands-on transformative and positive journalistic experiences that lead them to realize their own capacity for *civic engagement*. Being a part of something larger than themselves, such as a dynamic local media outlet, helps discouraged, marginalized or alienated youth embrace their full capacity as citizen journalists who can make a profound difference in their own neighborhoods, story by story. Our work over the years with youth at local high schools – especially at Hillside High School – has proven that concept to be highly effective.

After a decade of covering this community, we have a special perspective on the continuing struggles of the Hayti neighborhood for equity and social justice. Therefore, this letter of support wholeheartedly endorses the goals of Hayti Reborn, a bold renewal project that aims to rebuild the thriving business and residential place that once made this unique part of Durham a great place in which to live, work and thrive. The Durham Freeway can’t be undone, but its deleterious impacts can be mediated. The Durham VOICE pledges its support of the Hayti Reborn project.

Onward and upward

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