

[American Lung Association of New Hampshire](#)

[UNH College of Life Sciences and Agriculture](#)

[UNH Health Services](#)

UNH Students Launch Anti-tobacco Coalition

By [Sharon Keeler](#)
UNH News Bureau

February 13, 2002

DURHAM, N.H. -- University of New Hampshire students, with help from the American Lung Association of New Hampshire (ALANH), will begin a grass-roots effort to prevent tobacco use and promote smoking cessation among students on campus.

They will kick-off the campaign at the Feb. 16 UNH men's ice hockey game at the Whittemore Center.

Their initiative is made possible by a \$30,000 grant awarded to the university's Center for Health Enhancement through the efforts of Tony Tagliaferro, center director.

"This grant and working relationship with the American Lung Association of New Hampshire will allow the campus community to address more comprehensively this important health issue," says Tagliaferro, professor of human nutrition in the university's College of Life Sciences and Agriculture.

The grant is being used to support the development of health-related course curricula, a health education fellowship, student scholarships, and the development and implementation of an anti-tobacco campaign to be targeted to athletic events.

Rebecca Story of Newmarket, a graduate student in the Department of Animal, Nutritional and Medical Laboratory Sciences, received a fellowship to lead the student effort. Undergraduate students receiving scholarships to spearhead the coalition include Joanna Norton of White Bear Lake, Minn., Benjamin Morse of Bangor, Maine, and Julie Munson of Dover.

"I see the effect tobacco use has on adults," says Norton, a nursing major. "Asthma, emphysema,

bronchitis are only a few of the health consequences. Students say they only smoke occasionally and they can quit anytime. But then they're addicted."

Adults aged 18 to 24 years, many of whom are in college, represent the youngest legal targets of tobacco industry marketing. Nearly half, 46 percent, had used tobacco in the past year and 33 percent use tobacco regularly, according to a recent study in JAMA, the Journal of the American Medical Association.

At UNH, the statistics are similar. According to a 2001 survey conducted by the Student Affairs Research and Assessment Center, 43 percent of students have used tobacco, though usage varies from those who consider themselves occasional to daily smokers.

The American Lung Association has worked to improve lung health in the state since 1916. The nationally-affiliated association delivers smoking cessation programs at the adult and teen levels, in-classroom smoking prevention classes for fourth and fifth-graders, and asthma education for adults and children on a statewide level.

"The American Lung Association's traditional education programs are focused on children, not legal smokers," says Diane Smogor, ALANH program director. "We realize there is a gap in the education. UNH has strong health science and health education programs, and the board wanted to support this effort at the college level."

The anti-tobacco program is being coordinated through UNH's Office of Health Education and Promotion at Health Services. According to Kathleen Grace-Bishop, associate director, the grant will allow the office to strengthen its current tobacco and cessation efforts by providing additional staff and by the creation of the student-driven coalition.

Tagliaferro adds that many women, in particular, smoke to keep their weight down. He wants to teach them there are other ways to manage weight.

For more information on the CHE and American Lung Association grant, or to get involved, contact Tagliaferro at 603-862-1726.

[Back to UNH News Bureau](#)