

**Anjali Boyd**

**24 July 2020**

**People's Alliance Political Action Committee**

**Candidate's Fitness and Interest Statement**

In 1988, Mrs. Stella Adams became the first Black woman in the history of the state of North Carolina to earn and serve as Soil & Water Conservation District Supervisor. Thus, a legacy began. For over 30 years, the efforts of the Black women who served in this position have inspired other women to aspire for, win and serve other counties across North Carolina. As District Supervisor of Durham County Soil & Water Conservation District, my goal is to serve my hometown and build on those powerful legacies during my tenure of service.

The Durham County Soil & Water Conservation District's interdisciplinary approach has been adopted to enhance, protect and conserve Durham County's natural resources. As a scientist, educator, and entrepreneur, interdisciplinary approaches based in equitable paradigms have always helped me through the broad paradoxical nature of my interests and training. I learned early on to understand, respect and hold in a constant creative tension the importances of tackling issues using an interdisciplinary approach that involves science, education, economics, and an understanding of how they all hold up against the backdrop of our economy and how they are personalized within our own individual lives.

The Durham County Soil & Water Conservation District maintains its stance addressing interdisciplinary objectives & concepts at the intersection of human health and natural resource management. It will always be crucial for our District Supervisors to be centered in this interdisciplinary work, as I do.

I am the most qualified person to serve in this capacity. The combination of my international expertise in the environmental conservation field and my extensive roots in Durham County are the immediate aspects of my candidacy that are glaring. As a marine scientist, I have intensively studied these topics full-time; around water quality, natural resource management, and environmental conservation for the last 6 years. I have done so throughout the United States and internationally. As a #DurhamNative and a Durham Public Schools graduate, I have the connections, perspective and awareness needed to advocate for our communities and connect new and existing Soil & Water programs to those who would benefit from them the most. While also introducing them to a wide array of residents of whom Soil & Water's programs could be augmented. I am committed to using my experience, knowledge, formal education and commitment to the Bull City and Durham County along with my immersion in the environmental conservation field to connect with and promote advocacy for our youth. I am deeply passionate about Durham and invested in the success of Durham County, as it is my home and has been my family's home for generations.

I am currently a Ph.D. student at Duke University in the Nicholas School of the Environment and an Associate Supervisor for the Durham County Soil & Water Conservation District. As District Supervisor, my commitment will be to focus on the needs of Durham County, especially communities that have historically been systematically marginalized. I am eager to serve using the same platform my parents raised me on: Education, Economic Development & Environmental Justice.

- **Education:** It is my responsibility to properly equip generations and communities with the knowledge necessary to make informed decisions on the management and conservation of Durham's natural resources. It's also my responsibility to listen to these same communities and learn from their perspectives on Durham's natural resources and how their relationships with them could be augmented. I will go about doing this, using the following three guidelines;
  - Continue to build relationships between Soil & Water and Durham Public Schools with majority-minority populations, such as Jordan, Hillside, Southern, Riverside, and Northern.
  - Partner with educators to 1) raise awareness of Soil & Water, our missions, and values, 2) ensure that local educators and our youth know about and have access to Soil & Water education funds and 3) incorporate environmental conservation and AgScience into their yearly curriculum.
  - Collaborate with local organizations and community organizers to create campaigns around environmental conservation and Durham's natural resources.
- **Economic Development:** Agriculture and agribusiness is the #1 industry in North Carolina, and contributes billions to the state's economy. I will work to ensure that this continues and that marginalized communities know about the economic opportunities available to all in Agriculture. Simultaneously, I will advocate for; increased funding for the Agriculture Economic Development (AED) Grant; the implementation of technical assistance programs to lower the barrier of entry for GAP certification; and the expansions of Farm-to-Table programs. Lastly, recent studies have found that farmers who are tech-savvy have been better off than their counterparts that are not during COVID-19. As a result, I will work to connect local farmers with technology that will help them increase sales during and after the pandemic.
- **Environmental Justice:** Environmental racism is the disproportionate impact of environmental hazards on people of Color. It is often called the 'forgotten' sector of social justice, as it is more often than not left off of the list of social injustices that people of Color face (such as income inequality, education, health care, racial discriminations, etc.). However, I believe it is one of the most deadly injustices people of Color face, as there is a **direct link between environmental condition and human health**. I will work to:
  - Protect and conserve Durham's natural resources
    - improving water quality and decreasing sedimentation and nutrient pollution in Jordan and Falls Lake
    - Ensuring Durham's natural resources are not disproportionately impacted by pollution from other NC counties
  - Guarantee that marginalized communities have equitable access to our county's natural resources and green spaces.
  - Work with our communities, especially marginalized communities, to combat food insecurities and water pollution and prepare for extreme weather events (e.g. heat waves, heavy rainfall, and flooding).
    - Poor food and water quality decrease overall human health, which can lead to health care and medical systems being overwhelmed
    - Increasing FNS licensing among farmers and farmers markets
    - Creating proactive solutions (e.g. planting trees & restoring eroding creeks) to prepare for extreme weather events.

