

In Honor or Memory

Heartfelt gifts pay tribute to those who made their mark at UNH

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“I AM PLEASED ... THERE WILL BE A PLACE WHERE STUDENTS OF PROFESSOR CONNELLY — AND FAMILY AND FRIENDS OF MOLLY — CAN SIT A WHILE AND REFLECT ON HER GIFT AND HER CALLING TO TEACH WITH PASSION AND COMMITMENT FOR OUR FUTURE

GENERATIONS.” — SHELAGH CONNELLY, DAUGHTER OF MOLLY CONNELLY

A large number of UNH donors choose to make their annual gifts in honor or memory of someone important to them. Such tribute gifts are a meaningful way to honor a life,

create a legacy and keep a memory alive. And while they are deeply personal, tribute gifts also can rally friends, and even strangers, around making an impact at UNH while recognizing a common thread in their lives.

What follows are just a few examples of Wildcats who collectively inspired hundreds of gifts totaling tens of thousands of dollars. Perhaps the most important aspect of the gifts made in their names is the intention behind them: To help and inspire the next generation.

Madelyn “Molly” B. Connelly ’84



When her 12th child started kindergarten, Molly Connelly went back to school too, entering UNH as an undergrad and going on to earn her master’s. Formerly a midwife, she opened a private therapy practice and was an adjunct faculty member in the UNH family studies program for 20 years, retiring in 2016. A mentor and friend to countless students, Connelly was “the unofficial ‘grandmother in residence’ on campus,” says Andrew Minigan ’14, one of her teaching assistants. “Though Molly taught human development, her lessons all touched upon themes of love, empathy, understanding and growth.” After Connelly’s death in 2017, her daughter Shelagh Connelly raised funds for a granite bench dedicated in Molly’s memory that was installed near the Health and Wellness Center this fall.

Cleveland “Howie” Howard ’91



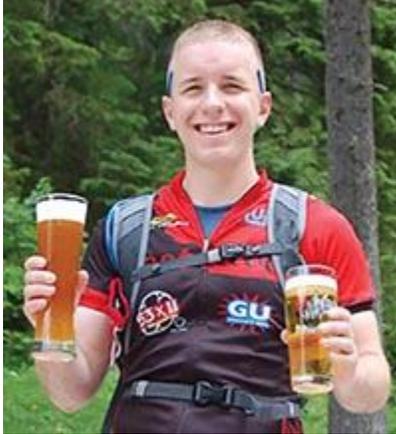
Friends of Cleveland “Howie” Howard ’91 (below, on the right) remember him as a magnetic sort of man who was singularly passionate about life. “We met at Freshman Camp and he was so enthusiastic about the activities I thought he was a counselor!” recalls his classmate Ted Baker ’91. Howard’s father, a UNH music professor, used to joke that after years of teaching he was still known as “Howie’s dad.” Howard played soccer at UNH and was a fraternity brother at Lambda Chi. After college, he worked in sales for adidas, Timberland and ASICS, settled with his family in Maryland and stayed close to his UNH friends. After his death from brain cancer in 2014, a number of classmates established the Cleveland “Howie” Howard III ’91 Memorial Scholarship Fund in hopes that its recipients would likewise make lifelong friends and be inspired to live extraordinary lives.

Neil Vroman



Neil Vroman loved being a professor and associate dean in the College of Health and Human Services at UNH, where he was deeply appreciated as a scholar, leader, mentor and friend. His former colleagues describe him as a great man with an unflinching sense of humor who had education in his bones and an extraordinary commitment to students. After his death in 2016, Vroman’s wife, UNH occupational therapy professor Kerryellen Vroman, and other family members created the Neil B. Vroman Memorial Fund scholarship. They invited friends and colleagues to honor Vroman’s boisterous spirit and love of education by contributing to a fund that would help future students. Vroman’s sister, lyric soprano and stage actress Lisa Vroman, gave a concert on campus to benefit the fund.

Nate Miller ’08



Nate Miller '08 proposed to his wife, Jessica Kukla '08, at the start line of a collegiate cycling race — a fitting spot, since cycling was a passion the two shared throughout their undergrad years at UNH and beyond. “Cycling took us all over the world, opening so many doors for us through that shared passion that transcended language barriers and cultural differences,” Kukla says. In 2017, Miller was struck by a motorist and killed while cycling to work. His wife and friends from UNH made memorial gifts in his name to support the UNH Cycling program. “He died doing what he loved, so it is an honor to Nate to give back to the organization that meant so much to us,” says Kukla.

Interested in making a gift to honor someone who matters to you while making a difference at UNH? [Find out how.](#)

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