

# Super Fan, Super Student

**Does Peter Wilkinson '15 Believe in UNH? You Better Believe It!**

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Lancaster, New Hampshire has a population of about 3,500. It's where Peter Wilkinson '15 grew up, one of 86 seniors in his graduating class at the regional high school. A top

student with so much school spirit an award was created in his honor, it was easy for Wilkinson to leave his mark.

But it wasn't just the small-pond thing. Wilkinson is the kind of person who would stand out among thousands. And he does, in fact, routinely, here at UNH.

Maybe you've seen him at a football or basketball game, face painted blue and white, rousing students to their feet with the school cheer and his big voice, chanting, "I believe in UNH, I believe in UNH, I believe in UNH."

If you were at a certain men's hockey game in December, you would have seen him leading that cheer again when the university rolled out its new logo. His was the first face to bear the new design.

But before you start thinking he's just one of those chest-pounding uber fans who live only for the game, consider this: Wilkinson is an environmental conservation and sustainability major with 4.0 grade point average. He's a member of the sustainability-focused Student Environmental Action Coalition, is the first student ambassador on the UNH Energy Task Force, and the only non-athlete member of the Student Athletic Advisory Committee.

Wilkinson became president of the Residence Hall Association during his sophomore year. He is also a veteran of the UNH Leadership Camp. And, later this summer, he will again help introduce incoming students to UNH, this time as a member of the senior staff.

"Being involved in so many things does take up a lot of time but it gets me energized," Wilkinson says. "I can be pretty passionate." Take the environment. Thanks to a class he took taught by associate research professor Cameron Wake, Wilkinson says he has found his place.

It was Wake who recommended him for an internship last summer at the National Ice Core Laboratory Colorado, where Wilkinson worked taking samples from hundreds-of-years centuries-old ice cores from an Alaskan glacier to help determine how climate change has impacted the state. Wilkinson was the only undergraduate there, working alongside graduate students and research professors.

"Growing up in the White Mountains, I have really taken to climate change. I like the social science aspect, looking at how to make cultural changes," Wilkinson says. "That's more where I want to go, trying to influence the way people think and act.

[See the video on YouTube](#)

"I relate climate change to the way I want to live my life. I can see it and I want to do something about it. It can be pretty daunting. You have to turn discouragement into motivation," Wilkinson says. "I've learned there isn't one solution; it's about everyone doing one thing. Some change is better than none."

Change is part of Wilkinson's mantra. His commitment to building school spirit, he says, is all about creating positive change. "It's all about instilling a greater sense of pride, a greater sense of community," Wilkinson says. "When students get behind their school,

they get more involved, and it makes for a stronger place. I've seen great results. Standing in front of a crowd, with all that positive energy, there's the feeling of being part of something bigger. That's what I live for."

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