



UNH Launches Ski Program Campaign With \$1 Million Leadership Gift

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DURHAM, N.H. -- University of New Hampshire Interim President J. Bonnie Newman announced today a \$1 million leadership gift for UNH's ski program, given by Thomas P. Putnam, former chairman of the Markem Corporation in Keene and a former member of the UNH ski team.

"Tom Putnam has helped us launch an aggressive 10-year fundraising campaign for the university's ski program, and we are deeply grateful for his support," said Newman. "His generosity helps ensure highly competitive ski teams for both men and women that will embody excellence and represent New Hampshire with distinction."

Putnam skied for UNH in the mid 1960s, and was captain of the freshman ski team before leaving the university to join the U.S. Army.

"The University of New Hampshire is committed to being a prominent force in the world of competitive skiing, and private support is critical to its continued success," said Putnam. "My feeling is every private gift to the university's ski program also is a gift to New Hampshire's official sport."

He announced the gift at a reception held recently at the NCAA Ski Championships, hosted by UNH this year at Attitash Mountain and the Jackson Ski Touring Center.

Putnam's gift will help fund scholarships, coaches' salaries and equipment, according to Newman. "Our goal is to support all of our varsity teams and men's and women's skiing certainly are two very important teams," she added. "A \$20 million campaign over the next 10 years will support the UNH ski program in perpetuity. There is great interest to keep UNH skiing strong because skiing is so vital to the state of New Hampshire, particularly its economy. We hope to not only build greater visibility for two great teams but to strengthen the relationship between UNH and the New Hampshire ski industry."

A committee to oversee the fund-raising effort includes names long familiar to New Hampshire skiing circles. Chaired by Attorney Jack Middleton, president of McLane, Graf, Raulerson and Middleton law firm, committee members include Phil Gravink, North Country ski enthusiast who, prior to his retirement, ran Loon, Cannon and Attitash ski areas; Penny Pitou of Sanbornton, a New Hampshire native and the first American to win an Olympic downhill medal; Kennett "Skip" Kendall, Jr., of Durham, former CEO of Kendall Insurance and an avid skier; Attorney Ann McLane Kuster of Hopkinton; Peter Powell, owner of Peter W. Powell Real Estate in Lancaster; Attorney Jack Sanders, UNH Class of 1959; Betty Tamposi, UNH alumna and member of the University System of New Hampshire Board of Trustees; and UNH alumnus William "Bill" Young, vice president of commercial banking for Federal Savings Bank in Dover and a member of the UNH ski team in the 1980s.

"Trustees, legislators, alumni, members of the New Hampshire ski industry and others want to create a permanent solution and insure the competitiveness of UNH skiing," Newman said.

"We are counting on our friends in the skiing community, both businesses and individuals, to help us insure that UNH skiing will be forever a part of New Hampshire and its flagship university."

Both the men's and women's ski teams have a grade point average exceeding 3.1 in 2007 and carry the highest grade point average of all UNH varsity teams. UNH skiers also have finished among the NCAA Skiing Championships top 10 in 15 of the past 21 years, earning six national championships since 1954.

"Tom Putnam's gift is not only a wonderful testament to the strength and success of the UNH ski program, but also a powerful example of commitment to its future," said Newman.