

Jessica Fury: From Dairy Cows to Reindeer

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A love of animals set Jessica Fury '19 on a path to a UNH education. Now, that same passion has her about to embark on a unique career: Fury is moving from the [UNH Organic Dairy Research Farm](#) where she helped manage the dairy herd to Santa's Village in Jefferson to manage the park's reindeer herd.

An [animal science major](#) in UNH's [College of Life Science and Agriculture](#), the Groveton native was still in high school when she realized that degree was the one she wanted. "I am the first person in my family to receive a bachelor's degree," she said, "so I've really tried to do my best and make my family proud. I always knew I wanted to work with animals and stay in New Hampshire, so I began college at White Mountain Community College, near my family's home, with the goal of coming to UNH for my animal science degree."

Fury cites her opportunities to conduct hands-on work — particularly at the [New Hampshire Agricultural Experiment Station's Organic Dairy Research Farm](#) — as an essential part of her growth during her two years at UNH. "My favorite part of UNH is living at the UNH Organic Dairy in Lee. I come from a small town and sometimes things on campus are too busy for my liking so being at the UNH Organic Dairy has been a perfect fit for me. I get to live a little out of the way and best of all spend lots of time with their lovely Jersey girls."

Her time at on campus has been anything but boring; she lived in an apartment at the dairy, which allowed her more time to work directly with the Jersey cows she came to love — including one named Andie who quickly became her favorite.

"Part of my work at the dairy has been to provide care for the cows and to assist when calves are born. Andie's calf was the first I delivered as a UNH student. I know I'm really going to miss them," Fury said before leaving campus. "I'll come visit a lot."

Fury, who worked part-time at the Santa's Village during high school and between semesters in college, is grateful to the park's owners, who provided a scholarship to help fund her UNH education. "They have always been very supportive of my academic goals," said Fury, who spent this past summer working with the park's herd of approximately 30 reindeer.

"I told them that if they had a full-time position, I would be very interested. A couple months later, the owners offered me this job. I am so excited to be developing this program and working to help make the reindeer even healthier and happier. Not everybody gets such a unique opportunity, and I am so thankful UNH has helped me get this chance," she said.

Fury says she is also thankful for the UNH faculty who helped ensure her transition as a transfer student went so smoothly. "There is a lot to love about UNH. I am grateful for all the wonderful students, professors, and coworkers I have met in my time here. So many of them have made an impact on my life I will remember long after I graduate," she said.

"I care a lot about animals, and I want to make a positive difference for the animals in my community. UNH has taught me how to improve the welfare of animals, and I want to take what I've learned here and apply it to my management practices," Fury said. "I

truly believe that being well educated is a requirement of all people who plan to work with animals. I also hope I can help others learn about what it takes to keep animals happy and healthy.”

Her advice for future UNH students? “Definitely look for the opportunities you can get, and put in a lot of effort. It really does pay off.”

Founded in 1887, the [NH Agricultural Experiment Station](#) at the [UNH College of Life Sciences and Agriculture](#) is UNH’s original research center and an elemental component of New Hampshire’s land-grant university heritage and mission. We steward federal and state funding, including support from the [USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture](#), to provide unbiased and objective research concerning diverse aspects of sustainable agriculture and foods, aquaculture, forest management, and related wildlife, natural resources and rural community topics. We maintain the Woodman and Kingman agronomy and horticultural research farms, the Macfarlane Research Greenhouses, the Fairchild Dairy Teaching and Research Center, and the Organic Dairy Research Farm. Additional properties also provide forage, forests and woodlands in direct support to research, teaching, and outreach.

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