

DURHAM BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Resolution

RECOGNITION FOR DR. VIRGINIA WILLIAMS

- WHEREAS,** Virginia Williams was born in 1937 and raised in Seaboard, North Carolina, in a family that emphasized hard work, sacrifice, and moral courage—values that shaped her character throughout her life; and
- WHEREAS,** in 1957, at the age of 20, she participated in a peaceful sit-in protest led by Durham civil rights leader Rev. Douglas Moore at the Royal Ice Cream Parlor as one of the ‘Royal Seven,’ where they sat in the whites-only section and were subsequently arrested; and
- WHEREAS,** during that now-historic encounter with law enforcement, it is widely noted that Virginia Williams demonstrated exceptional courage, clarity, and a steadfast commitment to justice—qualities that would define her lifelong pursuit of fairness and decency; and
- WHEREAS,** years later in reflecting on her participation the historic event that predated the Greensboro sit-ins Williams says, “It was exciting, because we went where we dared not to go. I wasn't frightened or anything of that sort because either way, we could have made history. If he had served us ice cream, he would have made history. But, by refusing to, I guess we made history!"; and
- WHEREAS,** she continues to share the story of the Royal Seven and to educate others about Durham’s rich civil rights legacy, and in 2022 she was awarded an Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree from North Carolina Central University in recognition of her enduring contributions.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Durham Board of County Commissioners hereby recognizes and congratulates

DR. VIRGINIA WILLIAMS

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we extend congratulations as she will be honored at the International Civil Rights Center & Museum’s 2026 “Sit-In Participant Award” at its Annual Gala on July 18, 2026.

This the 13th day of July 2026.

Dr. Mike Lee, Chair

Nida Allam, Vice Chair

Michelle Burton, Commissioner

Wendy Jacobs, Commissioner

Stephen Valentine, Commissioner

