

VOLUME 33 MARCH/APRIL 2024

# Scoops of Information & Inspiration!



DURHAM COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES



## WE WANT YOU!

Participation is welcomed here at SCOOPS! Feel free to send helpful information, recipes, life hacks and more to the email address below.

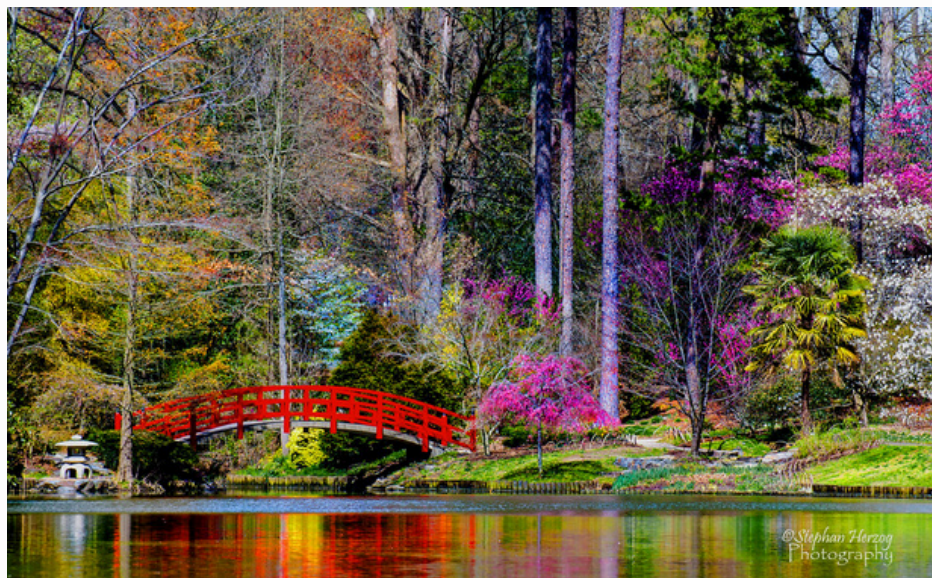
We also love to celebrate others! Graduation season is around the corner--let us know about your victories!



To get your SCOOPS delivered to your inbox, email:

[DCoDSSPublicInformation@dconc.gov](mailto:DCoDSSPublicInformation@dconc.gov)

## SPRING HAS SPRUNG!



One of the beautiful joys of Durham, is the Sarah P. Duke Gardens! Make sure to visit soon. It's a great place to unwind in nature, get some exercise and have FREE fun with your family! Learn more here:

[bit.ly/37WQACb](https://bit.ly/37WQACb)





## One Pot Lemon Pepper Chicken With Orzo

Lemon Pepper Chicken with Orzo is a zesty one-pot meal featuring juicy chicken thighs, orzo, feta, and lemon pepper for tons of flavor!

**Recipe Compliments of Budget Bytes**

### INGREDIENTS

- 4 chicken thighs\*
- 2 Tbsp lemon pepper seasoning
- 1 Tbsp cooking oil
- 2 cloves garlic
- 2 cups chicken broth
- 1/4 cup chopped parsley
- 1.5 cups orzo
- 2 oz. feta, crumbled

Visit our Durham Farmers' Market to get locally grown produce!



Wednesday markets are now open!  
Visit every Wednesday from 3pm-6pm

Main Market Season Hours  
Saturday's 8am-12pm  
April thru November

Double Buck\$ Program is available for SNAP customers

Durham turned 155 years old on  
April 10th!





The garnish of parsley with feta cheese combined with the orzo, makes this easy dish restaurant approved!

