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Jody Record
UNH Media Relations

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Media Relations

March 19, 2014

“Frozen” Screenwriter/Director Jennifer Lee ’92 is UNH 2014 Commencement Speaker

DURHAM, NH – The first woman to direct an animated feature film for Walt Disney Animation Studios, Academy Award®-winner Jennifer Lee, will deliver the University of New Hampshire commencement address Saturday, May 17, 2014.

In March, Lee ’92 took home an Oscar® for Best Animated Feature at the Academy Awards. She also is the first female director to have a film surpass the $1 billion earning mark and the first writer at any major animation studio to become a director.

The UNH alumna began telling stories long before she was chosen to write and co-direct “Frozen.” After earning a bachelor’s degree in English at UNH in 1992, Lee worked in book publishing in New York City. In 2005, she received a master’s degree in film from Columbia University School of the Arts.

Her first feature screenplay, “Hinged on Stars”, won the Columbia University Film Festival and launched her career. In 2006 she got her first film option for her script “The Way Between.” Her next film, “The Roundup,” was optioned by Leonardo DiCaprio’s production company, Appian Way.

In 2010, she began work on “Wreck-It Ralph” for Walt Disney Animation Studios with fellow Columbia graduate Phil Johnston. The film went on to earn an Oscar® nomination for Best Animated Feature and won the Annie Award for Best Animated Feature Screenplay. She was tapped to write the screenplay for “Frozen” while she was finishing “Wreck-It Ralph.”

Lee also directed “Frozen” with animation veteran Chris Buck. In addition to smashing box-office records, the film received an Oscar®, Golden Globe, a British Academy Film and Television Award, five Annie Awards — including best director and best feature — and a second Academy Award® for Best Original Song ("Let it Go").

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 12,300 undergraduate and 2,200 graduate students.

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Image for download: http://www.unh.edu/news/releases/2014/03/images/jenniferlee-1914.jpg

Caption: “Frozen” screenwriter/director Jennifer Lee ’92 will deliver the commencement speech at the University of New Hampshire May 17, 2014.

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