

## UNH Junior Named a "New Face" in Engineering

**Injury during freshman year provided new focus for ice hockey captain**

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It's often hard to look at a setback as a gift, but sometimes that is exactly what it is.

That was the case for Kate Haslett '18, who overcame a personal setback during her freshman year that helped paved the way for her selection to the American Society of Civil Engineering's (ASCE) 2017 New Faces of Civil Engineering.

The ASCE program highlights the next generation of civil engineering leaders and showcases young, diverse, talented

engineers. From the 10 nominees, one New Faces of Civil Engineering scholarship winner will be announced on April 5.

Haslett's path to the honor has been an unconventional one. The Rothesay, New Brunswick, native entered UNH as an undeclared major on an athletic scholarship with the varsity women's ice hockey team. Just weeks into the season, though, Haslett suffered a season-ending knee injury.

"When my season ended very quickly I was devastated," says Haslett, the current captain of the women's team. "It really posed some adversity, but I think I am stronger because of it."

Limited to rehabilitation, Haslett put new focus on her academics and eventually found her passion for engineering. After declaring a major in [civil engineering](#), Haslett immersed herself in the field. She joined ASCE and the [UNH Materials Research Group](#), where she worked as a laboratory assistant with graduate students and faculty members in performing evaluations of asphalt through various fracture-based testing methods.

"The faculty here really had a passion, and I could see that," says Haslett. "I would not be where I am today without the support from the UNH faculty, my co-mentors — professors Jo Daniel and Eshan Dave — my teammates, coaches and my family."

Dave, an assistant professor in civil engineering, says Haslett serves as a captain off the ice for students in the civil and environmental engineering program.

"Kate has always approached every challenge with a strongly positive attitude and has succeeded through her hard work," he says. "She is a great Wildcat and a great model for all future Wildcats."

Haslett expanded her credentials in 2016 by securing a Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship from the Hamel Center for Undergraduate Research. Though at first nervous about the

unique opportunity, Haslett was thrilled to partake in the experience aimed at improving mix design and crack resistance to increase durability and service life of roads.

“The take-home message in doing the research is that every day it is something new,” says Haslett. “That is why you are doing the research. It’s to figure it out, find something new and challenge yourself.”

The criteria for the ASCE honor include a track record of engineering experiences, multiple essay questions and a high grade point average. While Haslett has always strived to succeed academically, she thanks her status in the [University Honors Program](#) in part to the injury that led to a greater focus on her academics and the discovery of a new passion in civil engineering.

“I am truly humbled and honored to be nominated,” says Haslett. “UNH has challenged and pushed me to be my best in all areas of my life. My mentors, professors, coaches, teammates and friends have all played a significant role in shaping me into the individual I am today, and I can’t thank them enough.”

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