## ONE POT LEMON PEPPER CHICKEN WITH ORZO (CONTIN.)

### INSTRUCTIONS

- Blot the chicken thighs dry with a paper towel, then season both sides liberally with lemon pepper seasoning (about 2 Tbsp lemon pepper total).
- Heat a large deep skillet over medium. Once hot, add the cooking oil. Add the seasoned chicken thighs, skin side down, and let them cook undisturbed until browned (about 6-8 minutes for bone-in skin-on thighs). Flip the chicken thighs and cook until browned on the second side. The chicken will be cooked most of the way through at this point but will finish cooking when simmered with the orzo. Remove the chicken to a clean plate.
- While the chicken is browning, roughly chop about 1/4 bunch of parsley and mince two cloves of garlic. After removing the chicken from the skillet, turn the heat down to low, add the minced garlic, and sauté the garlic in the residual fat for about a minute.
- Add 2 cups of chicken broth to the skillet and stir to dissolve the crispy browned bits from the bottom of the pan.
- Add the orzo and half of the chopped parsley. Stir to combine. Finally, return the chicken to the skillet, skin side up.
- Place a lid on the skillet, turn the heat up to high, and let the broth come to a full boil. Once it reaches a boil, turn the heat down to low. Let the skillet simmer on low for about 15 minutes, or until most of the broth has been absorbed. Make sure it's simmering the whole time. If it stops simmering, increase the heat slightly until it just starts to simmer again.
- After about 15 minutes the orzo should be tender and most of the broth absorbed but there will still be a little sauce in the skillet.
- Fluff the orzo around the chicken a bit with a fork, then top with the remaining parsley and the crumbled feta. Serve and enjoy!



**Tip:** You must generously apply the lemon pepper seasoning to the chicken to start to ensure the great flavor!



**SLICE 325**

This nonprofit organization based in Durham, was founded in 2017 as a socially responsible initiative that provides culinary education classes to individuals and families.



# Learn About Nonprofit Slice 325



Durham has many treasures, but one jewel in Durham, that is no longer hidden is a unique nonprofit dedicated to improving the health outcomes of Durham's most needy residents: **SLICE 325**, which stands for *Serving Locations Inviting Culinary Education 325*.

Shemecka was inspired by observing several relatives negatively impacted with health challenges. With her years of experience in the healthcare industry, she is very knowledgeable of the importance of healthy eating for overall well-being. SLICE 325 is dedicated to educating low-income individuals and families on how to create healthy meals using affordable ingredients. Her organization provides FREE classes on grocery budgeting; food preparation; meal planning, spice creating, cooking classes and MORE!

Shemecka's expertise extends beyond health education - she is also a trained chef, healthcare professional, and farmer. Her unique skill set allows her to approach health and nutrition from a variety of angles, making her a valuable resource for anyone seeking to improve their eating habits and overall health.

As the Executive Director of SLICE 325, Shemecka is committed to making a difference in the lives of others, one meal at a time. She firmly believes that every family is unique and that there are countless creative ways to prepare healthy meals that are both delicious and affordable.



Shemecka McNeil, Founder & Executive Director of SLICE 325

Please check out the graphic above to see how you can get involved with this Durham treasure!

# Helpful Tips & Tricks

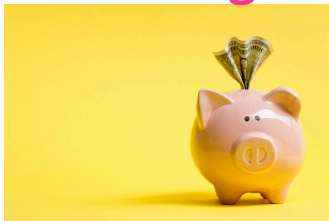


## Try this Proven Cost Saving Trick!

When you purchase a large container of salad greens, you CAN make them last! How? By simply folding a layer of paper towel inside of the container and sealing it shut, once you take out the amount you will consume. DO NOT wash the greens and put them back into the container. Wash the amount you will eat, and seal the container shut with the paper towel covering. It works! We can't explain it--just try it!



## How's Your Budget Doing?



Check out these valuable tips from **PENNY HOARDER**

- **Retiring Age:** [bit.ly/4dfN6b8](https://bit.ly/4dfN6b8)
- **50 Ways to Make More \$:** [bit.ly/448x8uZ](https://bit.ly/448x8uZ)
- **28 Ways to save on Groceries:** [bit.ly/3W15cY9](https://bit.ly/3W15cY9)
- **How to Pay off Credit Card Debt:** [bit.ly/3U8YpZW](https://bit.ly/3U8YpZW)
- **How to buy a House:** [bit.ly/49lIAzV](https://bit.ly/49lIAzV)



SHINE is a free app with daily affirmations, and an actual person who reads a daily recorded message. SHINE was designed to reduce anxiety & stress. Go to your App store and download it. Thank us later!





