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Co-Founder Of Life Is Good Is 2010 Commencement Speaker For University Of New Hampshire

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Bert Jacobs, co-founder of Life is good

DURHAM, N.H. - Bert Jacobs, co-founder of Life is good, an apparel and accessories company known for its smiling stick figure Jake and its optimistic messages, will be the keynote speaker at UNH's 140th commencement on Saturday, May 22, 2010.

Life is good was launched by Jacobs and his brother, John, in 1994 with just \$78. Today the \$100 million company sells its products in 4,500 retail stores nationwide and in 30 countries around the world, proof that "optimism can take you anywhere." The Boston- and Hudson, NH-based company does no product advertising and attributes 100 percent of its growth to customer word-of-mouth.

Jacobs graduated from Villanova University in 1987 with a degree in communications. Before launching Life is good, he worked as a ski instructor, a pizza delivery man and a substitute teacher.

In 1989, knowing nothing about the business, the Jacobs brothers began designing T-shirts, selling them on the streets of Boston and at colleges and street fairs along the East Coast, sleeping in an old van as they went. Believing consumers would respond to a message of optimism, the pair developed the upbeat character of Jake in 1994. They printed 48 T-shirts bearing a smiling Jake wearing a beret and the words "Life is good" beneath and sold them all at a Cambridge street fair within an hour.

Between then and 2007, the brothers sold nearly 20 million Life is good t-shirts.

Since their street-selling days, the Jacobs have founded the Life is good Kids Foundation to heal and strengthen children who face the trauma of life-threatening conditions. More than \$4 million has been raised in the past five years for children in need, principally through Life is good Festivals and the 100 percent of profits that the company donates to the Foundation from nationwide sales of select products.

Jacobs has appeared on The Today Show, CNN's Tips from the Top, CNBC's Business Nation, and the Donny Deutch Show. During speaking engagements, Jacobs teaches that optimism is fun, healthy and empowering.

The University of New Hampshire, founded in 1866, is a world-class public research

university with the feel of a New England liberal arts college. A land, sea, and space-grant university, UNH is the state's flagship public institution, enrolling more than 12,200 undergraduate and 2,200 graduate students.

Editors: a photo of Jacobs can be downloaded at

http://www.unh.edu/news/campusjournal/2010/Mar/10commencement_01.jpg

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