



F

A

C

E

S



O

F



O

U

R



F

U

T

U

R

E

The University of New England places students at the center of everything we do. Indeed, promoting the success of our students informs every project we undertake and every decision I make as president. It is the North Star that steers us through the increasingly treacherous headwinds facing higher education today.

When I first arrived at UNE in the summer of 2017, one of my first tasks was to initiate a University-wide strategic planning process. Our entire community agreed that promoting student success would be our guiding principle in that process, and over the course of the coming year the Nor'easter community came together to develop the plan. The Board of Trustees approved Our World, Our Future as our five-year strategic plan in November 2018.

Often in higher education, strategic plans sit on shelves collecting dust. We were committed to ensuring that wouldn't happen with our plan, that it would instead function as a living, breathing document. We established six oversight committees to coordinate the work on each of the plan's six priorities, drawing on the talents of our faculty, professional staff, and trustees. Together, these committees and my senior leadership team ensured that we maintained our focus on the plan's priorities. When specific initiatives within a priority were achieved and retired, new ones were added.

We did not falter, even in the face of a global pandemic. When most of our peers went into survival mode and halted any strategic work, we Nor'easters kept forging ahead, launching new academic programs, revising our curriculum and pedagogical methods, building new facilities, and finding ever better ways to enhance the experience of our students.

I'm not generally one to spend much time looking in the rearview mirror — I tend to keep my sites set squarely on the future. But as we approach the five-year mark of our plan, it's an auspicious time to pause just long enough to reflect on our progress as we contemplate next steps. And what progress we've made!



Through the voices of students themselves, this edition of the UNE Magazine celebrates our collective accomplishments over the course of the past five years as we look forward to what comes next. Of course, there's no way we can do justice to everything we've accomplished in these pages. But I hope the magazine will give you a sense of the dynamic energy and innovative spirit that defines our special community.

I look forward to an even brighter future over the next five years. I hope you'll find your own way of joining our collective journey.

Warm regards,

JAMES D. HERBERT, Ph.D. | PRESIDENT



FACES OF OUR FUTURE: EMPOWERING STUDENTS TO BUILD A BETTER TOMORROW



OUR FUTURE: CHARTING A NEW COURSE FOR FIRST-GENERATION STUDENTS



OUR FUTURE: ONE SLIDE AT A TIME

- 1 PRESIDENT'S LETTER
- 2 CONTENTS
- 3 NEWS BRIEFS
- 17 DONOR SPOTLIGHT
Doing Our Part
- 19 IN PHOTOS
188th Commencement
- 35 HUMANS OF UNE
Deeqo Mahamud
- 41 IN PHOTOS
President's Forum
- 43 OH! NEW ENGLAND
New Tides on Sustainable Aquaculture
- 47 IN PHOTOS
Reimagining a Health Sciences Campus for All
- 49 FIFTEEN MINUTES WITH...
Shyanne Barnes
- 51 TRAVELOGUE
Moments in Morocco
- 55 COLLEGE OF BUSINESS
A Bull Market for Business Education



IN PHOTOS: HOMECOMING 2023

- 57 IN PHOTOS
Voices of Our Future: Student Activism at UNE
- 59 STUDENT VOICE
Reshaping Reproductive Care
- 61 ATHLETICS
A Beacon for Women's Sports
- 63 ATHLETICS
A Hat Trick of Achievements
- 67 ALUMNI SPOTLIGHTS
Putting Research into Practice
- 68 ALUMNI SPOTLIGHTS
Shielding Children From Harm
- 69 CLASS NOTES
- 77 IN MEMORIAM
- 80 REMEMBERING
Margaret "Diane" Curl Roberts
- 81 CAMPUS COMMUNITY
Reduce, Reuse, Restyle



For additional content and bonus features, be sure to visit us online: une.edu/magazine

A PUBLICATION OF THE OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

VICE PRESIDENT
Ellen Beaulieu

MAGAZINE STAFF

Editor in Chief
Alan Bennett
Art Director
Marine Miller
Managing Editor
Emme Demmendaal
Staff Writers
Zach Brockhouse
Tulley Hescock
Matt Shinberg
Joel Soloway
Curry Stover
Photographer
Holly Haywood

DIGITAL CONTENT

Editor
April Forristall-St Michel
Designer
Jessica Kruzel

CONTRIBUTORS

Writers
Jordan Agabin '23
David Ambrose
John Austin
Angela Coulombe
Claire Dudek '24
E. Mackenzie Greenleaf '23
Amy Haile
James Herbert
Tyler Nussinow '26
Dawson Turcotte '24
Emily Walsh '24
Photographers
David Bates
Allison Cheng
Tristan Durgin
Edgecomb Photography
Tim Greenway
Gracie McNally '26
Rene Roy
Jeff Scher
David P. Terwilliger, II

UNE MAGAZINE is a publication for alumni, friends, and associates of the University of New England, Westbrook College, and St. Francis College. It is published annually.

CONTACT the UNE Communications Office:
716 Stevens Ave., Portland, ME 04103
unemagazine@une.edu

UNE AWARDS FIRST PRESIDENT’S AWARD FOR CONSTRUCTIVE DISCOURSE



Andrew Rotondo



Marc Ebenfeld

The University of New England presented Andrew Rotondo, Ph.D., professor of philosophy, and Marc Ebenfeld, Ph.D., director of the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, with the inaugural President's Award for Constructive Discourse during the annual Fall Assembly on Wednesday, Aug. 23.

Established by UNE President James Herbert, the award recognizes a member of both the faculty and professional staff who have shown exceptional dedication to promoting constructive, thoughtful discourse on difficult or controversial topics within the UNE community. The award carries a \$1,000 honorarium.

Herbert underscored the importance of fostering an environment where challenging conversations can thrive both in and out of the classroom.

“As recipients of the President's Award for Constructive Discourse, Andrew and Marc have clearly demonstrated our University's leadership in fostering constructive dialogue,” Herbert said, adding that the recipients were selected for their commitment to free expression, open inquiry, and civil discourse in the pursuit of knowledge. “Their exemplary efforts not only play a crucial role in addressing the challenges confronting our world, they set an example for the UNE community in how to engage in this important work.”

“Their exemplary efforts not only play a crucial role in addressing the challenges confronting our world, they set an example for the UNE community in how to engage in this important work.”

— James Herbert



UNE AND CHEYNEY UNIVERSITY FORGE NEW PATHWAYS TO MEDICAL EDUCATION

The University of New England and Cheyney University of Pennsylvania, the nation's first historically Black university, have announced a collaboration aimed at fostering new pathways to medical education for qualified students.

The two universities signed an articulation agreement in July to provide a pathway for qualified Cheyney undergraduates to pursue a medical education at UNE's College of Osteopathic Medicine (COM).

The agreement reflects the values of both institutions, with Cheyney's whole-person approach to student development mirroring the osteopathic principles embodied by UNE COM — of holistic, patient-centered care and promoting health rather than solely treating disease. More broadly, the agreement is a testament to UNE's mission of improving the health of people, communities, and our shared planet.

Cheyney's agreement with UNE is part of its ongoing efforts to meet the growing demand for bioscience and technology majors. With 24% of the student body enrolled within these majors, Cheyney is increasing awareness of career options for these students through its partnerships with institutions and biotech companies and expanding opportunities with external like-minded partners, providing internships and careers.

UNE President James Herbert remarked that the partnership represents the University's latest effort to expand pipelines to medical school while encouraging more students to pursue careers as physicians and meet both Maine and the nation's health care workforce needs.

“As Maine's only medical school, we feel a special responsibility to provide our aging state and region with a steady stream of primary care physicians as well as the full range of specialized doctors who can make equally important contributions to their fields and to the people who depend on them for care,” Herbert stated.

Cheyney is among the growing list of colleges and universities with which UNE COM has formed such agreements. Others include Tufts University and the University of Vermont.





INSTITUTIONAL

UNE's credit rating gets an upgrade

The University of New England has received an upgraded rating from Moody's Investors Service, elevating the University's credit rating from A3 to A2 with a "stable" financial outlook.

