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DURHAM, N.H. - When Kaitlyn Scofield of Pembroke was asked to choose an organization to volunteer with as part of her coursework at a University of New Hampshire business class, her decision was clear -- Compassionate Friends of Greater Manchester-Nashua. An organization that supports families who have lost a child, sibling, or grandchild, Compassionate Friends of Greater Manchester-Nashua helped Scofield and her family after the death of her brother, Ryan.

"Every year, my mom receives a letter on my brother's birthday from Compassionate Friends with inspirational quotes and prayers. This is so important because when the rest of the world goes back to its normal lives after a tragedy, a family of the deceased cannot. It's always nice to know someone is still thinking of you," Scofield said.

Scofield is one of four students at the UNH Whittemore School of Business and Economics honored recently with a Fidelity Investments Community Service Award, in recognition of their outstanding service projects with area nonprofits. Honorees are enrolled in the Whittemore School's Introduction to Business course taught by Ross Gittell, James R. Carter Professor of Management, and have completed a minimum of eight hours of community service to learn about corporate social responsibility.

"Fidelity has been a proud sponsor of the Fidelity Community Service Awards in partnership with the UNH Whittemore School of Business and Economics for the past five years. Thanks to the longevity of the program, $24,000 in grants has been given to local nonprofits on behalf of student volunteer projects," said Alison Stebbins, regional general manager for Fidelity Investments in New Hampshire.

In February, a group of 40 finalists attended a special reception and awards ceremony with Fidelity Investments employees who also are UNH alumni, at which time the four winning entries were announced. "Programs like this show our future workers that they can achieve both success and fulfillment in the career opportunities that exist right here in our great state," Stebbins said.

Winning student entries received a $1,000 Fidelity grant to benefit the nonprofit where they completed their volunteer work. On average, the students in the class donate more than 5,000 hours of service a year.

Scofield is this year's winner of the Community Investor category, which recognizes the student volunteer project or activity that provides the greatest benefit to families or an individual in or around New Hampshire. Scofield helped set up bereavement packets sent to newly mourning families and community members who work with the families. The packets offer information on the organization's extensive resources and on the grieving process. "I've never felt better about how I've spent my time. The best way to heal yourself is by helping others. I realized this from a simple assigned community service project," Scofield said.
Sarah Sceery of Warwick, R.I., won the Fidelity Literacy Award category, which recognizes a student volunteer project or activity that promotes literacy and/or helps strengthen reading skills for a variety of age groups and populations. Sceery volunteered with Seacoast Reads, a nonprofit, volunteer organization that pairs UNH undergraduate students with elementary students in the Seacoast area as reading tutors. Students meet twice a week to assist children in reading, writing, and literacy exercises.

"Although we had a number of exceptional finalists for the literacy award, Sarah stood out. She had volunteered for Seacoast Reads before, and during this exercise, she used her previous volunteer experience to recruit fellow students to join her at Seacoast Reads. Additionally, she served as the site coordinator, which is the liaison between the elementary school and Seacoast Reads," said Joe Murray, director of public affairs for Fidelity.

The Fidelity Financial Education Award recognizes a student volunteer project that helps promote personal financial education. This year's student winner is Roula Assadi of Greenland. Assadi volunteered with Autism Respite Resource Outreach, a new organization that has developed a training program and recruitment protocol that provides steady, dependable staff for families with autistic family members.

According to David Moore, senior vice president at Fidelity, Assadi designed a three-part plan to host a benefit event to raise awareness, wrote press releases, and created a newsletter. Her efforts brought more than 100 new private and business donors to the organization and expanded fundraising efforts with current friends and families of the organization.

Benjamin Roberge of Manchester was honored with the Fidelity Innovation and Technology Award, which recognizes a student volunteer project that helps a nonprofit organization use technology to initiate changes in its operations and service delivery channels to expand or improve service. Roberge worked with the Manchester Community Music School to help it create a marketing page on Facebook.

"The music school did not have the resources or expertise to create the page, which is considered an excellent marketing tool due to its targeted reach and popularity. By building the page and providing the school with the training and resources to maintain, update and fully utilize it, Ben helped the Manchester Community Music School bring music to a broader audience and continue its mission of changing lives through the power of music," said Bill Craver, client support associate at Fidelity.

Fidelity Investments is one of the world's largest providers of financial services, with custodied assets of over $2.5 trillion, including managed assets of over $1.2 trillion as of Jan. 31, 2009. The firm is the largest mutual fund company in the United States, the No. 1 provider of workplace retirement savings plans, the largest mutual fund supermarket and a leading online brokerage firm.

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.

PHOTOS
http://www.unh.edu/news/img/fidelity09.jpg
Benjamin Roberge, Roula Assadi, Alison Stebbins, Kaitlyn Scofield, and Sarah Sceery. (left to right)
Credit: UNH Photographic Services

http://www.unh.edu/news/img/scofield.jpg
Kaitlyn Scofield (right) with her brother Ryan and sister Samantha. Scofield decided to volunteer with Compassionate Friends of Greater Manchester-Nashua after the loss of her
brother.
Credit: Kaitlyn Scofield

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