

Town of Durham raking in accolades

By Morgan Palmer

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DURHAM — From Town Administrator Todd Selig's point of view, Durham has always been a winning community. It's just an added bonus to Selig, then, that the community has been receiving praise for its jobs, schools and safety efforts.

Durham's accolades in the last year include:

- The No. 1 town in N.H. for young families by NerdWallet.com, a personal finance website.
- The fifth most exciting place in the state by Movoto, a real estate brokerage based in California.
- The No. 1 town in the state for population and job growth from 2010 to 2012 by Nerdwallet.com
- The second safest community in the state by Safe Choice Security, a national provider of security systems.
- The No. 2 place to live for "20-somethings" in the country by CNNMoney.
- The top community for equal treatment for the LGBT community by the Human Rights Campaign.
- Oyster River High School ranked in the top 1 percent of more than 14,000 schools evaluated by Newsweek.
- A great place for the young at heart by the Boston Globe.

Selig expects the town to receive even more recognition in the future. "Durham has received so many accolades because it is a special place," Selig said. "Perhaps most notably so because of the people who live here — smart, entrepreneurial, always taking the long-term perspective, focused on the environment, community oriented, committed to quality education. "Selig added the town is "blessed" with a team of hardworking employees who work diligently to meet the needs of the town's residents.

Police Chief David Kurz said his department takes pride in making Durham a safe place for all. "We have long touted that ... in spite of all the students, the UNH and Durham Police ... are able to maintain this environment where, for the most part, students and residents are free of the challenges of major crime," he said.

Durham's Economic Development Director Mary Ellen Humphrey said the university has had a large impact in the economic success of the town. "With the university providing a dynamic economic engine in town, Durham has weathered the economic downturn better than lots of other communities," she

said. "Over 70 percent of Durham's residents over age 25 have a college degree, and over 40 percent have advanced degrees. This is a tremendous asset for the town. Not only has Durham done well, but it is poised to enjoy more economic prosperity by virtue of its careful planning and thoughtful administration of the town."

Selig said, "In Durham, you really do get what you pay for. And the 'what' is highlighted by the accolades we have received."