According to Moody's latest credit report, the upgrade reflects UNE's "excellent operating performance and diverse academic offering(s) within high-demand disciplines across undergraduate and graduate programs," while the University's financial outlook "reflects expectations of continued strong operating performance, despite student market challenges, and healthy reserves relative to debt and expenses."

The agency also pointed to UNE's "very good financial policy and strategy," supported by "exceptional budget discipline," that has generated "very healthy" financial margins over a multi-year period.

"Between the pandemic, economic uncertainty, and declining enrollment across the nation, the past several years have been particularly difficult for institutions of higher education," said UNE President James Herbert. "Instead of shying away from these challenges, UNE has worked to overcome them to emerge financially stronger than ever before, even bringing in our largest-ever undergraduate class in 2022."

The Moody's report listed several of UNE's institutional assets, including consistent student desire for high-demand programs, strong debt affordability, market distinction among academic programs, and strong brand identity and strategic positioning.

INSTITUTIONAL

UNE signs CEO Action for Diversity and Inclusion coalition pledge

The University of New England has joined the growing CEO Action for Diversity and Inclusion coalition, pledging to advance diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

In signing the pledge, UNE became — and remains — the first higher education institution in Maine to take part in the initiative, the largest of its kind in the nation to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workplace.

As a signatory of the pledge, UNE joins 2,400 businesses, educational institutions, and nonprofit organizations in vowing to cultivate a workplace where diverse perspectives, experiences, and backgrounds are welcomed and respected and where employees feel encouraged to discuss issues related to diversity and inclusion.

UNE President James Herbert said the pledge directly reflects UNE's mission of supporting an inclusive, welcoming environment for all people, supported by a commitment to freedom of expression and open inquiry.

"This pledge serves as a reminder that UNE is committed to fostering a diverse marketplace of ideas, where knowledge is built upon open expression and sometimes difficult conversations among people from different backgrounds and perspectives," Herbert said.

Many of the pledge's goals are outlined in UNE's Our World, Our Future Strategic Plan.

RESEARCH

UNE launches new lab for biotechnology research in Portland

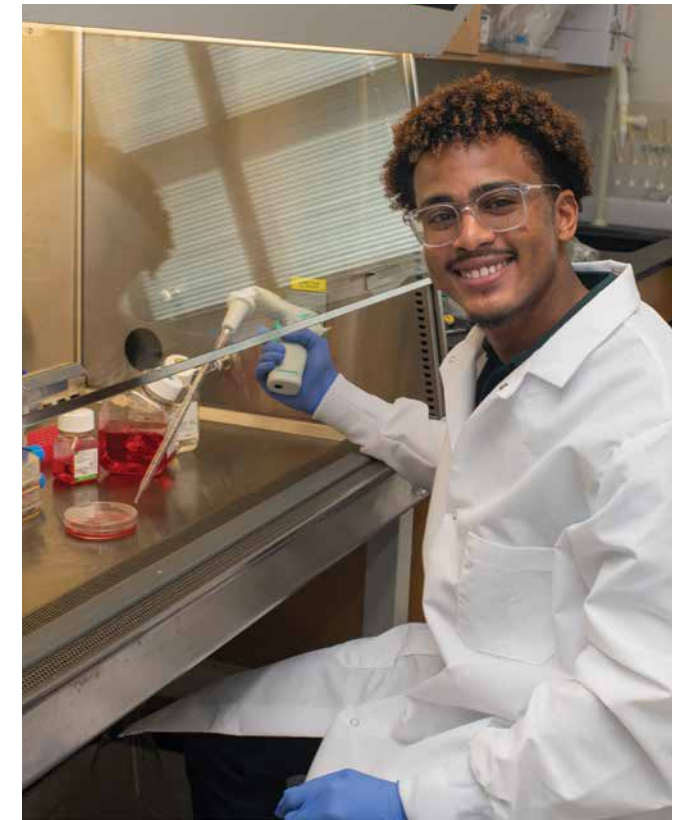
As part of its commitment to research innovation to better the health of people and communities across the globe, the University of New England has announced the launch of the Portland Laboratory for Biotechnology and Health Sciences, an innovative addition to the University's growing academic and research landscape.

The laboratory, located on UNE's newly renamed Portland Campus for the Health Sciences, will occupy two levels of the School of Pharmacy building at the heart of the University's campus on Stevens Avenue.

Gwendolyn Mahon, UNE's provost and senior vice president for Academic Affairs, said the new laboratory will bolster UNE's expertise in biotechnology and health sciences research while also creating opportunities for strategic research partnerships and contributing to workforce development in this dynamic field.

"This world-class laboratory reinforces our dedication to fostering collaborative, interdisciplinary research initiatives that address local and global needs, all while amplifying our efforts to engage students in focused research and scholarship," Mahon said. "Maine's biotechnology sector is growing. That growth, coupled with recent federal investments in biotechnology, creates an ideal environment for UNE to meaningfully contribute."

Karen Houseknecht, Ph.D., associate provost for Research and Scholarship and professor of pharmacology, will serve as the laboratory's inaugural director.



RESEARCH

UNE researchers awarded millions to study and treat chronic pain

Biomedical research is booming at the University of New England, and University researchers are pioneering novel ways of treating chronic pain, one of the nation's most pressing health issues.

Notable projects include a five-year, \$6.6 million grant to Ian Meng, Ph.D., director of the UNE's Center of Biomedical Research Excellence for the Study of Pain and Sensory Function, to map out the corneal nerves with the goal of developing new, more effective treatments for corneal pain.

Derek Molliver, Ph.D., professor of biomedical sciences, is using \$2 million from the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke to identify the molecular basis of chronic pain in hopes of developing non-addictive treatment options. Molliver's team is using the five-year grant to test therapeutic methods of suppressing mitochondrial signaling in hopes of reducing pain in sensory neurons.

And Diana Goode, Ph.D., is using a five-year, \$1.7 million award from the National Cancer Institute and National Institute of General Medical Sciences to study the role of anti-inflammatory immune cells in the prevention of peripheral neuropathy for chemotherapy patients. The goal of that project, Goode said, is to reduce side effects and improve the quality of life for cancer patients as they receive treatment.



OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE

COM alum tapped to lead Maine CDC

A 2012 graduate of UNE's College of Osteopathic Medicine (UNE COM) is the new director of the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Puthiery Va, D.O., was appointed to the post in July and started her new position in late August.

Va returned to Maine after serving as director of the Division of Public Health in Chinle, Arizona, leading the Navajo Nation through the COVID-19 pandemic.

Maine Department of Health and Human Services Commissioner Jeanne Lambrew said in a statement that Va was selected for the role based on her extensive range of experience in primary clinical care, epidemiology, and public health emergency response.

Va's journey to the United States as a child, alongside her family as refugees from Cambodia, adds a valuable dimension to her commitment to public health and humanitarian work.

"Dr. Va brings extensive knowledge and expertise to our health care system, patients, and communities," remarked Jane Carreiro, D.O., dean of UNE COM. "It is very meaningful for our students to see a fellow Nor'easter in this very important position, and I look forward to working with Dr. Va to address the health care needs of our state."

HEALTH PROFESSIONS

Health professions students learning to manage aggressive patient behavior

Students in the University of New England's Westbrook College of Health Professions (WCHP) are benefitting from a new initiative that teaches them how to engage with and manage patients with aggressive behaviors.

Management of Aggressive Behavior (MOAB) training is currently being offered to students in the college, administered by staff from UNE's own Office of Safety and Security. The training provides students with the tools and resources needed to de-escalate situations within health care settings, which can place both providers and clients at risk for harm.

Incidents of aggressive behavior on the part of patients and their families have risen in Maine and nationwide, particularly in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic.

The training teaches students to avoid conflict and confrontation altogether and evaluates strategies to optimize the outcome of aggressive situations. This type of training is typically reserved for health professionals upon employment, so participating UNE students are better prepared to handle hostile situations before they even enter the workforce.

Participants are taught about mental conditioning, non-verbal communication, personal space, reactionary distance, empathic listening, what to do when a situation worsens, and tactics to consider while maintaining personal safety.



SERVICE LEARNING

UNE volunteers pack 50,000 meals for Mainers facing hunger

Over 200 volunteers from the University of New England community came together in the spirit of service on Tuesday, Sept. 12, to assemble 50,000 nonperishable meal kits for underserved communities across the state of Maine.


