

Awards Honor Innovation and Research at UNH

UNHInnovation Presents J. Brent Loy Innovators of the Year Awardees for 2022 and 2023

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FROM LEFT: 2023 INNOVATOR OF THE YEAR JEFFREY HALPERN, 2022 INNOVATORS OF THE YEAR KATE SILER AND CHRISTINE SHEA, AND UNHINNOVATION'S MARC EICHENBERGER.

A UNH initiative addressing unconscious bias in the academic workplace and a suite of patented biosensors that advance quality control in biomanufacturing were at the center of the 2022 and 2023 J. Brent Loy Innovators of the Year awards presented by [UNHInnovation](#) May 2, 2023.

Two members of UNH's [ADVANCE](#) team — Christine Shea, professor emerita of Paul College, and ADVANCE program coordinator Kate Siler — were honored as the 2022 recipients for their work developing [IncludeU®](#), a groundbreaking, research-backed bystander intervention training platform aimed at improving academic workplace climate through education and awareness of unconscious bias. Jeffrey Halpern, associate professor of chemical engineering, received the 2023 honor for his [contributions to biosensing](#) and fostering a culture of research innovation at UNH. The awards were presented on May 2, 2023, during the Research, Economic Engagement and Outreach (REEO) annual celebration recognizing UNH researchers and scholars.

Shea and Siler were recognized for their significant contributions to UNH's mission of research commercialization through the development of IncludeU®, an online course that uses animated scenarios to provide examples of how faculty can intervene when they see bias occurring. Shea has also published research on leadership, champions of innovation and bystander intervention in leading journals, and has held various administrative positions at UNH's Paul College of Business and Economics. Siler has managed UNH's ADVANCE Institutional Transformation and ADVANCE Partnership grant programs. Her work is focused on improving workplace climate and reducing bias incidents through programs that support faculty recruitment, retention, and mentoring. She has also served on several university committees and worked on translating scientific concepts into accessible curriculum and professional development offerings in previous positions.

Halpern is a named inventor on five patents, including two issued and two pending, all related to biosensors. His interdisciplinary approach to sensor development involves surface chemistry,

materials science and electrochemistry. In addition to his work on biosensors, Halpern is also recognized for developing a culture of innovation at the university; he has mentored more than 25 undergraduates and summer interns, nine graduate students and two postdoctoral researchers from seven different academic programs. He was recently honored with the Herb Epstein award for Technical Programming from the American Institute of Chemical Engineers (AIChE) in 2022. Halpern's work has been supported by various grants, including from the NIH and NSF, and he currently leads a team designing protein sensors in biomanufacturing settings across four states and building a sepsis sensor on a urinary catheter line.

"Innovation and research are at the heart of our mission at UNH," says Marc Eichenberger, associate vice president and chief business development and innovation officer, who presented the awards. "This award represents years of dedication to their work. Tonight, we're celebrating the success of those research efforts, but also the overall contributions to their field and the impact on not only UNH and the academic community, but the greater public good."

The Innovator of the Year Awards were presented as part of REEO's annual [celebration recognizing UNH researchers and scholars](#) who received prestigious external honors. At the event, Jenna Matheny, director of technology transfer at UNHInnovation, moderated a panel discussing the impact of innovations created at UNH.

The [J. Brent Loy Innovator of the Year Award](#) honors the late Loy, a distinguished professor emeritus and longtime NH Agricultural Experiment Station researcher. Loy's research on cucurbit varieties is a core part of UNH's intellectual property portfolio and was a driving factor in the development of UNH's technology transfer program.

UNHInnovation provides resources and support for the university's research and innovation work, including intellectual property protection and commercialization.

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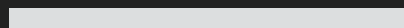
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