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Recommended Citation

Keeler, Sharon, "UNH among Top 25 NASA-Funded Institutions" (2000). *UNH Today*. 2763.
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UNH among Top 25 NASA-Funded Institutions

By *Sharon Keeler*
UNH News Bureau

DURHAM, N.H. -- The University of New Hampshire is among the top 25 educational institutions nationwide receiving funding from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) in the fiscal year 1999.

Through the Institute for the Study of Earth, Oceans, and Space (EOS), UNH received \$8.88 million from October 1998 through September 1999, making it 25 on the list of institutions receiving NASA funding.

"This is no surprise. UNH consistently has been in the top 25 for years, which reflects the high quality and extraordinary breadth of research done here," says David Bartlett, associate director of EOS. "Our faculty are recognized internationally as leaders in space science and in studies of the planet Earth using space technology."

UNH researchers are involved in many major NASA initiatives exploring both space and Earth-based phenomena. Among these are:

- Theoretical studies of the sun and solar wind
- Analysis of biogeochemical cycles on Earth
- Studies of global forests using land-based and satellite data
- Studies of gamma-rays, solar flares and aurora -- or Northern Lights
- Analysis of atmospheric chemistry and air quality

UNH's student-built satellite CATSAT (Cooperative Astrophysics and Technology SATellite) also received NASA funding. It is scheduled to launch in June 2001. Its scientific mission will be to study the origin and nature of gamma-ray bursts, one of the most mysterious astrophysical phenomena.

EOS is also involved with numerous ongoing NASA space missions including WIND, CLUSTER II, the Advanced Composition Explorer (ACE), the FAST Auroral SnapshoT Explore (FAST), POLAR, the SOLar and Heliospheric Observatory (SOHO), The Solar-Terrestrial Relations Observatory (STEREO), and the

Compton Gamma Ray Observatory (CGRO). UNH scientists have built instruments now aboard these satellites and are involved in data acquisition and analysis.

NASA dollars also cover the cost of the New Hampshire Space Grant Consortium, founded in 1991 as a collaboration between UNH and Dartmouth College. The consortium's goals include enhancing science, mathematics and aerospace education at all levels and providing motivation, improving quality, and increasing access for students, teachers and the general public.

This year, NASA doubled the budget for the New Hampshire consortium, which has been joined by Plymouth State College, the state Community Technical College System, and the Christa McAuliffe Planetarium.

Topping the FY99 NASA funding list is Johns Hopkins University, with more than \$100 million. Number two was the University of Colorado, with \$61 million, and Stanford University, a close third at \$58 million.

The highest ranking New England institution was the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, with \$25 million. UNH was the only other New England school ranked in the top 25.

May 22, 2000

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