The event, dubbed "Meals for Maine," was held as part of national Sept. 11 Day of Service and Remembrance events held across the country in memory of the 9/11 terror attacks. UNE was one of just 10 schools nationwide to receive funding to support the initiative.

The massive effort highlighted UNE's role in addressing the pervasive issue of food insecurity, a health concern for many in Maine and across the country. Maine is ranked first in New England and sixth in the nation for citizens facing food insecurity.

The event also sought to inspire students and others to make a difference in their communities in support of the University's mission of improving the health of people and communities, said Trisha Mason, M.A., director of the Office of Service-Learning in the Westbrook College of Health Professions, noting that the meals assembled will be distributed across Maine with a focus on reaching older adults, children, immigrant and refugee families, and other vulnerable groups.

"I am proud and humbled by the great work done on Sept. 12, and I know that the positive impact will be far-reaching. This is an excellent example of how our students are doing their part to better the health of communities across Maine," Mason said.

As a learning opportunity for UNE's health professions students, "Meals for Maine" featured online educational programming. Additionally, Mason hopes to host the event annually, "putting UNE at the forefront of tackling food insecurity from a public health perspective" and supporting the state's legislative action to end hunger in Maine by 2030.

 For additional content, visit us online: une.edu/magazine.

HEALTH PROFESSIONS

Recent alum Robert Motley returns from rehabbing veterans in Ukraine

Robert Motley, a 2023 graduate of UNE's Master of Science in Occupational Therapy program, returned to the Portland Campus for the Health Sciences in early September to recount his experience rehabilitating soldiers in war-torn Ukraine.

Motley, a former active-duty member of the U.S. Army who was medically discharged after just one year, was immediately inspired to use his newfound skills to make a difference for those like him overseas.

Motley embarked on the six-week trip in June and returned in August.

At UNE, he spoke to students currently enrolled in UNE's occupational therapy (OT) and physical therapy programs about what he called "the wartime culture of love and hate," an examination of the compassion and camaraderie of banding together in the face of senseless violence.

Motley discussed his experience providing rehabilitation services at the Superhumans clinic in the city of Lviv, where he worked exclusively with soldiers who lost limbs. He showed photos of the destruction that took place in cities like Lviv, Kharkiv, and Kyiv. One night, he said, he slept in a subway station as bombs exploded overhead.

Despite not knowing the language and relying on Google Translate (often unsuccessfully), Motley said he formed deep ties with the Ukrainian people. His go-to phrase, "duzhe dobre," or Ukrainian for "very good," became somewhat of an inside joke between him, his clients, and the rest of his team.

At his talk, Motley encouraged those who wish to become involved in disaster OT to pursue their passions.

While he plans to frequently return to Ukraine in some capacity for the rest of his life, he admitted the emotional toll of war weighs heavily on him.

"This is the best thing I've ever done. This is the most important thing I've ever done. But it comes with a price," he said.





MARINE AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS

UNE's first Marine Affairs/Maine Law student is on the pathway to jurisprudence

The first student to ever graduate from UNE's Maine Law 3+3 Pathways Program is now well into her first semester of law school, one year earlier than most traditional law students.

Isabella Dube (Marine Affairs, '24) graduated from UNE's unique program last spring.

The program allows marine affairs majors like her to fast-track their education, substituting their final year of undergraduate courses for their first year of law school. In just six years, students can earn both their UNE and Juris Doctor degrees, saving time and tuition costs.

Now, as she navigates her studies at the University of Maine School of Law, Dube eventually hopes to apply her lifelong love for the sea, and passion for law, to her professional career.

"To be the first to experience this and work toward being a lawyer while still being an undergraduate student feels like an incredible accomplishment," she said.

While her exact track remains uncertain, Dube hopes to work on policies to protect Maine's blue economy, addressing issues ranging from climate change to safeguarding endangered marine species.

WELCOMING, INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY

Cultural Exchange Lounge opens in Ripich Commons

In September, UNE's Cultural Exchange Lounge (CXL) relocated to its new location in the Danielle N. Ripich Commons at the heart of the Biddeford Campus, a move that underscores UNE's commitment to inclusivity and community building.

One of the key aspects of the CXL's mission is to serve as a "home away from home" for students. The new central location ensures that more students can benefit from this sense of belonging and find and identify with others who share similar experiences and backgrounds.

This relocation makes the CXL and its services even more accessible to students from all academic programs and class years.

"Moving the lounge is a tangible demonstration of UNE's dedication to creating a campus community where every student feels valued, supported, and empowered to succeed," said Andrea Paredes Santacruz, M.Ed., director of Intercultural Student Engagement.

In addition to its role as a haven for students, the CXL is a platform for collaboration and leadership development. Members from all kinds of student organizations often work together to put together events and programs that promote understanding and cultural exchange.



DENTAL MEDICINE

Dental Medicine students 'Give Kids a Smile'

The University of New England College of Dental Medicine (CDM) held its second Give Kids A Smile (GKAS) event in February.

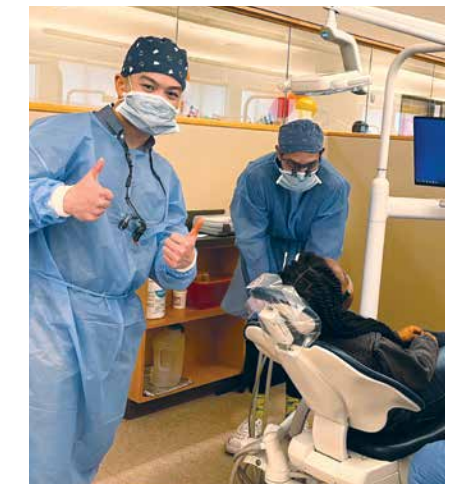
Seventy-three students from Old Orchard Beach schools, with ages ranging from four to 17, were bussed to the Portland Campus for the clinic.

Over \$13,100 of free oral health care was provided, including dental screenings, cleanings, fluoride varnish, sealants, and oral health education.

"By collaborating to provide this opportunity during the school session, we were able to help ease some of the challenges with finding and establishing a dental home that some of the families face," said Nicole Kimmes, D.D.S., dean of the UNE College of Dental Medicine.

On the ride back to OOB, each child received a goodie bag containing a toothbrush, toothpaste, floss, oral health education materials, activity sheets, and crayons.

Parents and guardians received follow-up reports outlining any dental findings, as well as vouchers for their children to receive a free comprehensive oral evaluation, radiographs, and treatment plan for a future visit at the UNE Oral Health Center.



SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

High school mentorship program addresses national teacher shortage

In late June, 13 rising high school seniors from across southern Maine gathered on the University of New England's Biddeford Campus for the inaugural Future Teachers of Maine Summer Institute.

The weeklong program was created by Associate Professor Lane Clarke, Ed.D., and directed by Assistant Teaching Professor Krysten Gorrivan, M.S.Ed.

