

Good Beer, Good Jobs

UNH brewing program offers both

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UNH HAS PARTNERED WITH SMUTTYNOSE BREWING CO. TO BREW A NEW LAGER. UNH WILDCAT TRACKS WILL BE DISTRIBUTED THROUGHOUT THE STATE IN CANS AND ON DRAFT. Timothy Fischer '20 is the assistant brewer for Border X Brewing in Bell, California. Brooklyn Zielie '21 works for Anheuser-Busch in Merrimack, New Hampshire, as a quality analyst running lab tests on beer to ensure it meets their high standards. After graduation, she'll enter their brewery trainee program with hopes of carving out a future in brewery management and engineering.

Proof that one can make a career out of beer.

When he was a student at UNH, Fischer took a course called The History of Beer that sparked an interest in homebrewing. While he was honing his skills, he applied for a job at Wachusett Brewing Company in Massachusetts. And that prompted him to take another course, Introduction to Brewing.

"Right away I knew I wanted to be a brewer," he says. "And I knew I had to continue to learn more about brewing before I could get to that role."

He got that through in the UNH Brewing Lab and graduated in May 2020 as a sustainable agriculture and food systems major with a minor in brewing. Now he works closely with Border X Brewing's head brewer, doing "just about everything."

"I help out with the brew days since those are the longest and require the most attention to detail," Fischer says. "Besides brewing, we do our own kegging, clean the tanks, test the gravity and pH of the beers, and even make deliveries down to the San Diego location. It's a small operation so everyone has to take many roles."

Zielie, whose major is [biochemistry, molecular and cellular biology](#), signed on for the UNH brewing program after Cheryl Parker, brewery manager, talked about her love of brewing and the parallels to science when she spoke in a class Zielie was taking.

"That sparked my attention," Zielie says, noting that, long term, she's interested in working in upper-level management, overseeing the brewing processes and solving problems as they arise.

“I feel so lucky to have had the opportunity to work with Cheryl and the UNH brewing program. Without it, I would never have found my passion or landed my dream job,” she says.

The demand for and interest in those jobs isn’t likely to fade any time soon, Parker says.

“Beer has been brewed for well over 10,000 years and it’s not going anywhere,” Parker says. “Our culture is tied to this particular beverage in so many aspects of our lives, from backyard BBQ’s to sporting events and, more recently, becoming a big influence in the culinary world just as much as wine. But as I remind the students constantly, the jobs are not just in brewing, they are in all those that support the brewing industry as well.”

For example, students could work for a company that designs and builds brewing equipment and automation or manage a farm that grows hops or grain, or work for a laboratory that grows and distributes yeast, Parker says.

“It all depends on their interests and what their major field of study brings to the table,” she says.

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