UNH Community Mourns Loss Of Alum In Afghanistan

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DURHAM, N.H. -- Officials at the University of New Hampshire learned late yesterday that a member of the Class of 2004 was killed on active duty in the Nuristan Province of Afghanistan. Benjamin Keating, of Shapeigh, Maine, was a lieutenant in the 10th Mountain Division of the U.S. Army.

"The university community is deeply saddened by the loss of Benjamin Keating," said J. Bonnie Newman, interim president of UNH. "We cherish each and every one of our graduates and are especially proud of Lt. Keating’s commitment and service to our country. We mourn his death, and send our condolences to his family and friends."

Keating graduated magna cum laude with a Bachelor of Arts degree in history and classics. While at UNH he was chair of the College Republicans, served as a member of the Town of Shapleigh, Maine Planning Board and as president of the Granite State Conservative Union. He was deployed to Afghanistan as an armor officer in early 2006.

Major Scott Silfies, assistant professor in the UNH ROTC program, recalled Keating as a committed student and dedicated officer.

"I spent time with Lt. Keating just last month while he was home on a mid-tour leave," Silfies said. "We talked of his dream to become a lawyer. Benjamin was an inspiration to his fellow cadets while at UNH and a natural leader. The UNH community and the United States military lost one of its best and brightest. We mourn his death and pray for his family."