

President Huddleston Delivers State of the University Address

Much to be celebrated at UNH in 2015

Wednesday, February 18, 2015

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Despite a continued lack of state support, the University of New Hampshire is thriving, UNH President Mark Huddleston said Tuesday during his annual State of the University address. Speaking to a full house in the MUB Granite State room and to additional community members who watched the live-streamed event from their offices in Durham, Manchester and Concord, he described UNH as “a healthy, vibrant institution, making a huge contribution to our state and our nation.”

As testament to the university’s success, Huddleston cited the unprecedented 2014 enrollment figures that reflected the largest incoming class ever, representing a 10 percent increase in the first-year class and a 13 percent jump in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) majors.

“While our admissions staff deserves a lot of the credit, the fact is that they can’t sell something that doesn’t exist,” Huddleston said. “It is the extraordinary quality of this institution, created day in and day out by the hard work and dedication of faculty and staff across campus that makes UNH a place that young people want to attend.”

Huddleston also noted that 2014 delivered UNH’s greatest fundraising success ever, with private support from more than 20,000 donors totaling nearly \$50 million — a 35 percent increase from the previous year.

He also praised the university’s nationally recognized assault and relationship violence programs, Prevention Innovations’ Know Your Power and Bringing in the Bystander. But he expressed concern that far too many New Hampshire students cannot afford a college education.

“I find it really troubling — and revealing — that while New Hampshire very nearly leads the nation in the percentage of students who graduate from high school, we are in the middle of the pack at best in sending high school graduates on to college,” Huddleston said, adding that the high cost of higher education in the Granite State is beyond many students’ reach and imagination.

A start to reversing that reality is to encourage the legislature to restore enough funding to extend the existing tuition freeze for another two years, Huddleston said. New Hampshire remains 50th in the country in higher education funding.

“This is not rocket science. Increasing costs closes doors. Lowering costs opens doors,” Huddleston said. “It’s time to reopen the doors in New Hampshire — for the benefit of everyone. Let’s start by urging the legislature to restore enough funding to extend the tuition freeze for another two years.”



Huddleston ended the annual address by taking questions from the audience, live and via Twitter and email. Questions ranged from divesting in fossil fuels to building renovations to increasing and retaining a diverse student population.

[Read Huddleston's speech.](#)

Watch the State of the University address [here](#).

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