

UNH News Release: UNH Political Science Student Has Front-Row Seat at Democratic National Convention



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UNH Political Science Student Has Front-Row Seat at Democratic National Convention
First-Year Student Selected for Prestigious Page Role



Emily Gold, a first-year student at the University of New Hampshire, will serve as an official page with the New Hampshire delegation at the Democratic National Convention. Gold, 18, from Manchester, is majoring in political science. Here she is pictured with President Barack Obama during his visit to Durham in June 2012.

DURHAM, N.H. – Emily Gold, a first-year political science student from Manchester, is starting her academic career at the University of New Hampshire with a once-in-a-lifetime experience serving as an official page to the New Hampshire delegation attending the Democratic National Convention in Charlotte, N.C.

Gold, 18, is the only UNH student serving in an official capacity as a page or delegate at either national political convention.

“Being selected as a page was something I did not expect, but I am honored to be given the opportunity,” Gold said. “Getting involved in politics allows students to have a stronger say in the future of their country. We are all citizens of the United States, and we all want to live in a prosperous country so we should all do our part instead of watching others change the world.”

“I have always been fascinated with democracy. Some of my first memories are of my parents taking me into the ballot box with them while they voted. Having the power to decide who will run the country is something people in other countries can only dream about. As Americans, it is something we do not really give a second thought about,” she said.

Gold is one of two New Hampshire teenagers selected for the page position who will sit on the floor of the convention with the rest of the credentialed New Hampshire delegation. She will attend committee meetings and participate in convention activities as if she was a voting member of the delegation.

“We have such a privilege here in New Hampshire. There is no place on earth where young people have such access to democracy. Emily is a terrific person, and has been selected for a very prestigious position. We’re so excited that she will be joining us,” said Raymond Buckley, chair of the New Hampshire Democratic Party.

Buckley said the New Hampshire Democrats have made welcoming young people in the party a priority and can appreciate the impact of being involved in New Hampshire politics at a young age. He was a strong Ed Muskie supporter – at age 8. By 15, he was involved in President Jimmy Carter’s campaign. Since Buckley didn’t have his driver’s license, Sylvia Larsen, who would become a leader in the New Hampshire Democratic Party, used to give him rides to events. “I felt very empowered and very welcomed even at that age, even before I had a license,” he said.

Lawrence Reardon, chair of the UNH Department of Political Science, echoed Buckley’s sentiments about the importance of getting involved in politics as a young adult.

“Political science professors are always advising students to combine their academic studies with real life experiences, whether by interning in Concord or Washington, D.C., studying in Beijing, or working to pay off academic debts. Working for the New Hampshire delegation, Emily will witness firsthand one of the oldest and most exciting democratic processes in the nation. While conventions are no longer crucial to the nomination process, they have become a key vehicle to unite the party behind a particular candidate in order to present a unified vision of the future. Emily will come back to UNH with an even greater appreciation of the American democratic process,” Reardon said.

Gold said she was inspired to get involved in New Hampshire politics and the Obama campaign after President Barack Obama spoke at her high school, Manchester Central High School, in November 2011. She became a regular volunteer at the Manchester Obama campaign office.

In February 2012, she was asked to introduce Sen. Jeanne Shaheen during Vice President Joe Biden’s visit to Manchester. There she met Buckley, who asked her if she would be interested in serving as a page. Before she was selected, Gold gave a speech to the New Hampshire Democratic leadership about what being a page would mean to her. Not only was she selected, but her speech was so moving that she was asked to present it again at the New Hampshire Democratic Party state convention in June.

At the end of June, she met President Obama in Durham and participated in the Obama campaign’s summer organizer fellowship program before starting her first year at UNH. “It was a lot of hard work, but I probably had one of the best summers of my life,” Gold said.

Education is Gold’s top issue. “My grandfather always said, ‘An education is not an expense, it is an investment.’ Today, most careers require some type of higher education degree. I believe that everyone should be able to get the training they need to succeed in their dream career,” she said.

“For me, I believe Obama is the right man to lead this country. He has doubled funding for Pell Grants and reformed healthcare, among many other accomplishments. I want to be sure Obama has four more years in the White House so I decided to do more than just vote in November,” she said.

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 12,200 undergraduate and 2,300 graduate students.

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