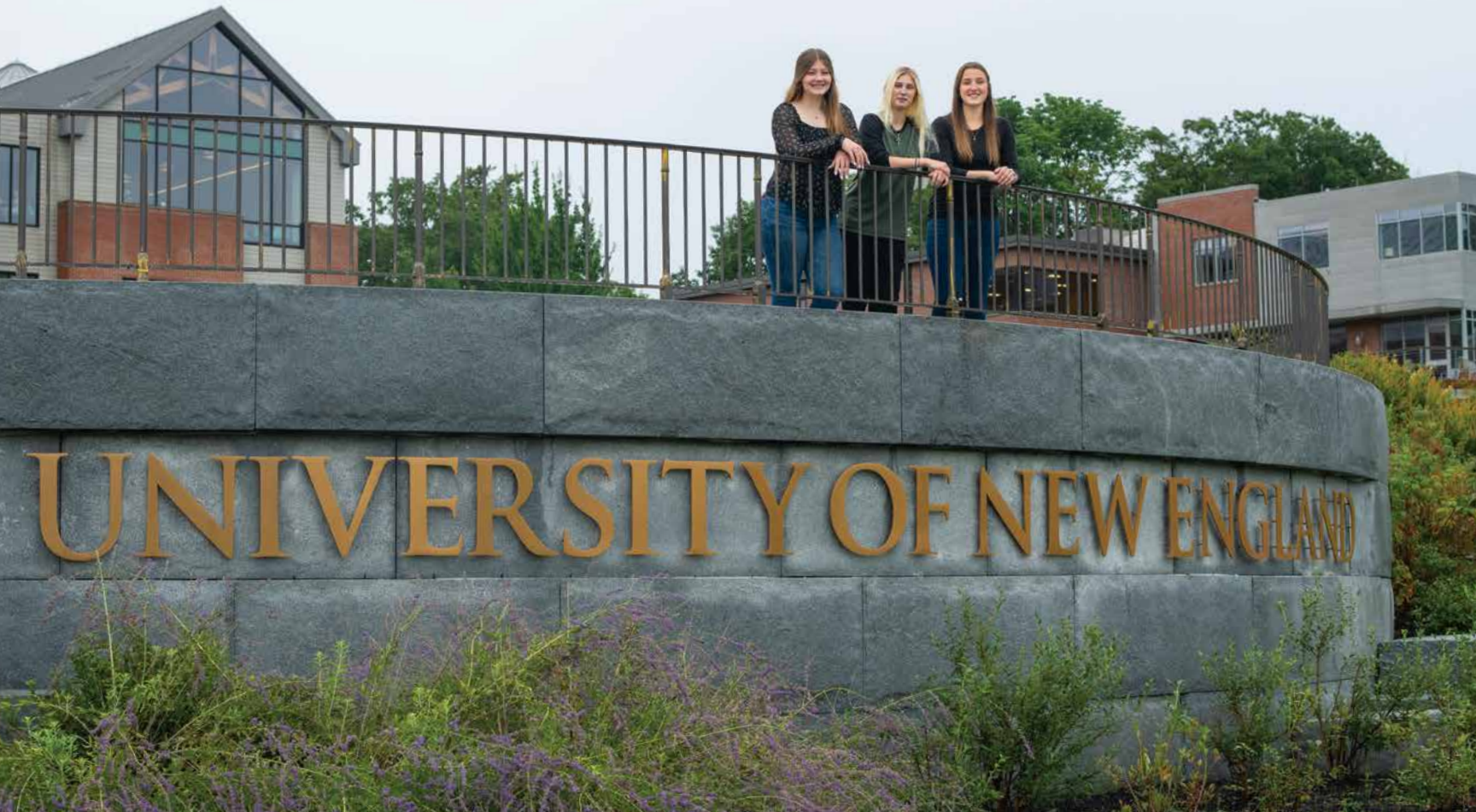
Gorrivan said one of the main objectives was to give high school students the tools and resources to follow their goals of becoming educators and support the national teacher shortage.

"If we can get some high school students interested in college who might not otherwise go, it would help to create a pipeline from high school right through college (and into education)," Gorrivan said.

Gorrivan said they worked on building partnerships with local high schools to find students in underrepresented communities or who may be first-generation college students.

Participants were mentored by four UNE education students during the week-long institute. Those mentors ran activities, ate meals with the participants, and stayed in the dorms with them.

The institute received a grant to cover two summers, and planning is already underway for the 2024 session.



CHARTING A NEW COURSE FOR FIRST-GENERATION STUDENTS

by Emme Demmendaal

Each year, first-generation college students from rural Maine are mapping a new course with assistance from the University of New England and the Davis Maine Scholarship.

Opening a letter seemed like a small thing to Mali Smith back in the spring of 2021.

At the time, she was walking to her high school locker with a friend, letter in hand. Smith was graduating from Narraguagus High School next year, and she had been waiting on news that had the potential to change her plans.

Anticipation mounted as she ripped open the envelope and pulled out its contents. Inside was a note from the Maine Seacoast Mission about a new initiative, the Davis Maine Scholarship program, which offers students from Downeast Maine a full-ride scholarship for tuition and living expenses at three participating universities. The letter informed Smith that she had been accepted into the program's inaugural cohort.

It was that piece of paper that ended up changing her life trajectory, Smith said.

She hadn't yet decided what she would do after high school graduation. She grew up in the Washington County community of Columbia Falls — population 500. She said the cost of attending school kept her from deciding whether to go to college or work for her family's carpentry business in town.

"I knew I needed support to make it happen," Smith said. Like many rural Maine high school graduates, her family didn't have the means to send her to school.

The letter from the Davis Maine Scholarship program opened the door to college for Smith.

"The scholarship pushed me over the edge to definitely say I was going to go to college at the University of New England," she said.

The Davis Maine Scholarship provides up to six first-generation college students in rural Washington and eastern Hancock Counties with the financial support needed to pursue and complete bachelor's degrees from a prestigious, private liberal arts college in New England.

In the scholarship's inaugural cohort, four of the six students selected the University of New England (UNE) to pursue higher education.

UNE stands as the sole Maine institution collaborating on this distinctive initiative for its track record of effectively serving first-generation, low-income rural students through existing programs.

"Education is something that can change your life, but it can change the life of your family as well," said John Zavodny, Ph.D., president of the Maine Seacoast Mission. Working closely with partner high schools and UNE, the program provides students with guidance as they apply to college and transition through it, and it also includes a parent workshop and support.

"When we selected our partner colleges, we were looking for institutions who saw real value in the students that we work with and who also had a credible track record and programs in place to support those first-generation, college-going students," Zavodny said.

Education is something that can change your life, but it can change the life of your family as well.

— John Zavodny



A large part of UNE’s history has been serving underserved students all the way back to St. Francis College. — *Shane Long*

Andrew Davis created the scholarship because of his experience at a college in Maine, where he recognized the transformative value of a four-year liberal arts education away from home, he said. The scholarship, named after his family and the Shelby Cullom Davis Charitable Fund, aims to provide students with a similar experience and continue the legacy of philanthropy in education initiated by his predecessors.

Serving first-generation college students is a tradition that dates to UNE’s origins, said Shane Long, M.S., assistant dean of students. Long, along with many University leaders, including the president, provost, dean of students, and other key members of the faculty and professional staff, are first-generation college students.

“A large part of UNE’s history has been serving underserved students all the way back to St. Francis College,” said Long, referring to one of UNE’s precursor institutions. St. Francis College was founded, in the

place where the UNE Biddeford Campus is today, with the goal of educating young residents who may not normally have attended college, he said.

“UNE is and has always been a place for students who might not have an opportunity to be at an academically rigorous residential campus with connections to graduate school and the opportunity to participate in research,” Long said.



It’s more than I ever thought I could get to achieve my goals. — *Emilee Hutchins*

Each year, over 30% of UNE’s admitted undergraduate students are first-generation students. With this in mind, the University has actively tailored programs to address their unique challenges, Long said, and the Davis Maine Scholars are great examples of the UNE first-generation students’ journey.

Katie Bernier, MBA, assistant director of undergraduate admissions, provides Davis Maine Scholars with support through the college selection process and serves as an administrative contact once scholars matriculate to UNE.

“A whole team is available to help (the Davis Maine scholars) find success, from student academic support, faculty assistance, mentoring, and the community the students have on campus,” Bernier said.

Each year, Davis Maine Scholars, along with other first-generation students, come to campus a few days before the fall semester of their freshman year to move into their residence halls, participate in the First-Generation Bridge program, and build relationships with their peers.

“We want them to feel supported in this process and feel like they have a good resource as they’re navigating all of this,” Bernier said.

FINDING A COMMUNITY

Emilee Hutchins, from Winter Harbor, credits the program for easing the financial hardship of college and the University for providing support while adjusting to college life. She said it helped her develop connections, pushed her to succeed academically, and gave her tools to thrive beyond school.

“It’s really freeing to have this scholarship,” said Hutchins, who is a sophomore elementary-middle education major in the College of Arts and Sciences, adding that she wants to open her own daycare or preschool in her hometown or a nearby town. The scholarship and education at UNE have put her further ahead than she thought possible, she said.

“It’s more than I ever thought I could get to achieve my goals,” she said. “UNE has an amazing (education) program and the people at UNE have really helped me adjust to college life and made sure I was succeeding.”

