

# Mixing Business with Heart: Class Uses Business Savvy to Help Community

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Business is typically concerned about bottom lines, strategy, profits and losses. And while those things are important for sure, one University of New Hampshire at Manchester professor is looking to broaden that paradigm by making charitable giving a more natural partner.

“Through these projects students learned that they must be holistic when looking at business theory; that it is more than profit/loss,” said [Kelly Kilcrease](#), associate business professor at UNH’s campus in Manchester, who made service a mandatory part of his Business Ethics class. “Can what they learn generate money for themselves and their organization? Absolutely. But it can also be applied in an environment where they can measurably address human suffering and community challenges.”

Kilcrease said adding a service component to the class wasn't a stretch given that community giving is already such an integral part of UNH Manchester's culture. Their assignment was to create a charitable event. Each group was told to be bold in choosing their projects, to really get outside of their comfort zones and consider helping not only the community in which they live, but those around the world.

Kilcrease said in terms of business skills, he wanted students to experience what it's like to work with nonprofits. This, he said, allows his students to see how business principles apply to all types of organizations. Furthermore, he wanted them to learn the mechanics of creating a charitable event so that they could either one day recreate similar events at their future places of employment or at the very least, apply the mechanics of the process to other areas of their work. And, as this is a senior capstone class, another vital aspect was getting students to apply tools from all of their courses to solve business programs, such as marketing, finance, management and organizational behavior.

"The value was strengthened as students had to make decisions that would not only impact their learning, but also impact their community," Kilcrease said. "Students were able to see firsthand that the business theory they learned in the [UNH Manchester Business Program](#) can indeed address the need of the community."

These concepts weren't lost on UNH senior Olivia Marchioni, of Salem. The business major worked with two other students to raise awareness about autism and money for Community Crossroads, an Atkinson-based nonprofit that works with individuals with developmental disabilities and their families.

"This experience is invaluable because it teaches you the process of creating such an event, the coordination that is involved, and how to work with different people and organizations," Marchioni said. "It goes beyond theoretical learning. It allows you to look up from the pages of the textbook and to live the experience firsthand. Such practical hands-on experience is incredibly important in the learning process."

As a result of the project, Marchioni's team held an event at the college on October 29 where they distributed information to students and staff about Community Crossroads and the prevalence of autism, collected donations for the organization and gave out autism awareness stickers.

"In that four hours we spoke to nearly 100 people and raised about \$75," Marchioni said. "Although this seems minuscule in comparison to other teams in our class, any donation is an impactful donation to a small nonprofit."

The group also secured a \$25 Shaw's discount to help out with events [Community Crossroads](#) holds for families, such as holiday dinners, as well as more than 10 YMCA day-passes that the organization can give out to families or individuals.

Beyond monetary contributions, the team worked to create a sustainable relationship between Community Crossroads and UNH Manchester. Marchioni said they met with the [Internship and Career Planning](#) office to gather information about how Community Crossroads can recruit UNH interns. They also spoke to Associate Professor [Jeffrey Klenotic](#) about the potential for [Communication Arts](#) students to create a Public Service

Announcement for Community Crossroads for their film reel/resume in the future. As if that wasn't enough, they had more than 10 students sign-up for internships with Community Crossroads.

Fellow [Business](#) Ethics student Rutger Tupper of Manchester said he had a similarly rewarding experience. The 2012 Merrimack High School grad and Marketing Management student said he and his team created a fall craft fair called Jack-O's for Jude's at Tuckaway Tavern to benefit St. Jude's Hospital.

"We had a \$5 entry fee per child at our event, but many people felt the cause and donated more," Tupper said. "The Tuckaway Tavern in Raymond is one of the most popular restaurants in New England, so our event and cause were exposed to thousands of people through the months we were operating. It touched many people who came through the door, and the Tuckaway and its manager were main contributors to us each step of the way."

In total, the group raised \$580 for St. Jude's. And while the whole group was proud of what they were able to do for this community, they also recognized the value of the exercise to their education and their future.

"The hands-on experience is extremely useful for real world application and truly makes you realize all the skills and knowledge learned in the classroom that are immediately useful," Tupper said. "The way we took the reins of this project was under our own control and ended up bringing forth more project management skills. On top of these skills, the marketing aspects used were highly relevant."

Tupper added that this real world experience is crucial in the post college job search.

"It's extremely important to be able to have the experience of these projects," he said. "Because saying you have the true ability in something sets you apart from other students. I believe these projects, and this one in particular, makes you more confident and helps you excel in a career."

"It all starts with choosing an education at UNH Manchester and then getting the opportunity to do projects that have impact," Tupper said.

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**UNH MANCHESTER**



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