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UNH Grad Receives Huntington Public Service Award

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May 21, 2013

UNH Grad Receives Huntington Public Service Award



University of New Hampshire's Alex Freid '13 has received the 2013 Samuel Huntington Public Service Award. Credit: Kevin Connolly, UNH Video Services.

DURHAM, N.H. – University of New Hampshire recent graduate Alex Freid '13 has received the 2013 Samuel Huntington Public Service Award. The award, granted by National Grid, provides a \$10,000 stipend for a graduating college senior to pursue one year of public service.

Freid, a political science/philosophy double major from Lee, will use his award toward the national launch of the Post-Landfill Action Network (PLAN), inspired by the success of UNH program Trash 2 Treasure. Trash 2 Treasure collects “trash” from students moving out in the spring then resells it in the fall to incoming students, reducing the impact on landfills.

Launched by Freid and Emily Spognardi '14 with UNH's Student Environmental Action Coalition (SEAC) in 2011, Trash 2 Treasure has diverted more than 65 tons of waste from landfills and earned more than enough money to support its efforts. It is the first student-led, self-sustaining program of its kind.

Freid's ambition to bring UNH's Trash 2 Treasure success to a national scale took shape shortly after the program's first year. He's in the early stages of launching PLAN, a nonprofit combining micro-financing, franchising, and consulting services to reduce campus waste and “help students become the leaders of new paradigm sustainability,” he says.

“We're working off Trash 2 Treasure at UNH as a pilot model,” he says. Starting with colleges and universities in New England, PLAN aims to help student organizations create Trash 2 Treasure-like move-out waste programs with

start-up funding and consulting.

“We want to give them tools and resources to be further engaged in the waste-reduction movement,” he says. “Our goal is to help students start these programs, but also to guide them through the steps of implementing the next phase of waste reduction solutions on their campus with the profits they generate from the move-out collection programs. We plan on guiding students through the process of conducting a campus-wide waste audit, and then identifying areas where they can make the biggest impact.”

The Huntington award will jump-start PLAN’s fundraising efforts, which Freid hopes bring in \$75,000 by the end of the summer. He’ll work on securing corporate sponsors and partnerships that could help defray new programs’ costs of services like truck rentals, storage, and other supplies. To date, PLAN has received support from UNH, where it will pilot its campus waste audit and other programs, via the Office of Research Partnerships and Commercialization, Carsey Institute, the Paul T. Paul College for Business and Economics, the Sustainability Institute, and the offices of business affairs, facilities and planning, and student and academic affairs.

While Freid sets his sights on the future of PLAN, working in Durham’s IdeaGreenhouse collaborative office space with the advice of a board of directors and a team of advisors, Trash 2 Treasure continues at UNH. Even the leadership model of the organization is sustainable: Freid, who launched the program as a sophomore, ensured that each year a new sophomore takes the reins.

The Samuel Huntington Public Service Award was established to honor Huntington, the president and chief executive officer of the New England Electric System, which later merged with National Grid. He was deeply interested in public service. This year’s award went to three college seniors selected from a field of 58 applicants. Freid worked closely with the university’s Office of National Fellowships on his application for the Huntington.

Learn more about Trash 2 Treasure and PLAN: www.postlandfill.org. Watch a video: http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=o2TGJCV2kDg#!.

Watch a UNH commercial featuring Freid and Trash 2 Treasure: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2ZDsU9htOqU>

Photograph available to download: <http://www.unh.edu/news/releases/2013/may/Freid.jpg>

Caption: University of New Hampshire’s Alex Freid ‘13 has received the 2013 Samuel Huntington Public Service Award.

Credit: Kevin Connolly, UNH Video Services

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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