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**Biographical Statement**

I am a #DurhamNative, a Black woman, a millennial, and a marine scientist. I am committed to using my experience, knowledge, the formal education I have been blessed to obtain and pursue and my love for my hometown to connect with and promote advocacy for Durham County. I am the product of strong, loving, Black parents who have always preached the value of education, entrepreneurship and utilizing whatever achievements I may reach for the betterment of others.

I was born and raised in Durham, NC and attended Burton, Southwest, & Creekside Elementary, Shepard IB Middle & Jordan High School. In high school, I studied animal science, was a member of the FFA, served on the Student Council, and was voted homecoming queen my senior year. I also volunteered with the Museum of Life and Sciences throughout high school. After graduating in 2015, I left Durham to attend Eckerd College in St. Petersburg, FL where I majored in Marine Science (Biology Track). While away in college, I spent my time traveling, completing internships in my field, and educating K-12 students. I graduated from Eckerd in 2019 and moved back to Durham shortly after, where I have been working with organizations (e.g. iNviTECH and Bambino's Playschool) and schools (Neal Middle School) in Durham to develop and implement STEM curriculums. The objective of my STEM education work has been to expose students from diverse and underrepresented backgrounds to the aquatic environment and environmental conservation.

Throughout my career, I have been **awarded over 25 awards and scholarships** (including: NOAA, Hollings Scholarship, Eckerd College Presidential Scholarship, Eckerd College Social Justice Award, Marine Science Outstanding Contribution to the Major Award, and Duke Marine Lab's Marine Science and Conservations Scholarship.). I have also **studied and conducted research at the most respected institutions in my discipline**, such as National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Scripps Institute of Oceanography, and Duke University Marine Lab. In addition to attending and presenting my work at world-renowned international conferences. Outside of research, I have gained valuable teaching experience as a Teaching Assistant for John Hopkins Center for Talented Youth (CTY), an intern for the Duke University Marine Lab Community Science Initiative, and the current Director of Instruction & Curriculum Development for iNviTECH. Furthermore, I hold/held a number of leadership positions, including founding and serving as editor-in-chief of Eckerd College's Feedback Magazine, founding and leading the Eckerd College Marine Science Club, and being elected the Chair of the Ecological Society of America's (ESA) Student Section and the Secretary/Treasurer for the Society of Wetland Scientists (SWS) Student Section. The variety of experiences I have participated in, such as conducting research, participating in educational outreach events, and teaching the youth, has allowed me to develop a unique set of research, science communication, and leadership skills.

I am currently continuing my formal education as a Ph.D. student at Duke University in the Nicholas School of the Environment and my education and outreach work as a Program Lead for the Duke University Marine Lab Community Science Initiative's STEM Pathways Program and Water Quality educational curriculum. While also serving as an Associate Supervisor for the Durham County Soil &

Water Conservation District. My efforts and energies are leveraged toward working to ensure environmental conservation fields are developing equitable science-based and community centered programs and policies to protect our natural resources.

To learn more about me, my platform, and the #DurhamNative team, visit our website at [www.Anjali4Durham.com](http://www.Anjali4Durham.com) or find us on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter at @Anjali4Durham.