Hutchins highlighted that the people within the School of Education, from the professional staff to her professors, were there to help her as she navigated the college system for the first time. “From understanding what resources are available to me to balancing my coursework, each person in the department helped me in their own way,” she said.

In addition to her first-year classes, Hutchins participated in the Education Club, one of more than 100 clubs and organizations UNE students have created to enhance their college experience.

“I was three-and-a-half hours away from home,” she said, noting that the relationships and community she built with the club, along with her Davis Maine cohort, helped her ease into college life in her first year. “Along the way, I met people — I tried to get out there, and having a home away from home really helped since I didn’t have my family.”

FINDING NEW PATHWAYS

Rachel Colby from Gouldsboro came to the University not sure exactly what she wanted to do besides work in health care.

“I’ve always liked helping people,” said Colby, who grew up lobstering with her father and younger sister. “And to some people, it sounds kind of crazy because, my whole life, I’ve just been self-employed doing my own thing on the water.”

For her, the Davis Maine Scholarship opened doors to college, she said, that would have stayed closed otherwise. When Colby arrived at UNE, her advisors and professors helped guide her toward discovering a career path that fit her interests.

“I’ve talked to multiple advisors, admissions counselors, and even professors, and everyone’s there to help you and make sure you have the best experience you can,” Colby said. “They really helped me narrow down what type of things I like to do.

“Being away from home and knowing that you’re not alone — that you’re supported — makes it so much easier,” she added.

The other recipients and I are beyond grateful for the opportunities the Davis Maine Scholarship has provided for us. — *Rachel Colby*

While Colby started out as a pre-med student, she quickly discovered the other health care professions have more condensed classroom time and greater opportunities to return home earlier to her community.

“In nursing, there’s so many opportunities,” she said. “With becoming a nurse, I find comfort in the countless job opportunities it provides, such as hospital settings, outpatient settings, and being able to work with patients of all ages.”

Amidst discovering a career path that will take her home to serve Downeast Maine, Colby was tasked with learning how to study — a challenge many first-generation college students face. UNE’s Student Academic Success Center is designed to assist students in developing a learning and study plan based on their individual needs and workload to assess progress and effectiveness.

“I had no idea how to study because I never had to do it before,” Colby said. “I think I’m starting to get the hang of it now, and it helped me learn strong study habits and the best ways to prepare for exams.

“The Davis Maine Scholarship is here to support all their students to see them succeed and flourish in college,” Colby said. “The other recipients and I are beyond grateful for the opportunities the Davis Maine Scholarship has provided for us.”



Being away from home and knowing that you're not alone — that you're supported — makes it so much easier. — Rachel Colby

FINDING OPPORTUNITY

Mali Smith, an animal behavior major in the School of Social and Behavioral Sciences, said she was severely homesick after arriving on UNE's campus her freshman year.

She attended different First Generation Bridge program events that helped students transition more smoothly to college life. At one event, she and a group of students met with faculty and staff who were once first-generation students themselves.

Here, she reconnected with UNE's Katie Bernier, who later became a staff mentor for Smith. The Bridge program, while optional, is only a small part of helping Davis Maine Scholarship recipients succeed at school. Since the program's inception, 48 faculty, professional staff, and University leaders who are first-generation college graduates have participated as mentors.

"Katie was a really big help for me because I didn't have a lot of people to talk to at the time," Smith said. "It was just a really, really big help to have somebody supporting me and able to guide me in the way that I was able to flourish."

At UNE, Smith discovered a wider array of career opportunities to work with animals than she thought possible.

"At first, I wanted to be a veterinarian," she said, "but discovered I could do wildlife rehabilitation or be a game warden — something I didn't know was possible before."

Determined as she was to pave a new path for herself, Smith said she sometimes felt like an imposter at school.

"I was really nervous being away from home," she admitted. "Sometimes I asked myself, 'Do I really belong here?' But in the end, I knew that I did."

"To say that the Davis Maine program changed my life is an understatement," Smith added. Her younger sibling will be attending college in a few years, and she plans to help them transition to college life. "It isn't just a scholarship. It was an entire path change, not just for me but for my sister, too."

In addition to helping break open a pathway to college for her sister, Smith plans to help the next cohort of Davis Maine Scholars who are first-year students this fall.

"The first group of scholars are the overseers," she said. "And we'll watch over the others to see how they grow into their own person and look out for them if they have any trouble — We will be somebody they can also lean on."

The vision of Maine Seacoast Mission's Davis Maine Scholarship, in partnership with UNE, aims to impact Downeast Maine communities through the education of the next generation of leaders and changemakers. UNE is forging a path toward a healthier planet through the impactful endeavors of these scholars, Long said.

"As we guide our students in shaping their futures, our aspiration is for them to continue to foster their talents, not only for personal enrichment, but also for the betterment of the people and institutions they will eventually lead and the communities they are bound to serve," he said. "With unwavering certainty, we anticipate that the investment in their education will generate substantial return that will resonate across generations." ■



It isn't just a scholarship. It was an entire path change, not just for me but for my sister, too. — Mali Smith

DOING OUR PART

by Amy Haile

The value of a college education has become a hotly debated topic. Despite various narratives challenging the value of higher education in the popular press, the benefits of a college education remain clear and unambiguous — higher income, lower rates of unemployment, better health, and longer life expectancy. The outcomes of those with a post-secondary education degree are also trans-generational, as each subsequent generation finds themselves able to build upon the opportunities provided by those who came before.

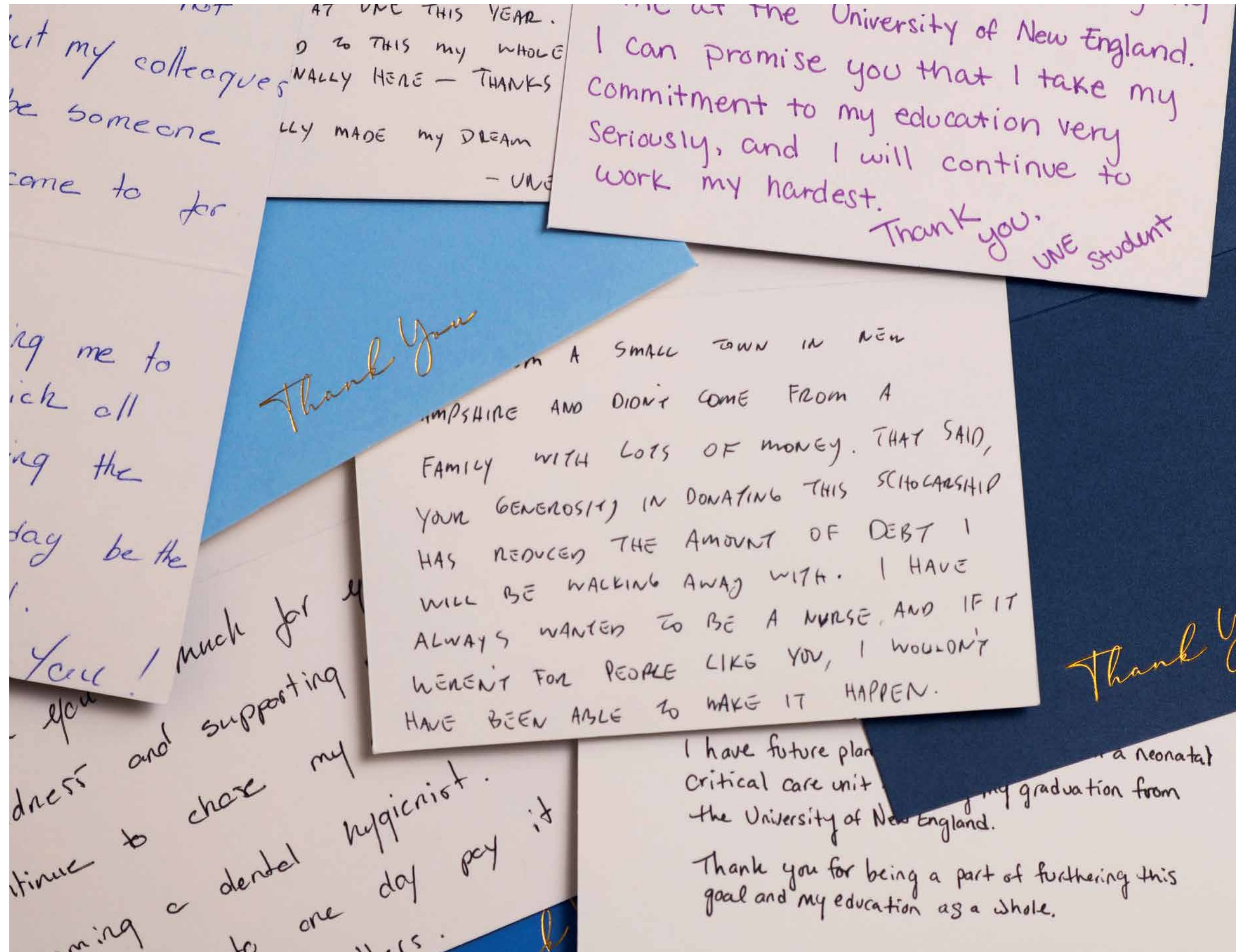
Each year, over 30% of UNE's admitted students are the first in their families to go to college. Too often, students are working several jobs to cover tuition and housing and are unable to fully experience the rich educational opportunities available to them — such as research, athletics, internships, study abroad, clubs, and student leadership — or even pay full attention to their studies. In addition, excellent prospective students, who would love to attend UNE, reluctantly decide against doing so, choosing to attend another institution that is able to offer larger financial aid packages.

