

UNH Law Celebrates Class of 2018, School's History at 43rd Commencement Ceremony

Saturday, May 19, 2018



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Ceremony: <https://youtu.be/IZBrwdLLqkl>

The University of New Hampshire School of Law celebrated its 43rd commencement ceremony on Saturday, May 19, 2018, awarding more than 75 juris doctor and graduate degrees.

The ceremony also featured the awarding of an honorary degree to retired New Hampshire Supreme Court Chief Justice Linda Stewart Dalianis – the first woman to serve as New Hampshire’s chief justice, and to sit on the state’s highest court – and a celebration of the school’s class of 1978, as well as a keynote

address from Tim Ryan '00 JD, a rising star in the Democratic party and United States congressman in Ohio.

The entrepreneurial and independent spirit that has fueled UNH Law since its founding as the Franklin Pierce Law Center in 1973 was highlighted throughout the festivities. It began with recognition for the class of 1978, celebrating the 40th anniversary of its graduation with recollections of the school's humble beginnings in a former bull barn in East Concord, and continued with the honoring of Dalianis, a visionary for the school's celebrated Daniel Webster Scholar Honors program, still the nation's only client-ready, bar-alternative course of study.

Ryan, a graduate of the JD class of 2000, heralded UNH Law as "the first law school in America to drop the pomp from the study of law."

UNH Law Dean Megan Carpenter opened the proceedings with a similar sentiment, comparing the school to a spirited startup by referring to it as "the Apple of legal education," crediting the members of the class of 1978 for being "so much a part of the pioneering spirit of taking legal education in a different direction."

Carol Ann Conboy, retired New Hampshire Supreme Court Justice and a member of the class of '78, addressed the graduates as well.

"We all, in our disparate ways, heard the siren call of a law school in its infancy," she said of her classmates. "We, your legal ancestors, were risk takers, and we bet it all on a quirky place we affectionately called 'Frank's.'"

The focus wasn't solely on the past, however. UNH President Mark Huddleston, addressing his final cohort of graduates as he prepares to retire after 11 years as the longest-tenured president in UNH's history, pointed out the opportunities that await the class of 2018.

“You thrived on the cutting edge of innovative legal education, and you earned your degrees at an institution that boasts some of the highest bar passage and job placement rates in the nation,” Huddleston said. “The world is eager for your talent, and we are excited to follow your successes.”

Professor Buzz Scherr was next to address the crowd as part of a long-standing school tradition known as Advice from the Faculty. Scherr began his remarks with some good-natured ribbing of Ryan – who was once a student in Scherr’s classroom at the law school – before encouraging the graduates to follow three pieces of advice: to “listen well in your professional lives,” to “speak confidently,” and to “show people, don’t tell people.”

“It may well be true that you think you are pretty much the smartest person in the room,” Scherr said. “If that’s true, you don’t need to tell people that – you will show it by the way you carry yourself, and that’s maybe the most important thing.”

Vijaya Natarajan, a student from India who earned an LLM in intellectual property, was selected by her classmates as the graduate student speaker, and she noted the “wonderful journey and lifetime of experiences” she had at UNH Law.

She said the education provided knowledge and skills that “we are all going to take as good-will ambassadors, and follow the path of the alumni network. I have a bunch of people in my country all from this proud institution, and I am so happy to be a part of it.”

Richard Steele, the selected speaker for the juris doctor graduates, used a poem by Charles T. Davis as the basis for his remarks. The poem refers to “the ancient laws of youth” – “to ride, shoot straight, and speak the truth.”

“We have been trained to precisely choose our words, to

concisely communicate exactly what we mean,” Steele said. “We have to make the truth matter. Because if the truth does not matter, then those precise words will not matter. And if the words do not matter, then the law will not matter.”

Following the awarding of the honorary degree to Dalianis, Ryan took to the podium and challenged the graduates to be leaders for the next generation.

He highlighted many of the societal and political challenges that currently face the United States, including economics, health care, school shootings, climate issues, and the opiate epidemic.

“The world you are entering is much different than the world that existed in 1973 when this school was founded. But its founders have given us a road map on how to deal with these tumultuous times, and here’s what I think this school has shown us – to believe, to be brave, and to be together.”

He encouraged the graduates to be fearless and adventurous in helping the country through such difficult times, referencing the accomplishments of leaders that led to the emergence from “the dark ages.”

“As graduates of this great university, you are the heirs of those brave adventurers. So I stand here today to tell you in no uncertain terms, we need you to have the courage to go on an adventure that will transform you and will transform our world.”

“Your education has prepared you to take your place among those leaders who are redefining the rules and changing the way we see things,” Ryan continued. “No matter the challenges, answer the call and lead us to the next renaissance, for our country and for the world. Graduates, lead – and take us on an adventure.”

The ceremony concluded with remarks from Carpenter, who just completed her first year as dean of UNH Law. She, too, encouraged the graduates to work to make the world a better

place by utilizing the skills and knowledge they've gained, once again weaving the school's history and celebrated alumni into the afternoon's proceedings by welcoming the current class into that esteemed group.

"Lawyers make the roads so that the wheels of our society work. They work to safeguard the value of every individual," Carpenter said. "Here at this school, we pay particular attention to that. This school that started in a bull barn is an essential part of social justice and public service in the information age, in this state and around the world. And today, you all join these ranks. The world needs you.

"Your parents, I'm sure, looked at you once and wondered what you would be someday, and we are honored at UNH Law to be such an important part of your becoming," Carpenter said. "And you are part of our family, too, now – the UNH Law family. You are graduating, but you will always be a part of our family."

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This brief provides updates from the Insurance Coverage and Marketplace "Covering the Care Briefs" that were previously published.¹⁻³ This update also includes a special section focused on premiums and deductibles in New Hampshire.

WHY DOES INSURANCE COVERAGE MATTER?

Individuals risk experiencing unexpected and high medical costs and often forgo necessary care when they lack health insurance. More than 3 in 4 uninsured adults said they or their family delayed or went without health care because of cost reasons in 2019.⁴

INSURANCE COVERAGE IN NEW HAMPSHIRE

The uninsured rate in NH has been consistent in recent years, approximately 6% from 2015 through 2019, down from almost 11% in 2013.⁴ Nationally, the uninsured rate was approximately 9% in 2019. New Hampshire's rate of 6.3% in 2019 is higher than its 2018 rate of 5.7%, while these are not significant

FOCUS ON HEALTH POLICY RISING COSTS AND MARKET INSTABILITY

The cost of health insurance, in terms of premiums and deductibles, increased significantly between 2017 and 2019. This is due in part to the reality that the underlying costs to provide health care are high, and New Hampshire is a small state. The insurance industry attributes rising premiums to many factors, including:

- ongoing uncertainty about the future of the Affordable Care Act;
- the elimination of the individual mandate penalty by Congress in December 2017;
- lack of funding for cost sharing reductions;

December 29, 2020 | INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH POLICY AND PRACTICE (IHPP)

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