

Still Rising to the Challenge

Supporters clear an ever-higher bar in UNH's annual (603) Challenge

Tuesday, April 27, 2021



In popular lore, seven years is a common benchmark: the restless point in relationships, the amount of time chewing gum stays in your stomach if swallowed, the duration of bad luck that follows breaking a

mirror. For UNH's (603) Challenge, however, seven years have been nothing but good luck, bringing in an ever-increasing number of vital gifts that can be deployed immediately to support students and projects across the university.

Since its launch in 2015, The (603) Challenge has set new records for both dollar-amounts raised and participant numbers from one year to the next — and 2021 was no exception. During a year like no other, the five-day event, which ran from Apr. 9-13, raised more than \$2.6 million to support UNH's colleges, teams and programs, with gifts coming from more than 11,3000 alumni, parents, faculty, staff, students and friends.

Noting that more than half of the donors who make contributions to UNH each fiscal year participate in the challenge, Director of Annual Giving Jackie Overton says, "The manner in which so many people come together to make gifts in this very specific timeframe signals that the challenge is a great source of pride for the Wildcat community. We're so grateful to every donor who rises to the challenge, and to our underwriters who provide the bonus and matching funds, which really motivate people to give, knowing their gift can have a greater impact on their favorite areas."

A total of 340 funds representing virtually every area across UNH's three campuses received gifts that will benefit students directly, in the form of scholarships, stipends and experiential opportunity funding, and indirectly through support of programs, clubs, athletics and more. Overton says this student-specific impact is the reason that so many UNH families support The (603) Challenge. Some 1,700 current and former parents — as well as 600 students — made gifts during the 2021 campaign.

"Because 603 focuses on showcasing all the areas a donor can support rather than a general fund, it gives donors the opportunity to give back to areas that are meaningful to them," she explains. "For families this is especially great, because they're connected to UNH through their students, and parents and family members can give to interest areas that will directly benefit their own Wildcats. While families do contribute to UNH in many other ways, philanthropic gifts add value and enhance the UNH experience for students and can make so much more possible."

To view full results and leaderboards and to learn about the generous donors who provide the funds to match gifts and offer bonus and area challenges during The (603) Challenge, visit unh.edu/603.

PARENTS



University of New Hampshire

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