As a key initiative of the *Doing Our Part* campaign, UNE is providing two ways to transform financial aid opportunities for students by leveraging private financial support to remake the system. The first is an **Endowment Scholarship Challenge**, which will increase the long-term investment in scholarship support while doubling the short-term impact. The second is the creation of the **President's Excellence Scholarship Fund**, which will provide additional support to high-merit, high-need students.

Never before have scholarships and financial aid had the potential to change the lives of young people as profoundly as they do today, said Jim Irwin, CPA, senior vice president of Finance and Administration, and never has the need been as great.

“We recognize the importance of providing world-class education and co-curricular activities at an affordable price. — Jim Irwin

“We are committed to making the UNE educational experience even more exceptional by elevating its value through increasing the financial support to our students,” he said. “We recognize the importance of providing world-class education and co-curricular activities at an affordable price. These scholarships will help UNE fulfill this noble cause.” ■





188TH COMMENCEMENT

The University of New England awarded over 1,500 baccalaureate, graduate, and professional degrees during its 188th Commencement on Saturday, May 20, representing the fields of osteopathic medicine, dental medicine, pharmacy, health sciences, the humanities, human services, business, education, and the natural and social sciences.

The University welcomed Ronald A. Crutcher, D.M.A., a national leader in higher education and a distinguished classical musician, who delivered the commencement address.

Speaking to the crowd at the Cross Insurance Arena in Portland, Crutcher addressed the many challenges facing the world today, including the COVID-19 pandemic, racial reckoning, and economic disruption and political polarization. In combating these pervasive issues, he said, people with differing viewpoints must work together to effect positive change.

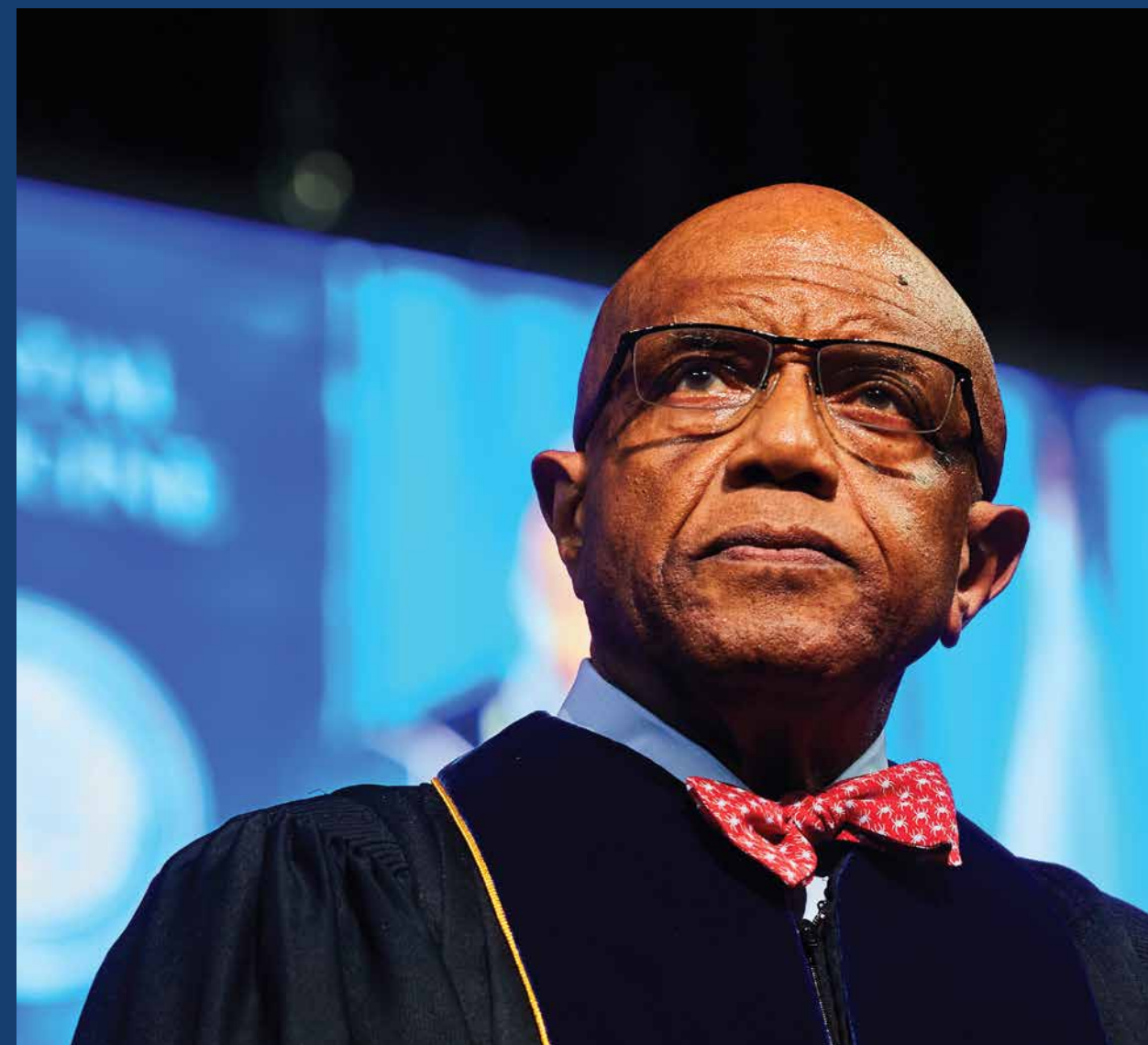
"I know (these issues) are relatable to you and the state we are in as a society, which, in my opinion, can be perceived as a collective knee on all of our necks," he stated. "All of you have the power to drive positive change and help our country live up to its promise of e pluribus unum – 'out of many, one.'"

Crutcher's address dovetailed with UNE President James Herbert's own remarks, which called for graduates to engage with people of differing viewpoints to foster inclusive, open discourse in tackling global challenges.

"Though it may be easier to associate with those who think like you, who vote like you, who share the same cultural background as you – if you step outside your comfort zone, you will be rewarded by a life that is endlessly more complex and enriching than it would be otherwise," President Herbert told the graduates. "Your time at UNE has prepared you for that kind of life. It is my hope that you will carry the appreciation for these priorities into your professional and personal lives."



See more
une.edu/magazine





FACES OF OUR FUTURE

EMPOWERING STUDENTS

TO BUILD A BETTER TOMORROW

by Alan Bennett

Can a university build on the past while forging new innovations? Can we recognize the challenges of an uncertain world, while moving forward with confidence and certainty? Can we do big things while keeping our feet on the ground?

UNE's strategic plan, Our World, Our Future, was adopted in 2018 with these issues in mind, offering a daring and expansive perspective on health as the solution. The plan called for the University to become one of the nation's top providers of education, expertise, and innovation for sustaining the health of our world's natural environment, people, and communities.

