

# A CEPS Mainstay

**For Sherry '07P and Bob Phillips '76, '07P, supporting UNH is second nature**

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Sherry and Bob Phillips' time together as a couple — 46 years total, 40 of those married — only slightly exceeds the number of years they've been connected to their beloved University of New Hampshire. The two met after signing on to work for a summer at the same country store near Bob's family's vacation home in Ossipee, New Hampshire. Bob '76 would head to UNH that fall, while Sherry headed back for her sophomore year at Plymouth. Their lives have been intertwined with each other, and with UNH, ever since. In fact, whether contributing time, talent or treasure, the Phillipses have made UNH —

in particular the College of Engineering and Physical Sciences (CEPS) — a major focus of their generosity.

Having been exposed to computer programming at his high school, Bob Phillips, a gifted mathematics student, arrived at UNH knowing he wanted to focus on computing and soon gravitated to the applied mathematics major. His experiences within that department have been critical to everything that's come after. "My math advisor, Berrien Moore, taught an applied analysis course that is the foundation for what I do today," he recalls. Equally pivotal was the opportunity to study nuclear engineering for a semester at Argonne National Laboratory with a protégé of Enrico Fermi, the Italian-American physicist behind the world's first nuclear reactor.



From UNH, Phillips would go on to obtain two master's degrees and eventually a doctorate in mechanical engineering from Penn State. In 1985, he and Sherry, eager to return to New England, settled on the New Hampshire Seacoast. Phillips was hired by UNH's mechanical engineering department to teach computational fluid mechanics and began moonlighting for a software company focused on applying artificial intelligence to engineering design. When the latter took off, Phillips pulled back on his teaching but remained firmly connected to UNH. In 1999, when CEPS' accreditation became threatened by its increasingly decrepit physical plant and equipment, Phillips joined the advisory board that helped save the program and rebuild its facilities.

In the years since, Phillips, a managing partner at 3EDGE Asset Management, and Sherry, a retired special education teacher, have remained consistently engaged with and excited by everything from UNH's trailblazing Undergraduate Research Conference and its Peter T. Paul Entrepreneurship Center (ECenter) to its soccer and ice hockey teams. Longtime donors, their most recent generous gift, a bequest, will be split between their named scholar-ship fund supporting engineering students and the ECenter. Their unwavering fondness for UNH, says Phillips, springs from the opportunities it's created in their lives and the lives of many countless others.

**It's just a gem of an institution, and one that really stands out for us as a place worth supporting.** "Among all of the schools I've attended, the thing I love about UNH is the incredibly rich experience and affordability it

provides, particularly to first-generation college students,” he says. “It’s just a gem of an institution, and one that really stands out for us as a place worth supporting.”

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