**Congratulations to our very own  
Dr. Dana Hart-Raynor!**



**Dana Hart-Raynor, Ed.D.**

“In March, in honor of Social Work appreciation month, our agency held a statewide contest to identify the MOST AMAZING Social Worker in NC. We asked our followers, families, social workers, resource agencies and community partners to nominate an amazing social worker. Hundreds of workers were nominated! I am honored to inform you that Dana Hart has been awarded an Honorable Mention! This is an incredible honor for her and we are ecstatic to share this news with you. She will receive recognition on our social media sites as well. Please join me in congratulating her! “

**Christy Roessler, Director of Outreach  
Foster Family Alliance of NC**

*A Friendly Reminder...*

Stop waiting  
for friday,

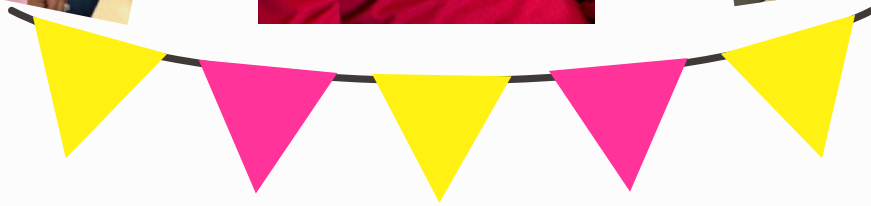
for summer,  
for someone to  
fall in love with you,  
for life. Happiness is  
achieved when you stop  
waiting for it and make  
the most of the moment  
you are in now.



**I AM is a free app with  
daily affirmations, to help  
rewire our brains, build  
self esteem and change  
negative thought patterns.  
Go to your App store and  
download it. Get it today!**



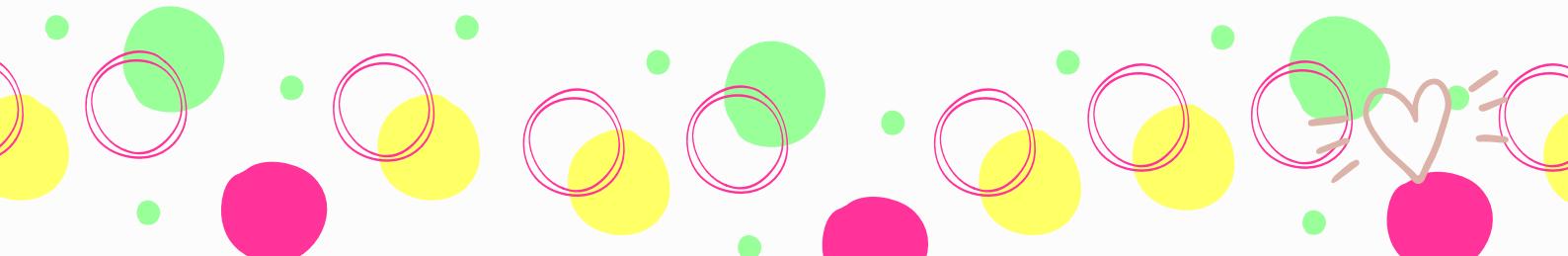
## We Celebrate Our Social Workers!



This year's theme for #NationalSocialWorkMonth was *"Empowering Social Workers"*

There are approximately 720,000 social workers in the United States. The field of social work is expected to grow by 13% between 2019 and 2029. In 2019, about 43% of social workers were employed in individual and family services. According to the U.S. Labor Bureau and Statistics social work is one of the fastest growing careers in our country. We're so fortunate to have roughly 500 of them at our agency!