Through six strategic priorities — Exceptional Teaching and Learning; Increased Enrollment, Progress to Graduation, and Lifelong Learning; Focused Research and Scholarship; A Welcoming, Inclusive, and Vibrant Community; Engagement with Local, Regional, and Global Partners; and A Strong and Sustainable Resource Base — the plan ultimately set out to empower students to anticipate and meet the challenges of our world and become active leaders in creating its future.

Over the past five years, as UNE's senior leaders, faculty, and professional staff have worked to execute the plan, our students have embodied the plan's priorities and core values. Emboldened by a relentless quest for knowledge, they are indeed leading the charge to shape a better world.

In the coming pages, you will meet five UNE students and recent alumni whose accomplishments reflect the ambition and passion of UNE's institutional journey these past five years. These students surely didn't realize that their actions embodied lofty institutional priorities — but it is in the day-to-day persistence of individuals that UNE's mission is realized.

In clinical settings and future courts of law, they are pursuing justice for the underserved. Miles offshore, they are researching novel ways to preserve Maine's maritime livelihoods. In remote parts of the globe, they are learning what it means to be human. And in classrooms in Maine's farthest reaches, they are molding the minds of future generations.

To echo President Herbert's words, the UNE community is defined by a dynamic energy and innovative spirit.

In that vein, these five students comprise only a fraction of those at UNE who have made it their mission to better the human condition. Our students are not merely degree-seekers; they are vanguards in transforming people's lives everywhere as healers, caregivers, fierce advocates for intellectual curiosity, and defenders of our natural world. They are the faces of our future.





EMILY ROSSER

THE MASTER OF EDUCATION



Family always comes first for Emily Rosser.

Family has kept her in northern Maine since childhood, where she grew up knowing from early on that she wanted to be a teacher. It's also why she sought out UNE, after 11 years of teaching for Regional School Unit 39 in Caribou, just miles from the Canadian border, to pursue a master's degree in education.

As a busy mother of three — Andrew, 12, Ava, 10, and Addison (Addy, at left), 6 — an in-person program was not an option. So, Rosser turned to UNE Online for its flexibility and relevant program offerings.

She graduated in May with her Master of Science in Education – Reading Specialist, and she's been named the Aroostook County Teacher of the Year by Educate Maine and the Maine Department of Education.

“UNE allowed me the flexibility to do my work on my own terms and set healthy boundaries for myself.”

Emily Rosser

“I really thought going back to school at this stage in my life would be impossible. Teaching, by itself, is really, really busy. To keep up with teaching and three busy kids while going back to school was a lot to consider,” the first-grade teacher recalled, adding that doing homework late at night or missing her children's activities was out of the question. “UNE allowed me the flexibility to do my work on my own terms and set healthy boundaries for myself. I have so many wonderful things to say about my program at UNE.”

Rosser's passion for lifelong learning was inspired by her students — more accurately, she said, the struggles with basic literacy she saw among students at her school. “Our typical practices weren't effective, and we were noticing a pattern of kids not reaching grade-level expectations as much as we'd like. I said to the other teachers, 'I need help,' which is a hard thing to ask.”

Rosser's question sparked a collaborative process whereby she and her fellow teacher leaders began to refine their assessments, identify weaknesses in their current practices, and revitalize the curriculum.

Since that time, she said, the results have been exponential. “We have evolved big time, and our kids are really growing because of it,” she said. “Those changes lit a fire in me and ignited this lifelong learner mentality. I thought I had missed the window to get my master's degree, but this shift in my mindset convinced me to seek out my master's in literacy education. I truly wanted to be a master at teaching literacy.”

Rosser's journey reflects RSU 39's district mission of “preparing today's learners for tomorrow's world,” not unlike UNE's mission of fostering innovation to improve the health of our planet and its people. As both a teacher and a mother, Rosser said it is her personal mission to ensure her students have the skills they need to thrive in an ever-shifting society.

“Our world is changing, and it's changing fast,” she said. “A huge focus for me as a teacher, other than instilling basic reading and writing skills in my students, is to ensure my students, when they grow up, are able to work with people who might not be exactly like them — who have different colored skin or who have different academic abilities — because, no matter what the future brings, they're going to have to do that.”

She paused to think about how her work is contributing to a better world.

“Every year, I get 20 kids, right? And our ultimate goal is to prepare them for tomorrow,” she said. “In the year my students spend with me, they will learn lifelong lessons in teamwork, patience, and empathy. I put a lot of time into building relationships and cultivating an environment that supports that mission, and I take that role pretty seriously.”

It's a responsibility that Rosser takes especially to heart as the educator of her own children. Like Andrew and Ava some years before her, Addy is a member of Rosser's classroom this fall.

“My students — and my kids — are going to be impacted by everyone they meet, from their coaches, their dance instructors, and by the people they see in the grocery store,” she said. “They're impacted by all these people, and I get to be one of them. I think that's pretty special.”

FAJAR ALAM

THE HEALTH CARE JUSTICE ADVOCATE



It was almost certain that Fajar Alam would study medicine.

Raised in Waterbury, Connecticut, a working-class city of about 114,000 on the banks of the Naugatuck River, Alam (D.O., '25) saw firsthand the health care disparities faced by her parents, who emigrated from Pakistan and are industrious local business owners. As early as high school, she began helping her parents navigate the complexities of the American health care system, first helping enroll them in Medicaid insurance and eventually interpreting their doctor's visits.

But a fellowship with the AmeriCorps STICH (Service to Improve Community Health) program at a federally qualified health center in Waterbury taught her the disparities in her community were more widespread than she previously thought.

Waterbury was once regarded as the brass manufacturing capital of the world, but periods of economic decline led to extreme gaps in socioeconomic status and quality of life for many. Today, Waterbury has some of the highest asthma and infant mortality rates in the entire state, and its median income is only about two-thirds that of the rest of Connecticut.

"Growing up with these experiences, I realized people who are from backgrounds like mine and other vulnerable, low-income communities in the U.S. have significant barriers to health care," she said. "It was a strong influence for me to pursue medicine."

She sought the UNE College of Osteopathic Medicine (UNE COM) for its focus on helping vulnerable communities. Specifically, she was drawn to the Care for the Underserved Pathway (CUP) Scholars program through the Maine Area Health Education Center, housed in UNE's Center for Excellence in Public Health. The interdisciplinary honors program provides opportunities for students in all health programs to address public health issues in rural and underserved communities while gaining competencies in interprofessional, team-based practice.

It was like finding a golden ticket, she said.

"Having a community of peers who are like-minded in looking out for whole communities is exactly what attracted me to UNE," Alam said. "To have that philosophy embedded throughout my education is very important to me, especially to create a health care system that is fair and just for all."

Since coming to UNE, this passion for justice has been reflected in nearly every aspect of Alam's work. In her second year at UNE COM, she served on the subcommittee to develop broader cultural competencies in the health curriculum. As a CUP Scholar, she also took on a health equity internship to diversify the health care workforce in Maine.

As part of the internship — funded in part through a grant from the Maine Health Access Foundation — Alam developed a curriculum to expose high school students from underrepresented communities, including New Mainers and children of immigrant families, to various health professions fields.



The goal of the programming, she said, is to promote diversity in the health care workforce as a means of bridging the cultural divides that often lead to disparate health outcomes.

"We want to diversify the health care workforce here in Maine, particularly amid an influx of refugees, and expand cultural competencies for health providers," she said, adding the importance of cultural humility in health care settings — acknowledging internal biases and committing to understanding another's cultural identity.

"We need to break down barriers for people who come from vulnerable communities and make it so that health care is not a burden."

Fajar Alam

"We need to break down barriers for people who come from vulnerable communities and make it so that health care is not a burden. And it's not just immigrants," she said. The communities are any group with specific health care needs, including the prison resident population, unhoused individuals, and people who identify as LGBTQ+, she noted.

In solving grand societal issues such as these, Alam said she thinks of the principles of osteopathic medicine and the ethics of health justice.

"My goal for the American health care system is to increase the justice for underserved people," she said. "If we take a public health approach to medicine and look at the context in which our patients come to us, we can better influence not just their health but their entire quality of life. I try to keep that in the forefront of my mind when I do the work that I do, because I can shape the health outlook of an entire community."

