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UNH Sustainable Commencement May 23 To Be Powered By Landfill Gas

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UNH Sustainable Commencement May 23 To Be Powered By Landfill Gas

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UNH Media Relations

May 14, 2009

Reporters/photographers: If you plan to attend commencement, please R.S.V.P. to Jody Record in UNH Media Relations: jody.record@unh.edu or 603-862-1462.

DURHAM, N.H. - From powering loudspeakers and Jumbotrons with landfill gas to composting celebratory snacks to honoring forward-thinking business and academic leaders, the University of New Hampshire will showcase its national leadership in campus sustainability at its commencement ceremony Saturday, May 23, 2009.

The ceremony will be powered by EcoLine™, which brings purified landfill gas from Waste Management's Turnkey landfill in Rochester to UNH's cogeneration plant, where it will provide up to 85 percent of the electricity and heat for the university. UNH will be the first university in the nation to receive the majority of its power from landfill gas. UNH President Mark Huddleston will officially launch EcoLine™ during the commencement ceremony, which takes place rain or shine on Memorial Field at 10 a.m.

"It's fitting that UNH's largest annual celebration embrace sustainability, which is at the core of what we do here all year long," says Huddleston. "I'm especially proud to launch EcoLine™ to this audience of UNH graduates, parents, and other friends from around the state and the region. As a project that advances both fiscal and environmental sustainability, it's a wonderful showcase of our New Hampshire values and education at work."

Gary Hirshberg, "CE-Yo" of Londonderry-based organic yogurt maker Stonyfield Farm and an outspoken business leader on issues of sustainability, will deliver the ceremony's keynote speech. Hirshberg will receive an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree. Other honorary degree recipients are Dennis Meadows, UNH professor emeritus and co-author of the influential 1972 environmental book "The Limits to Growth," and business leader and environmental steward Richard Verney, chairman and CEO of Bennington-based Monadnock Paper Mills. UNH will present Granite State Awards to corporate responsibility leader The Timberland Company of Stratham, and former state senator and public servant William Bartlett, Jr.

Additional sustainable elements of the ceremony include:

- Programs for both commencement and honors convocation will be printed on 100 percent recycled paper from Monadnock Paper Mills, which tracks the paper's environmental footprint here: <http://www.unh.edu/presidentialevents/commencement/MonadnockSavingsCertificate.pdf>.
- Student invitations to the ceremony were sent electronically, saving resources historically spent on printing and mailing thousands of invitations.
- UNH buses providing ceremony guest shuttle services will run on biodiesel and compressed fuel and will adhere to policies that reduce idling.
- UNH Dining Services will compost leftover food for use on the university's farms and for sale to the public as UDoo compost.

- Recycling stations will be available in and around Memorial Field.
- Porta-potties contain environmentally friendly products that are 100 percent biodegradable and non-toxic supplied by Earth Friendly Chemicals™.

UNH is a leader in conserving energy, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and integrating sustainability throughout its curricula, operations, research, and engagement efforts. Committed to being a climate protection campus that pursues a sustainable energy future through emissions reduction policies, practices, research, and education, UNH has earned several awards for its sustainability initiatives, which range from an undergraduate dual major in EcoGastronomy and organic dairy research to having the largest transit system in the state and being the first in the nation to receive an EPA Energy Star building rating for residence halls. Discover the sustainable learning community at UNH at www.sustainableunh.unh.edu and discoversustainability.org.

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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