

Window of Opportunity

That's one way to meet the future president

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On March 7, 1960, one day before the New Hampshire presidential primary, Massachusetts Senator John F. Kennedy arrived at UNH to deliver a speech in New Hampshire Hall.

Lou D'Allesandro '61 remembers that day well.

At the time, D'Allesandro was a junior at UNH, studying history and playing on the football, baseball and lacrosse teams. Hailing from East Boston, he considered Kennedy to be "the best thing since sliced bread," and he was excited to have the

opportunity to hear him speak. But when the undergrad got to New Hampshire Hall, the room was so packed that he couldn't get in.

D'Allesandro recounted the story of what happened next for a recent episode of NH Primary Vault on WMUR:

"I go around to the side of the building, I jack open a window, I jump up on the windowsill and then I jump down onto the stairway. And I land with my head down. I look up there's a hand [out stretched] and the [future] president says, "Hi, I'm John Kennedy." And I said, "Hi, I'm Lou D'Allesandro." So that's how I met John Fitzgerald Kennedy."

With a chuckle, D'Allesandro noted, "In today's world I probably would have been shot dead, I don't think there's any question about that."

Instead, D'Allesandro went on to a distinguished political career of his own. After earning his UNH degree and a master's in education from Rivier College, he served on the New Hampshire Executive Council and in the New Hampshire House of Representatives. Today, the Manchester Democrat is a member of the New Hampshire Senate, a position he has held since 1998.

The [full interview](#) with Sen. D'Allesandro can be seen at the WMUR web site. The episode aired Sept. 24, 2015.

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