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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 28, 2016

Durham's Partnership for Children elects new leaders for Board of Directors

Durham, NC – Durham's Partnership for Children (the Partnership), a Smart Start Initiative, held its Annual Board Meeting on Thursday, October 20, 2016 to elect officers and new Board members to serve for the 2016-17 fiscal year.

The 2016-17 slate of officers:

Karen O'Mansky, Director of Commercial Programs at Self-Help, will continue to serve as Chair of the Board. She previously served as Treasurer of the Board and Chair of the Finance Committee. As part of Self-Help's Commercial Team for more than 15 years, O'Mansky manages commercial credit officers, serves as a loan underwriter, and manages several partnerships, including Self-Help's Child Care Revolving Loan Fund (a partnership with NC's Division of Child Development). She has led numerous workshops on child care lending and the business side of child care and has extensive involvement in children's advocacy issues, including serving on the North Carolina Partnership for Children Early Childhood Advisory Committee, the North Carolina Child Care Coalition, and the Executive Board of the National Children's Facilities Network.

Cathy Collie, Director of Early Childhood Education at Durham Technical Community College, will continue to serve as Vice Chair of the Board. Collie is also Co-chair of the Allocations Committee, of which she has been a member since 2008. Collie was previously an Instructor of Early Childhood Education at Wake Technical Community College. As a former teacher at a child care center in Durham, she has years of experience in early childhood and a keen sense of the needs of children, teachers and child care centers.

Ilene Britt, Program Director of the Early Childhood Associate program and an Instructor at Durham Technical Community College, will continue to serve as Secretary of the Board. Britt has been involved with the Partnership since its inception. She has been a pediatric early interventionist, a child care center director, served as a board member of the NC Interagency Coordinating Council, and is a NC Early Childhood Education Fellow. Ilene sits on the School Readiness/NC Pre-K Committee and has served as Secretary since FY 09-10.

Queron Smith, Senior Underwriter at The Redwoods Group, will serve as Treasurer of the Board. Prior to joining Redwoods, Smith was the Durham City Executive with Mechanics and Farmers Bank. During his tenure there, he joined the Partnership's Finance and Audit Committee and also facilitated a grant from the bank to support a year of Early Childhood Bus Tours. Smith has served on many community boards in Durham, including the Emily K. Center, the Johnson C. Smith University Durham Alumni Association, Durham Cares, Downtown Durham, Inc., and Central Park School for Children, and Habitat for Humanity.

Newly elected members of the Board:

Elizabeth S. Erickson – Pediatrician, Duke Children’s Primary Care

Phillip A. Harris, Jr. – Attorney, Kilpatrick Townsend & Stockton LLP

Jason Jones – Assistant Director, Durham Parks and Recreation

Queron Smith – Senior Underwriter, The Redwoods Group

The Board of Directors meets bi-monthly, and all meetings are open to the public. For a full list of Board members, meeting schedule and minutes from previous meetings, please visit www.dpfc.net.

About Durham’s Partnership for Children – Preparing our children to succeed.

Founded in 1994 and first funded in 1995 to administer the Smart Start grant in Durham County, the Partnership works as an independent, local nonprofit that serves young children birth to age 5 and their families to ensure that all children enter school healthy and ready to succeed. For more than 20 years, the Partnership has helped parents pay for child care, improved the quality of child care and provided health and family support services to thousands of Durham County families with young children. The Partnership leverages the public and private sectors to achieve its mission: To ensure every child in Durham enters school ready to succeed, we lead community strategies for children birth to 5 and their families that promote healthy development and learning and enhance access to high quality care. The Partnership administers Smart Start, NC Pre-K, and Early Head Start in Durham County. For more information about the Partnership, visit www.dpfc.net or call 919-403-6960, ext. 221.

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