

Durham Democratic Women

Biographical Questions

Name: Steve Schewel

Age: 66

Place of Birth: Lynchburg, Va.

Marital Status: Married to Lao Rubert

Children: Abraham, age 31, and Solomon, age 27. Both attended Durham Public Schools from K-12.

Education: BA, Duke University, 1973; MA in English, Columbia University, 1974; PhD in Education, Duke University, 1982

Occupation: Visiting Assistant Professor of Public Policy, Duke University, 2000-2017

Current Employer: Duke University Sanford School of Public Policy

Public Sector Work Experience:

- Former Instructor of English, NCCU
- Former English teacher, Jordan High School

Private Sector Work Experience:

- Visiting Assistant Professor of Public Policy, Duke University, 2000-present
- Founder, President and Publisher, *The Independent* (now *IndyWeek*), 1983-2012
- Co-founder, President, Hopscotch Music Festival, 2010-2015
- Co-director, North Carolina Public Interest Research Group, 1979-81

Elected office held, with dates:

- Member, Durham Board of Education, 2004-2008 (vice-chair, 2006-2008)
- Member, Durham City Council, 2011-present

Relevant Experience:

- Founder and former board member, Crayons2Calculators (C2C), non-profit supplying \$1 million in free supplies to Durham Public Schools' teachers for the past ten years

- Past Co-President, E.K. Powe PTA
- Member, School Merger Issues Task Force (chair of committee that wrote final report)
- Member, Blue Ribbon Commission on the Future of Durham High School (now Durham School of the Arts)
- Youth soccer coach for 18 years at the YMCA, Strikers Club, Brogden Middle School, Riverside High School
- Recognized by the North Carolina Recreation and Parks Association as their 2014 North Carolina statewide “Distinguished Legislator” for advocacy of the funding, upkeep and safety of Durham’s parks

Boards/Commissions:

- Council liaison to the Durham Housing Authority
- Chair, Durham-CHC Metropolitan Planning Organization
- Chair, Finance Committee, Mayor’s Poverty Reduction Initiative
- Member, Audit Services Committee
- Council liaison to the Recreation Advisory Commission
- Council liaison to the Durham Open Space and Trails Commission
- Member, Council Legislative Affairs Committee
- Former member (21 years), Board of Directors, Durham Tech Community Foundation (past chair)
- Former member, Board of Directors, Urban Ministries of Durham
- Former member, Board of Directors, Durham Arts Council
- Former member, Board of Directors, Durham Public Education Network
- Former member, Community Advisory Board, WNCU Radio (N.C. Central)
- Former member, Community Advisory Board, WUNC Radio (UNC-CH)
- Former member, Board of Directors, N.C. Museum of Life and Science

Website: stevefordurham.com

Facebook page: Steve Schewel for Mayor

Twitter handle: [@stevefordurham](https://twitter.com/stevefordurham)

Why are you running:

Why am I running? It’s simple. I love this city, and I want to help it flourish for everybody. Since I graduated from Duke in 1973, I have immersed myself in the civic and political life of Durham. I believe that my service has prepared me well to lead us towards the realization of a common vision—a vision of a prosperous, innovative, green and welcoming city that thrives on

diversity and difference, that puts racial and economic justice at the top of our civic agenda, that defends the vulnerable among us, that cherishes robust, respectful debate on difficult questions, that embodies the belief that all residents get an opportunity to share in our newfound prosperity, that serves as a progressive beacon for the South and the nation.

As Durham's economy booms, we face three critical challenges:

First, we must make sure that the city we love is a city for all. The harsh underside to Durham's recent prosperity is that thousands of people—overwhelmingly African-American and Latino—are poor, jobless, and now increasingly priced out of their central-city neighborhoods. To ensure that everyone in our community can support themselves and their family, we must keep affordable housing at the top of our agenda, train our residents for good jobs and connect them to those jobs, create a bus and rail system that makes employment around our region accessible to all, and guarantee policing that is free from racial profiling and discrimination and that keeps our neighborhoods safe from gun violence.

Second, in the Age of Trump and our ultra-conservative legislature, we must speak out boldly for Durham's values, and we must act on them. This means speaking out as the city council has in opposition to HB2 or to Trump's immigration policies. But just as important are the practical ways that Durham finds to act on our values—like the council's support for the Faith ID for undocumented immigrants, like our misdemeanor diversion court, like Durham Refugee Day, like our assertion of an environmental agenda in response to Trump's withdrawal from the Paris accords. As our state and national governments fail us, the resistance is local—and the solutions are, too.

Third, as we grow, we must enhance rather than diminish our wonderful small-city quality of life. We need to preserve open space and parkland, protect our neighborhoods from commercial encroachment, provide a plentiful future source of safe, clean drinking water, replenish our declining tree canopy, keep pace with our infrastructure needs, and increase the pace of construction of the sidewalks, ball fields, bike lanes and trails that will make Durham a happier and healthier place to live. Finally, we must make these resources available to everyone in every neighborhood.

What is the best thing about Durham?

The best thing about Durham is our vibrant civic culture, the multitude of voices that are engaged in our civic and political life every day. Our diversity is one of our greatest assets, but other cities have that same diversity. Few of them, however, have the same kind of ongoing robust public participation and commitment that we witness every day on every issue in Durham.

For every need, for every issue, there are non-profits, civic clubs, churches, neighborhood organizations, advocacy groups and political action committees stepping forward to take action and be heard. Volunteerism and political participation are our civil religions.

Durham is a place where everyone can step forward to participate, to lead, to speak and be heard—and we welcome that broad participation and debate. That is deep democracy, and that is what sets Durham apart.