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DURHAM, N.H. -- The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching has officially recognized the University of New Hampshire as a "community engaged" university, placing UNH among 119 higher education institutions selected nationally in 2008 by Carnegie.

Carnegie's Community Engagement Classification is awarded in recognition of a college or university's exemplary alignment among their mission, culture, leadership, resources, and practices that support dynamic and noteworthy community engagement.

UNH defines community engagement as "a mutually beneficial relationship between the university and external partners for the purpose of generating and applying knowledge directly to benefit the public."

"We are pleased to receive this recognition from the Carnegie Foundation," said UNH President Mark Huddleston. "We are significantly engaged with partners in our state and nationally through the work and commitment of our faculty, extension educators, and students."

Other colleges and universities across the country recognized by the foundation include Duke, Georgetown, the University of Michigan and from New England, the University of Maine, several campuses in the University of Massachusetts system, and St. Anselm's College. These institutions join the 76 institutions selected in 2006 - the year Carnegie initially established the classification to emphasize the importance of community engagement in higher education.

UNH submitted a detailed application to the Carnegie Foundation describing the institutions' commitment to community engagement. Julie Williams, associate vice president for research and outreach scholarship, and associate professor George Hurtt co-chaired the Carnegie classification planning team.

According to Williams, community engagement at UNH takes many different forms. For example, UNH's Carsey Institute conducts policy research on vulnerable children, youth and families and provides policy makers and practitioners the resources they need to effect change in communities. The Joan and James Leitzel Center partners with local school districts so that children in the state have cutting-edge knowledge in mathematics and science education. And UNH Cooperative Extension is actively engaged statewide to bring the resources and knowledge of the university to local communities.

"These are just three of a much larger number of examples that exemplify our commitment to be an engaged university," said Williams. "I am also very proud of the many individual faculty, extension educators, and students who are committed to partnering with our communities."

Upon announcement of the 2008 Community Engagement Classification recipients, Carnegie President Anthony Bryk said, "We hope that by acknowledging the commitment and
accomplishment of these engaged institutions, the foundation will encourage other colleges and universities to move in this direction. Doing so brings benefits to the community and to the institution."

The University of New Hampshire, founded in 1866, is a world-class public research university with the feel of a New England liberal arts college. A land, sea and space-grant university, UNH is the state's flagship public institution, enrolling 11,800 undergraduate and 2,400 graduate students.

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