



UNH Social Work Department Launches Outreach Office At McConnell Center

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Reporters and editors: For additional information about the UNH department of social work's outreach at the McConnell Center, contact Jerry Marx at 603-862-0274 or jerry.marx@unh.edu.

DURHAM, N.H. -- Social work students at the University of New Hampshire soon will have a new classroom: the McConnell Center in Dover. The multi-service McConnell Center, at the former Dover High School, will host a new community outreach program that brings social work students to the Dover community for practical experience.

"The McConnell Center is an opportunity to build a community outreach program for our students and faculty that will be known for its excellence in the integration of social work education and community service provision," said Jerry Marx, associate professor of social work and chair of the social work department of UNH. "Its location in the heart of downtown Dover makes the Center easily accessible by community members and by our students via Wildcat Transit buses."

Built in 1904 as Dover's second high school, the McConnell Center is being renovated by the City of Dover into a multi-generational community service center. "As a social worker, I see the McConnell Center's philosophical roots in the settlement house movement that helped millions of immigrants in the late-19th century get settled in America," said Marx. Additional tenants include the Dover Adult Learning Center, Dover Police Outreach, Dover Human Services, HUB Family Resource Center, Dover Recreation, and Seacoast Hospice.

The UNH social work outreach program will provide agencies and services housed in the McConnell Center with undergraduate (BSW) and graduate (MSW) student interns as well as faculty research and curriculum initiatives. In addition, the outreach program will offer a range of services to the community -- such as support groups, workshops, and presentations -- that tap the unique resources of social work faculty and students.

UNH is currently remodeling space at the Center and anticipates a fully functional office in the fall of 2007. Student placements with other McConnell Center agencies also will begin in the fall of 2007, with additional outreach program activities launching throughout the year.

For more information about the McConnell Center, go to <http://www.ci.dover.nh.us/McConnell/>. To learn more about the department of social work at UNH, visit <http://www.shhs.unh.edu/sw/index.html>.