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New Hampshire's Top Students Are Offered the Distinction of Presidential Scholars at UNH

Program Provides \$3,000 Scholarships and an Invitation to Prestigious Honors Program

UNH News Bureau

February 9, 2001

DURHAM, N.H. , The University of New Hampshire has just made it a little easier for the state's top high school students to attend the university. Valedictorians who are New Hampshire residents graduating from a public high school will be designated Presidential Scholars. The distinction means a \$3,000 scholarship as well as an invitation to participate in UNH's highly regarded Honors Program.

"This is part of a much larger effort to keep the state's best students in New Hampshire, both for their college educations and for the start of their professional lives," explains Mark Rubinstein, vice provost for enrollment management. "That's one of the reasons that scholarship support was identified as a critical need for the university's Next Horizon capital campaign."

Further, if the state funds the Granite State Scholars Program in this legislative session — a concept that was supported by state lawmakers last year — it would provide public funds to leverage private gifts that would create an endowment to support scholarships for more of the state's best students to enroll in New Hampshire's public colleges and the University.

"We want to extend this type of support to more of our New Hampshire students, but for now, we are taking the first step, " Rubinstein says.

He notes that one of several goals of UNH's \$100 million capital campaign is student scholarships. Since the campaign kick-off, more than \$14.7 million has

been raised for scholarships alone. The target is \$28 million.

"The university's capital campaign, The Next Horizon, is beginning to make a difference," says UNH President Joan Leitzel. "In terms of scholarship support, we are more than halfway to our goal. The response of alumni and friends enables us to begin to move in these directions."

Leitzel adds that there is a special bond between the president and the Presidential Scholars. Through occasional breakfasts and other forms of outreach, she counts on these students to provide her with insights into their educational experiences as well as the experiences of their peers.

"I want to know if we are challenging them enough and supporting them enough," says Leitzel.

"This is just one step toward a more substantial commitment to the state's best students," she says, "The state of New Hampshire needs these students to stay in New Hampshire, and we want to make it possible for them to attend UNH."

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