

Tracking Hidden STEM in NH's North Country

Project links outdoor recreation to science, technology, engineering and math

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PHOTOGRAPH BY JOE VIGER.

Is K-9 search-and-rescue a STEM skill? What about hunting, snowmobiling or cross-country skiing? That's what [Andrew Coppens](#), associate professor of education, and [Jayson Seaman](#), associate professor of recreation management and policy, set out to explore with 40 middle and high schoolers from Coös County at a recent workshop at the Appalachian Mountain Club's Highland Center. The students met [Neeko](#), a 3-year-old Belgian Malinois,

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and handler Doreen Michalak from [New England K-9 Search and Rescue](#), and practiced using a mobile app that will help them document “hidden STEM” in their outdoor recreation pursuits.

“Our goal is to connect STEM skills, a critical area of workforce need in the state, to New Hampshire’s booming \$2.7 billion outdoor recreation industry,” says Coppens. “We want to understand how their outdoor recreation could catalyze promising educational and workforce pathways.” Funded by the National Science Foundation, this [research](#) is led by [CAST](#), with Seaman and Coppens as co-principal investigators.

WRITTEN [Beth Potier](#) | Communications and Public Affairs |

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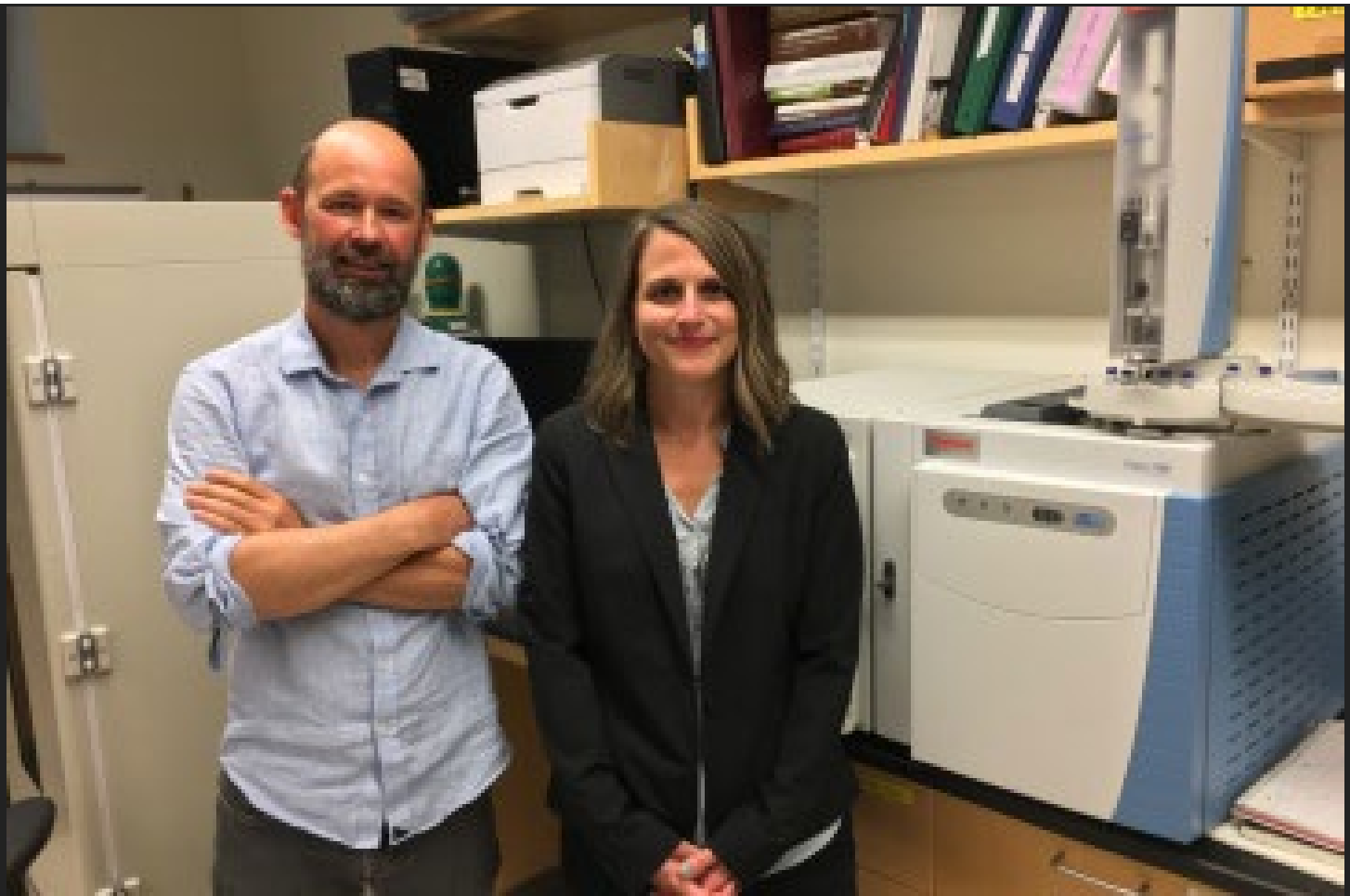
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