

SEACOAST ONLINE

December 9, 2013

Durham Ranked No. 1 In N.H. For Young Families; Portsmouth 6th

By Staff reports

news@seacoastonline.com

December 09, 2013 9:21 AM

Durham has been named the No. 1 town in New Hampshire for young families by NerdWallet.com, while Portsmouth ranked sixth, Newmarket seventh and Hampton eighth.

NerdWallet.com said that when young families choose a place to settle down, they look for more than an affordable home. They look for a community that offers them opportunities, both in the job market and at schools. It asked the following questions and analyzed communities across the state:

1. Does the town have good public schools? NerdWallet measured schools' academic performance with ratings from GreatSchools. This non-profit compares a given school's standardized test scores to the state average to obtain a rating on a 1 to 10 scale (10 representing the highest score). Higher ratings led to a higher overall score.
2. Can you afford to live there? Median home values in each town and ongoing monthly home costs were considered, including mortgage payments, real estate taxes, insurance costs, utilities, fuel and other bills. Lower costs led to a higher overall score.
3. Is the town growing and prospering? A town's economy was assessed by looking at average household income and income growth over the last decade. Higher income and greater growth led to a higher overall score.

Durham Town Manager Todd Selig said, "The designation celebrates what local residents have known for years, Durham is a terrific place to live, work, and raise a family. Anchored by the University of New Hampshire and the Oyster River Cooperative School District, along with rich natural resources and high quality municipal services, there is a lot to like about our town."

NerdWallet.com is a personal finance and credit card comparison website launched in March 2010.

The top 15 on the list in New Hampshire are as follows, in order: Durham, Hooksett, Littleton, Hanover, Lebanon, Portsmouth, Newmarket, Hampton, Londonderry, Keene, Goffstown, Concord, Hudson, Wolfeboro, Berlin.