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Media Relations

August 20, 2015

Federal Grant Renewed Thanks to Success of Its Academic Support

DURHAM, N.H. – Thanks to the renewal of a five-year grant of more than \$1.5 million from the U.S. Department of Education, the University of New Hampshire will continue to provide academic support and scholarship assistance to low-income, first-generation college students and students with disabilities.

“This TRIO grant is great news for New Hampshire and means many Granite Staters will get the support they need as they pursue higher education,” said Sen. Jeanne Shaheen (D-N.H.). “As a former public school teacher, I share TRIO’s commitment to making education more accessible for young people from all walks of life. I will continue to advocate for this program which has helped so many students achieve their dream of a college degree.”

The Student Support Services (SSS) program is one of four TRIO programs that UNH hosts. It provides academic support for 200 undergraduates each year through the Center for Academic Resources. Born out of President Lyndon B. Johnson’s War on Poverty, TRIO programs target students from disadvantaged backgrounds, including first-generation college students and those with disabilities. In addition, students who successfully complete the first-year transitions and the sophomore engagement programs that are part of the SSS grant become eligible for scholarship awards in each of those years.

“The grant process is very selective,” said Keller Magenau, director of the Center for Academic Resources. “We continue to be funded because what we do works.

We bring students into our program who might not make it through without the resources we can offer, and we encourage them to do much more than just make it through. We guide them toward the high-impact opportunities that make their time at UNH so valuable.”

UNH has been receiving the federal support grant since 1974. According to Magenau, the goal of their work is to help undergraduates maximize their educational experience while at UNH, offering tutoring, and teaching such skills as note-taking, time management, and test-taking and encouraging study abroad, undergraduate research, internships, graduate school advising and GRE preparation.

“Without a doubt what we do makes a difference in students’ lives,” said Magenau. “Our outcomes demonstrate that, and students tell us time and again. We’re grateful for Sen. Shaheen’s support and we’re grateful that UNH continues to sponsor the TRIO grants. But my hope is that UNH will expand on what we do with federal support so we can see more underrepresented students be successful.”

Magenau noted that approximately 40 percent of the undergraduate population is eligible for

academic support. The 200 students served by the TRIO programs are closely tracked to measure success, and 70.1 percent graduate in four years (80.7 percent in six years) as compared to the 58.7 percent who are eligible but are not served by the grant funding (70.1 percent in six years).

The U.S. Department of Education provides 80 percent of the funding for the TRIO@UNH-Student Support Services program; UNH funds the remaining 20 percent (in the 2015-16 academic year, \$319,203 and \$82,197 respectively).

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