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New Scholarship Fund for UNH Grad Students Focused on Improving Health Care

Wednesday, February 8, 2017

(HTTPS://WWW.UNH.EDU/UNHTODAY/NEWS/2017/02/08/NEW-SCHOLARSHIP-FUND-FUND-FUND-UNH-UNH-UNH-GRAD-GRAD-GRAD-STUDENTSSTUDENTSSTUDENT FOCUSEDFOCUSEDFOCUSED IMPROVINGIMPROVINGIMPROVING HEALTHHEALTHHEALTH-CARE) CARE) CARE)

DURHAM, N.H. – A \$500,000 scholarship fund in recognition of the former president and CEO of Northeast Health Care Quality Foundation (NHCQF) will generate more than \$20,000 a year to support graduate students at the University of New Hampshire pursuing health care careers.

Robert Aurilio served as president and CEO of NHCQF for almost 40 years, often speaking with UNH students about the foundation’s work as a federally designated quality improvement organization for health care and Medicare in particular. When the foundation was dissolved as a result of provisions of the Affordable Care Act, its board of directors voted to give the remaining money to several New Hampshire charities, including UNH. Aurilio also donated \$15,000 to help the scholarship fund reach



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: MIKE FERRARA, DEAN OF UNH’S COLLEGE OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES; NORTHEAST HEALTH CARE QUALITY FOUNDATION BOARD CHAIRMAN ROBERT DORF, DO; ROBERT AURILIO, FORMER PRESIDENT AND CEO OF NHCQF; AND GENE HARKLESS, CHAIR OF THE NURSING DEPARTMENT AT UNH AND A FORMER NHCQF BOARD MEMBER.

\$500,000.

“This tribute to my work is a legacy I never expected and one that means the world to me,” said Aurilio. “I am so proud of what we did to help provide quality health care for all people in northern New England and I am honored to have a scholarship in my name that will help continue our corporation’s mission to advance excellent and efficient health care. I hope this scholarship will make it possible for those who want to make a positive impact on health care to do so.”

The Robert A. Aurilio Scholarship Fund will provide merit-based support for several students each year at the discretion of the dean of UNH’s College of Health and Human Services (CHHS). The first scholarships will be awarded in the fall of 2017.

“We are pleased to have the ability to recognize the work of graduate students who seek a career that focuses on improving the quality of health care in our country,” said CHHS Dean Mike Ferrara. “This will allow us to give financial support to the students who will go on to lead efforts to provide the quality of health care we all receive.”

As chair of the nursing department at UNH and a former NHCQF board member, Gene Harkless knows firsthand the impact this fund will have.

“For many years Bob shared his passion for quality health care with our students,” Harkless said. “I can’t think of a more fitting person’s name to be on this scholarship that will benefit the future health care leaders of our country. He truly wants every student to have a rewarding career that allows them to see what they are really does make a difference.”

The University of New Hampshire is a flagship research university that inspires innovation and transforms lives in our state, nation and world. More than 16,000 students from all 50 states and 71 countries engage with an award-winning faculty in top ranked programs in business, engineering, law, health and human services, liberal arts and the sciences across more than 200 programs of study. UNH’s research portfolio includes partnerships with NASA, NOAA, NSF and NIH, receiving more than \$100 million in competitive external funding every year to further explore and define the frontiers of land, sea and space.

Editor's Notes:

Photo available for download: <https://www.unh.edu/unhtoday/sites/default/files/media/aurilio.jpg>

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Caption: From left to right: Mike Ferrara, dean of UNH’s College of Health and Human Services; Northeast Health Care Quality Foundation Board Chairman Robert Dorf, DO; Robert Aurilio, former president and CEO of NHQFB; and Gene Harkless, chair of the nursing department at UNH and a former NHCQF board member.

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