



# MEDIA RELEASE

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Tarboro, NC America in Bloom National 2013 Awards Announced**

(COLUMBUS, OH): After months of anxious waiting, top honors for the prestigious 2013 America in Bloom national awards program were announced at the annual awards held in Orlando, Florida on September 21.

America in Bloom executive director, Laura Kunkle, said, “America in Bloom is helping participants of all types achieve their potential. The accomplishments and progress shown by this year's towns and cities is remarkable.”

Tarboro earned a three bloom rating in the 7,001 to 12,000 population category. In addition, they received special mention for their environmental efforts.

Tarboro was judged on six criteria: overall impression, environmental awareness, heritage, urban forestry, landscape, and floral displays, across four sectors: municipal, residential, commercial, and community involvement.

Ed Hooker III and Jim Abraham, two specially trained AIB judges, visited towns of similar populations and spent two days touring each town, meeting municipal officials, residents, and volunteers. Other competitors in the 7,001 to 12,000 category were Demopolis, AL and Coshocton, OH.

Hooker and Abraham were very impressed with the city’s environmental efforts and commented, “Faced with a failing school system, the residents of Tarboro met the challenge head-on by chartering a new school that focuses on not only the education of students, but also on the arts, agriculture, and physical well being. School founders repurposed an abandoned facility for initial classes, and new facilities are being constructed to LEED standards. A greenhouse onsite will provide a space for the children to grow plants for sale, and gardens will provide a food source for the cafeteria. An on-site working farm will allow children to explore and learn about caring for animals. Children will be actively involved in campus beautification projects. Last year, approximately 2000 daffodil and tulip bulbs were donated by the Keep America Beautiful Program and planted throughout the 52 acre campus. Rain gardens have been installed to address parking lot run-off. When at full capacity, the school will educate 2200 children K-12 from 7 surrounding counties.”

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Congratulations to Tarboro!

Registrations for the 2014 national awards program can be submitted until February 28, 2014. Eligible participants include towns, cities, college and university campuses, business districts, military installations, and recognized neighborhoods of large cities.

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*America in Bloom is an independent, non-profit 501(c)(3) organization. America in Bloom envisions communities across the country as welcoming and vibrant places to live, work, and play – benefiting from colorful plants and trees; enjoying clean environments; celebrating heritage; and planting pride through volunteerism. For more information, visit [www.americainbloom.org](http://www.americainbloom.org).*

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