

## Media Relations

May 21, 2016



More than 2,400 undergraduate and 473 graduate students received degrees at the University of New Hampshire's 146th commencement ceremonies Saturday, May 21, 2016. Credit: University of New Hampshire Communications and Public Affairs

DURHAM, N.H. – “Look at commencement as an intellectual and personal journey that begins today and never stops,” University of New Hampshire commencement speaker Richard Haass said during the university’s 146th commencement held Saturday, May 21, 2016. More than 2,400 undergraduate and 473 graduate students — including 70 military veterans — representing 40 states and 24 foreign countries received degrees.

Haass, president of the Council on Foreign Relations, urged the graduates to think about being closer to the end of the beginning than the beginning of

the end of their education, and that a piece of their continuing education be about the world. He noted that Americans are just four percent of the world’s population and that our country, for all its wealth and productivity, represents less than one quarter of global economic output.

“You are entering a world increasingly defined by globalization, which involves flows that are vast and fast across borders of just about everything you can imagine,” he said. “You are also entering a world characterized by increasing disarray.”

Haass stressed a need to know about the world for three reasons: it can affect you directly, it can and will affect your livelihood, and one of the most important hats each one of us wears is that of citizen.

In his welcoming remarks to graduates, their families and commencement guests, UNH President Mark Huddleston commended the class of 2016 for the role it played in helping to shine a bright light on the university during the considerable national and international media coverage it received during the first-in-the-nation presidential primary.

“It was an exciting time. What really stood out for me, though, was how well all this attention reflected on the character of our students. You showed the world a quality that is unfortunately rare these days. You listened. You listened thoughtfully and respectfully to a broad spectrum of opinions and ideas,” he said. “Changing the world for the better means using your ears at least as much as your mouth; sticking to your principles, but looking for common ground.”

Huddleston also recognized the grit – a combination of passion and perseverance in pursuit of a singularly important goal – of the class. “By that definition, this is one gritty class. You’ve demonstrated it in your resilience, our hard work and your focus on earning your diplomas.” He highlighted Samantha Granville, an English major from Concord, who at one point in her college career worked three part-time jobs to afford to stay in school. “Samantha is a wonderful example of grit in action. But her story and her family’s story are not unique at UNH. I know that there are hundreds and hundreds of Samanthas out there, each with his or her own stories of daunting challenges and even more powerful passion and perseverance.”

“Hold on to the qualities that got you here. Stay grounded. Keep listening. Find common ground. And bring your grit with you when you head into the word,” he added.

John Harrigan and Jameson French received the 2016 Granite State Award, given in recognition of their outstanding contributions to the state. Harrigan owned and published three weekly newspapers in northern New Hampshire and is known as the voice of the North Country. He is an award-winning journalist and was first finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in breaking news reporting in 1998. For 36 years he wrote an outdoor column that ran in the New Hampshire Sunday News. French, president and CEO of Northland Forest Products, is the immediate past president of The Hardwood Foundation and has served as chairman of the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests. A longtime Portsmouth resident, he also served on the NH Charitable Foundation board and led the campaign to restore the North Church steeple in Market Square.

Along with Haass, historian and author Kate Clifford Larson ‘03G and retired Air Force commander Col. Colleen Ryan ‘82 received honorary degrees. Larson is an historian, author and leading Harriet Tubman scholar. Her most recent book, “Rosemary: The Hidden Kennedy Daughter,” spent five weeks on The New York Times bestseller list and was voted one of People magazine’s top 10 books in 2015. From 2002 to 2006 she was the consulting historian for the National Parks Service’s Harriet Tubman Special Resource Study, which led to several years of ongoing legislation to establish two national parks in Tubman’s honor. Ryan took command of Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in 2006, becoming the first female commander in the base’s 58-year history. She is a master navigator with more than 3,400 hours and was part of the advance teams for Air Force One during the administrations of Presidents George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton. Ryan entered the Air Force in 1982 after receiving her commission through UNH’s ROTC program.

The University of New Hampshire produced a total of 2,626 undergraduates and 637 graduate students across its three campuses in Durham, Manchester and Concord.

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 13,000 undergraduate and 2,500 graduate students.

**Photographs available to download:**

<http://unh.edu/unh/relations/nb/releases/2016/05/images/img-5img-5richard-n-haass-keynote.jpg>

**Caption:** Richard Haass, president of the Council on Foreign Relations, delivered the speech at the University of New Hampshire commencement Saturday, May 21, 2016, in Durham.

**Credit:** University of New Hampshire Communications and Public Affairs

[http://www.unh.edu/news/releases/2016/05/images/img-9IMG\\_0013-2.jpg](http://www.unh.edu/news/releases/2016/05/images/img-9IMG_0013-2.jpg)

**Caption:** President Mark Huddleston addresses the 146th University of New Hampshire commencement Saturday, May 21, 2016, in Durham.

**Credit:** University of New Hampshire Communications and Public Affairs

[http://www.unh.edu/news/releases/2016/05/images/img-10\\_HUY4559.jpg](http://www.unh.edu/news/releases/2016/05/images/img-10_HUY4559.jpg)

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[http://www.unh.edu/news/releases/2016/05/images/img-7IMG\\_6117.jpg](http://www.unh.edu/news/releases/2016/05/images/img-7IMG_6117.jpg)

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### Speaker Remarks

[Read UNH President Mark Huddleston remarks](#)

[Read keynote speaker Richard Haass remarks](#)

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