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## **MEDIA ADVISORY: UNH to Receive Top Tier Status as Sea Grant College Program**

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**WHAT:** The University of New Hampshire will receive top tier status as a Sea Grant College within the National Sea Grant College Program. NOAA Administrator Vice Admiral Conrad Lautenbacher will present UNH President Ann Weaver Hart with a plaque commemorating the event. Representatives of NOAA and various marine researchers will be available to answer questions at a reception following the ceremony.

**WHEN:** Wednesday, Aug. 20, 3:30 p.m.

**WHERE:** Ceremony: 3:30 to 4:30 p.m., Courtyard Reading Room, 5th floor Dimond Library, UNH campus. Reception to follow from 4:30 to 6 p.m., Morse Hall Atrium, UNH campus.

**DETAILS:** Speakers will include NOAA Administrator Vice Admiral Conrad Lautenbacher, UNH President Ann Weaver Hart, UNH Vice President for Research and Public Service Don Sundberg, National Sea Grant Director Ron Baird, National Sea Grant Review Panel Chair Peter Bell, NH Sea Grant Director Ann Bucklin, and Seacoast Science Center President Wendy Lull.

**BACKGROUND:** Over the past 30 years, New Hampshire Sea Grant has worked to fulfill the Sea Grant mission in its state and region. For most of that period, it was a component of the Maine/NH Sea Grant College Program, an entity that combined the resources of the major universities of both states to address marine problems, issues and opportunities.

In October 2000, Maine/NH Sea Grant separated, creating two fully distinct programs. Growth in the marine research communities and funding at both universities allowed for this development, which in turn has given each program the opportunity to better respond to the needs of its state.

However, the separation of the joint program led to UNH's need to reapply for top tier status as a Sea Grant College within the National

Sea Grant College Program. Designation as a Sea Grant College is based on a demonstrated record of superior performance in marine and coastal resource programs and signifies that the Sea Grant program is addressing the needs of its state.

In March, a distinguished panel of marine scientists visited UNH to review its application to become a Sea Grant College. The panel members were impressed with the breadth of marine research taking place at the university, as well as with the quality of the marine facilities located there. The Aug. 20 ceremony will commemorate the university's official status as a Sea Grant College. This award recognizes UNH's dedication to maintaining a high quality and balanced program of marine research, education and outreach, and NH Sea Grant's role in working with UNH's marine community, marine researchers at other state colleges and universities, and the state's marine stakeholders to address current and future resource issues.

**CONTACT:** For more information or to indicate your interest in attending, please contact Kathleen Schmitt at 603-749-1565 or [kathleen.schmitt@unh.edu](mailto:kathleen.schmitt@unh.edu).

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