

Media Relations

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UNH's Sexual Harassment and Rape Prevention Program Receives \$162,000 Anonymous Donation

DURHAM, N.H. – The University of New Hampshire's Sexual Harassment and Rape Prevention Program (SHARPP) has received donations in the past. The largest amount was a generous \$1,000--until now.

Just before winter break, the UNH Foundation received a \$162,000 check from an anonymous donor who asked that the money be given to SHARPP for use in creating "an environment more inclusive towards male victims" of sexual violence.

While there is nothing known about the donor, Amy Culp, SHARPP's interim director and direct services coordinator, acknowledges that male victims traditionally receive less support despite the fact that one in seven men have been victims of sexual assault.

"Our data doesn't reflect that's who we are serving, and I think that's across the board at any crisis center because there is a stigma that comes with reporting it," Culp says. "The stigma attached with sexual assault is exponentially more for men."

This donation may possibly help diminish that stigma by reaching more men through education and outreach. The money will be used to increase services to men, including outreach and direct service.

"I see this money as enhancing and increasing our capacities," Culp says.

Culp speculates that SHARPP may have been chosen to receive the donation because they are "ahead in the field."

"SHARPP has a long history of being considered a model crisis center on a college campus. Many colleges and universities still consult with us when they are starting up," Culp says, adding that one difference is conversations that take place at SHARPP are covered by privileged communication, which is not the case at every center.

In the letter accompanying the check, the donor wrote "... a growing body of literature has suggested that the ways in which we measure and define victimization largely impacts the rates of self-reported victimization, potentially leading to an underestimation of the rates of male sexual victimization."

"Furthermore, many stereotypes exist around male sexual victimization, resulting in a lack of attention and an additional layer of stigma towards male victims."

Of SHARPP, the writer went on to say, "Your existing work within the community has been very impressive, and I am hopeful that this donation can help to further the population that you are able to serve."

The [University of New Hampshire](http://www.unh.edu), 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 12,300 undergraduate and 2,200 graduate students.

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