Thank you to all of our social workers for your service to the Durham community!





# Community Celebrations



Our wonderful **Durham Parks & Rec Department** turns 100 years old this year! Visit their website for Summer Camp, Aquatics, Mature Programming, and so much more:  
[bit.ly/49NADIs](http://bit.ly/49NADIs)

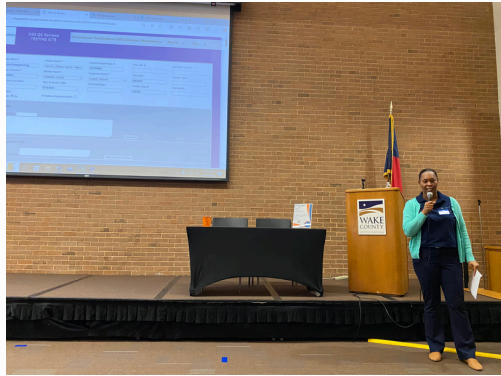
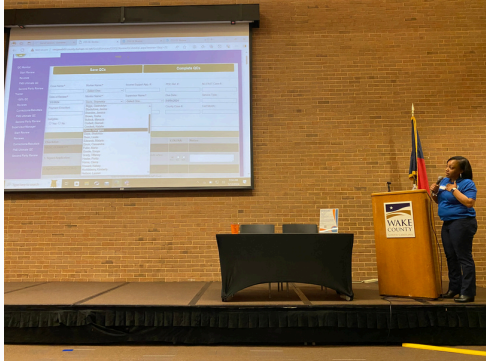
For their 100th Anniversary **DPR** is bringing R&B icon **MONICA** to their **BIMBE Festival!**  
Save the date: **May 18th**



**The Durham Center for Senior Life** is 75 years young! This award winning nonprofit's mission is all about "enriching the lives of older adults 55+ by promoting healthy, active and independent lifestyles." The Center offers lots of engaging activities. To get involved, visit: [dcsln.org](http://dcsln.org)



**Customer Accountability Talent & Development (CATD):** The division that touches every portion of the agency. The Call Center, Records Management; Training on all of our service programs; our reception areas; specialty external training programs, Covey training and Public Information Services are all handled by this unique agency division.



**Candice Leathers, Vada Moore, Shamekia Davis, Melanie Johnson** presented their unique QAT magic and tools at a state meeting in Wake County. They were treated like the rock stars that they are! **Kim Lincoln, CATD Interim Assistant Director** went to the training as well. We're proud of you ladies!



**Shelbia Green and Joanne Otuonye** part of the QA team for Aging & Adult Services spent some time volunteering at the Durham Rescue Mission. Thank you ladies for giving back to our Durham community!

**Jackie Hamlet  
A DCoDSS Star**



**“Jackie Hamlet is a star. Jackie is so quiet, but a true leader. With everything on her plate, she makes everything look easy. She may have several tasks but will always follow up and get back with you. She is dependable, reliable, and approachable. Jackie, thank you for being who you are and supporting everyone with grace.”**

*Submitted by: Deborah Cousin, Social Worker II,  
Foster Care/Resource Parent Recruiter*



# April is Child Abuse Prevention Month



## A Giant Blue Heart of LOVE

Protecting children is more than wearing a color for a day, and taking photos. But it is a cool way to get a number of people together to create a conversation about an important topic. Our staff works hard on this task daily to protect the lives and souls of children. If you suspect child abuse in Durham, call **919-560-8424**.

Our community partner Positive Childhood Alliance NC offers free training & professional development opportunities to prevent child abuse and neglect before it occurs. Visit: [bit.ly/4b0FhUw](https://bit.ly/4b0FhUw)

There were 116,566 NC children with investigated reports of possible abuse and neglect from July 2022-June 2023. Every case referred is investigated, with the goal of strengthening the family, and the best possible outcomes for the children involved.



## Connect With Us On Social Media



@DCoDSS



/DurhamDSS



DurhamCountyDepartmentSocialServices