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## New Program Offers Support and Scholarships for N.H. Students to Study STEM at UNH

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(HTTPS://WWW.UNH.EDU/UNHTODAY/NEWS/2018/01/03/new-program-offers-support-and-scholarships-nh-students-study-stem-unh)

DURHAM, N.H. – A new program developed by the University of New Hampshire will help 30 students from Manchester West and Dover high schools with academic talent and financial need attend college to study in the fields of science, technology, engineering or math. The Finishers’ Program will provide up to four years of scholarships as well as ongoing academic support and job placement assistance.

The program, which has received a five-year \$1 million grant from the National Science Foundation, grew out of a need to continue supporting students participating in Manchester’s STEAM Ahead program. It partners with Manchester West and Dover high schools, as they represent the largest and fastest growing urban areas respectively in New Hampshire.

“STEAM Ahead is a successful public school/private industry partnership – participating students are absent one-fifth as often and have almost a point higher GPA than those not participating in the program -- but when they graduate high school the support stops,” said David Mattingly, assistant professor of physics at UNH and the head of the program. “This new program helps students transition from high school to college and persist through a four-year college degree and STEM career by providing the financial and academic support they need.”

Mattingly noted that STEAM Ahead was founded to help businesses in the state meet their skilled workforce needs, and that need still exists. Dover High School also offers STEM opportunities through its career and technical education programs. At both schools, the training and support largely ends upon high school graduation. For students who may not have the resources to attend college, this often means an end to their education and a limit to STEM workforce development in the state.

“Manchester High School West is extremely excited to enter this partnership with UNH,” said Rick Dichard, principal of Manchester West. “It is a tremendous opportunity for our students to be part of a cutting-edge program while keeping the cost of college tuition at a more affordable rate via the scholarship that comes with it.”

The scholarship, averaging \$24,000 per student over four years, is designed to meet the average unmet need for these students. In addition, students will receive continuous academic support from their senior year of high school through college as well as job/graduate school placement assistance and mentorship. Knowledge gained from studying each student’s progress and experiences will provide data needed to better support students in STEM across the country.

“By providing this unified system that addresses financial, academic, professional and social need we can support these 30 students and learn from them how to improve overall educational equity at UNH,” Mattingly said. “In this time of rising economic inequality, we have an obligation to keep higher education accessible and affordable for low-income and first-generation students. Because of this program at least 30 kids will go to college who might not have otherwise been able to.”

Interested students must apply to UNH by Feb. 1, 2018, and complete the FAFSA by March 1, 2018. Federal regulations require that eligibility is based on the FAFSA. For more information contact David Mattingly at david.mattingly@unh.edu (mailto:david.mattingly@unh.edu).

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