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Fidelity Investments and UNH Announce Community Service Awards Program

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DURHAM, N.H. - The University of New Hampshire's Whittemore School of Business and Economics and Fidelity Investments' Merrimack Region recently announced the establishment of a Community Service Awards program to recognize outstanding student volunteer activities.

Students enrolled in the Whittemore School's Introduction to Business course taught by Ross Gittell, James R. Carter Professor of Management, are required to do eight hours of community service as part of learning about corporate social responsibility. They will be eligible to win a \$1,000 grant for the nonprofit organization or agency where they complete their volunteer work.

“Fidelity is pleased to partner with the Whittemore School on this exciting new project,” said Dale Gilpin, vice president and general manager for Fidelity's New Hampshire operations. “Civic responsibility is one of our core values at Fidelity. The earlier we can expose business students to volunteerism and community involvement, the more likely they will be to engage in community service throughout their college careers and beyond.”

Fidelity committed \$10,000 to support the programs for the first year. Each semester, \$1,000 grants will be awarded in four categories. The awards will recognize student volunteer projects that promote literacy and/or help strengthen reading skills for a variety of age groups and populations; promote personal financial education and further understanding of personal finance concepts; and help a nonprofit organization use technology to initiate changes in its operations to expand or improve service. The fourth award will recognize the project that provides the greatest benefit to families and individual residents of the town of Durham.

“Fidelity has been a business partner with the class for three years, providing top executives to talk with the students,” Gittell says. “Part of corporate social responsibility is to be concerned about the larger community you're a part of, so when Fidelity heard about the community service component they wanted to support it.” He noted that students can partner with any nonprofit organization in the state, including schools, and on average students in the class donate more than 5,000 hours of service a year.

Last semester Melissa Bilodeau, a freshman from Sunapee, N.H., did her community service at Barrington Middle School through a program called Wildcat Youth Mentors. Even after the class requirement was filled, she continues to mentor a teenage girl.

“I hope to someday have a career related to the business field,” Bilodeau says. “However, no

matter what I choose to do this community service experience will come in handy. Whether I am trying to communicate with someone or carry out charitable acts within my own business, I will always look back and remember how beneficial this experience was.”

Fidelity Investments is one of the world's largest providers of financial services, with custodied assets of \$1.8 trillion, including managed assets of \$988.3 billion as of Dec. 31, 2003. Fidelity offers investment management, retirement planning, brokerage, human resources and benefits outsourcing services to 18 million individuals and institutions as well as through 5,500 financial intermediaries. The firm is the largest mutual fund company in the United States, the No. 1 provider of workplace retirement savings plans, one of the largest mutual fund supermarkets and a leading online brokerage firm.