

“Your education is a tool, not a weapon.”

Dean Kamen addressed largest graduating class in UNH Manchester history at Thursday's commencement ceremony

Friday, May 18, 2018



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“You’ll make a living by what you get. You’ll make a life by what you give.”

This was the theme of Dean Kamen’s keynote address at UNH Manchester’s commencement ceremony on Thursday. Education is a tool, not a weapon, and it should be used for something important, the renowned inventor told the graduating class.

“This world does not need conquering. This world is on life support,” Kamen said. “What this world needs is smart people with

a real dedication to fix it.”

Manchester is becoming a hub for people and businesses with that mission. One such venture is the Advanced Regenerative Manufacturing Institute, founded by Kamen, which will build an industry for human tissue engineering centered in Manchester’s millyard. Kamen said the key to the community’s growth and progress is keeping the best and brightest talent here.

Mike Decelle, dean of UNH Manchester, said the college is doing just that. With 93 percent of graduates settling in New Hampshire, Decelle said the college is a workforce engine for the state.

Thursday’s ceremony celebrated the achievements of 274 students, the largest graduating class in UNH Manchester history. UNH President Mark Huddleston led the proceedings, which recognized 208 undergraduate and 66 graduate students.

“What really sets you apart is your character and work ethic,” Huddleston said. “You embrace challenges and you are eager to prove yourselves. You are self-starters and team builders. And your desire to improve your lives, to support your families and to build stronger communities is second to none.”



Embodying this notion was student speaker Abigail Goen, whose UNH Manchester career began after graduating from ConVal High

School in 2002. But after struggling with some of the coursework, Goen realized it wasn't the right time for her to be in college, and she withdrew.

Ten years later, married and the mother of three children, Goen decided it was the right time. She returned to UNH Manchester, where biology courses ignited her interest in science. Graduating with the highest honors, Goen's success is highlighted by an Undergraduate Research Conference award, the upcoming publication of microbial genomics research and her induction into the TriBeta honor society. But she credits much of her growth to the grit, diversity and ingenuity of her peers.

“As UNH Manchester students, our education has not been limited to our majors or within the walls of our classrooms,” Goen said.

“We have worked together and shown that there is real success to be gained when we put aside our bias and engage.”

The program also included the presentation of the 2018 Granite State Award to Joseph Reilly '78, '90G, former NH regional president of Eastern Bank, and the Excellence in Teaching awards to Daniel Seichepine, assistant professor of neuropsychology, and Suzanne Cooke, adjunct professor of biology.

Congratulations, Class of 2018! [SEE THE LIST OF GRADUATES](#) □

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The stories are written by the staff of **UNH Communications and Public Affairs**.

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