

## UNH Students Join Moharimet Elementary School Children in a Different Kind of Learning Experience

### Group will 'clean up' Durham Nov. 13

By [Sharon Keeler](#)  
UNH News Bureau

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**Editors, News Directors:  
Members of the media are invited to cover the MOH Clean-a-Thon. For more information, contact Steve Stettner, event organizer, at 603-868-6884.**

DURHAM, N.H. -- Students from elementary school through college age will join together Saturday, Nov. 13, to help Durham put its best face forward. They'll be doing some serious garbage pickup from 1 to 3 p.m. as part of the MOH Clean-a-Thon '99.

In case of rain, the event will be held Sunday, Nov. 14.

Several hundred children from Madbury's Moharimet School will join with University of New Hampshire students in this annual community-building event and fundraiser for the Moharimet Parent Teacher Organization. Others students from the Oyster River School System have also volunteered, along with youngsters from the Brownies and Cub Scouts, parents, teachers, and adults from the Rotary and Durham Main Street Association.

Last year's inaugural clean-a-thon brought together 300 people who collected and disposed of 1.75 tons of litter, in under two hours, from the downtown Durham area. Local businesses, families, parents at the elementary school and UNH students contributed approximately \$400 to the Moharimet PTO.

Organizer Steve Stettner, a parent with two children at Moharimet School and a member of the PTO, expects this year's event to be an equal success.

"We think this event gives back value to the community, not only in the clean up, but more so in the lesson our children learn," he says. "It's a great opportunity for us to work side by side with UNH and the local community, and a way for our children to see that they can make a difference."

Victor Messier, UNH associate professor of families studies who teaches a course on families, schools and the community, agrees that the MOH Clean-a-Thon is a great opportunity to turn a fairly mundane activity into a vehicle for education. Students from his class will be participating in the clean-up as part of a class project. Other UNH students from the Office of Sustainability Programs, athletics and the Greek system will also join the effort.

"Many young people today have grown up without a strong sense of community," says Messier. "The idea that there's a bigger world right at their fingertips in need of caring and engagement has generally not been brought to their attention. When we have a catalyst like the MOH Clean-a-Thon, the experience can work magic on the community at large. It brings together people of all ages, who usually don't engage socially, to do something really worthwhile for the environment."

Those interested in participating in the MOH Clean-a-Thon should gather at the parking lot near the Durham Bike shop at 12:30 p.m. Saturday. Those who would like to make a donation to the Moharimet PTO should call Steve Stettner at 603-868-6088.

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