CLAYTON NYIRI

THE REEL-WIELDING RESEARCHER



It's not yet 7 a.m., and Clayton Nyiri is already down at UNE's research pier, poring through bundles of equipment needed for a day's journey out on the Atlantic.

Donning a blue life preserver, he ensures there are enough batteries, hooks, fishing rods, and other key items needed for the six-hour voyage he and his team will make to a remote location 20 miles offshore to tag and study small sharks known as spiny dogfish.

The sun is low as he unties the rope mooring the RV Sakohki, one of UNE's four research vessels, to the weathered dock. When the crew returns, it will be high and blisteringly hot, as it often is in Maine in early August.

The trek, one of dozens made this summer, is part of a research project years in the making.

Nyiri (Marine Sciences, '25) is one of several students working under the mentorship of John Mohan, Ph.D., assistant professor in the School of Marine and Environmental Programs and director of the Shark and Fish Ecology Lab, to pilot a novel method of preventing sharks from ending up as bycatch — or unintended catch — on the fishing lines of both commercial fishermen and recreational anglers.

The research includes using small devices, known as electronic bycatch reduction devices, or BRDs, which emit electrical signals that target the sharks' electro-sensory systems to deter them from the bait. Students in the Mohan Lab are researching if the devices can be placed both on commercial fishing lines and home fishing rods to ward off sharks and prevent them from becoming mixed up in the fishing haul.

The method will benefit fishermen who lose out on their target catch and the money such catches bring in when sharks become attached to their lines.

“Being an undergraduate and getting to immerse myself in this research I’m passionate about is such a great opportunity.”

Clayton Nyiri

“I think (these devices) will have a very large economic benefit for fishermen,” Nyiri said, noting that lab trials so far show a 50% reduction in dogfish bites on lines with active BRDs. “Now, it’s part of my research to make this device optimal and effective for fishermen.”

For Nyiri, the research isn't work — it is the culmination of a yearslong passion for sharks and, by extension, preserving the health of our oceans. Raised in Fairfield, Connecticut on the northern shore of Long Island Sound, Nyiri developed a love and respect for the sea at a young age.

Now 19, he takes every opportunity to study and learn from the ocean, whether in the lab, on the boat, or under the brisk New England waters.



“To engage myself in this research not only allows me to grow as a scientist, but as a person,” he said.

Nyiri is one of 41% of the University's undergraduate students who participate in hands-on research with real-world applications. Compare that to just 23% nationally who told the National Survey of Student Engagement that they do the same. UNE is unique among prominent research universities, where students often have to wait to obtain a bachelor's degree before even seeing the inside of a lab.

The rising junior is also among 18 students this year (81 since 2018) to receive a Summer Undergraduate Research Experience (SURE) grant from the College of Arts and Sciences to complete his research. The program funds interdisciplinary student research and stipends for students to live on campus while they work on their projects. For Nyiri, that means living just steps from the dock and the marine research facilities where he spends most of his days.

“Being an undergraduate and getting to immerse myself in this research I’m passionate about is such a great opportunity,” he said. “I want to absorb all the information that UNE has to offer, to really take in every experience that I can and make my education my own.”

This relentless thirst for knowledge is distinctively cultivated among UNE students. For Nyiri, it entails supplementing his studies with classes that aren't required of him; engrossing himself in the latest scientific literature; picking up not one, but two academic minors (chemistry and applied mathematics); and, when he can, scuba diving with his camera, capturing the world below the waves.

“When I look at all the work I’ve done and the skills I’ve obtained, all I can do is compare myself to who I was yesterday and look toward how I can make an impact in the future,” he said. “That’s why we’re all here: to make a difference, to do something we love for the rest of our lives.”

KIARA BOECK

THE STUDENT OF THE WORLD



Kiara Boeck may never be fluent in Spanish, a lesson she learned while studying in Guatemala this past spring.

Boeck is one of seven students and three faculty members from UNE's Doctor of Physical Therapy and Master of Science in Occupational (M.S.O.T.) programs who traveled to the Central American nation in March as part of a travel course geared toward developing cultural competencies in working with various populations — one of nearly two dozen such courses and clinical immersions offered each academic year.

The group spent 12 days touring clinical facilities and adaptive equipment manufacturers while observing patient interactions. Highlights of the trip included a tour of a clinic that makes mobility equipment tailored to each client and a visit to a children's rehabilitation center.

For Boeck (M.S.O.T., '24), it was an opportunity to engage with a previously unknown culture. While difficult, she said the language barrier taught her to respect cultural differences and learn more about herself.

"It was hard to acclimate to my surroundings at first," Boeck said. "But then I thought to myself, 'I'm not here to become fluent in Spanish. I'm here to learn and connect with people.'"

"I think the benefit of studying abroad is really getting to know yourself as a professional and where you fit into the world."

Kiara Boeck

Boeck said she realized that many of her patients back in the U.S. will come from various backgrounds.

"This experience taught me about meeting clients where they're at. I can't expect all of my patients to speak English to me, so this was a real teaching moment in cultural relevance," she said. "In terms of communicating with people on the trip, it was really about finding common ground and communicating in different, even nonverbal, ways."

Outside the clinical setting, Boeck and her peers engaged in a five-hour hike with breathtaking mountain views and took a trip to Lake Atitlán, located in the remnants of an ancient volcano. Students further involved

themselves in Guatemalan daily life by attending chocolate-making classes, a coffee production facility, and a shaman service.

Boeck is among the nearly 1,400 students who have studied abroad since 2017. UNE students study abroad more than four times the national average compared to other institutions and complete their studies abroad through a multitude of avenues: through semester-long programs at UNE's campus in Tangier, Morocco, or sites in Seville, Spain; Aix-en-Provence, France; and Akureyri and Reykjavik, Iceland.

COVID-19 decimated global travel throughout 2020 and 2021, but studies abroad have rebounded. Twenty-one percent of baccalaureate students who graduated in the 2022-23 academic year participated in at least one global program while at UNE, with many partaking in multiple programs. Prior to the pandemic, an average of 33% of graduating students completed a program outside the U.S.

"I think the benefit of studying abroad is really getting to know yourself as a professional and where you fit into the world," Boeck said. "The world is a classroom, and it provides so many opportunities to find new ways to learn and appreciate things around you. I'm continually learning to better myself for the sake of my clients."

She said such global experiences are valuable in teaching students of all majors the importance of cultural humility.

"As health care providers, we have to be aware of our clients' backgrounds, because our clients can be so empowered by their cultures," Boeck said. "They come from all walks of life and are often determined to overcome the barriers they see in everyday life. It's important to be humble and not impose our own viewpoints on them. We want to encourage them to bring their perspectives to us, and so we must be willing to continually learn about and embrace new cultural views."

Boeck said her experiences at UNE, including global travel, have been eye-opening, and they have empowered her to make change through her work — one patient at a time.

"I think there's power in changing one person's life. That person can go out and influence others to seek the care they need. You can create a domino effect and create a better tomorrow for not only that person but for the community as well," she said. "I've always been open-minded, but my experiences at UNE have allowed me the kind of self-discovery necessary to see where I fit into the world."

"I'm confident when I say that my experiences will make me a better practitioner, a better occupational therapist," she said.



JEREMIAH MARTINEZ

THE VOICE FOR THE VOICELESS



Jeremiah Martinez waves to his friends on a cold January day in early 2022 as they pass him outside the library. Martinez talks with a University photographer about his experience as a person of color for an upcoming series on Black History Month.

Passersby — friends, teammates, and faculty — shout Martinez’s name as he poses for a portrait. Entourage aside, it’s a relatively normal day for Martinez, who graduated this past spring with a degree in political science.

While at UNE, Martinez became a familiar face to most and an outstanding leader for many.

As a co-president of both Brothers of Color, a student organization that provides a safe space for men of color to gather and build community, and the athletics advocacy group Storming to Change, Martinez became a guide and mentor to underrepresented groups on a predominantly white college campus.

“On a campus that’s largely white, it’s important to have affinity groups that can provide safe spaces for minorities while advocating for change within our communities,” said Martinez, who hails from Methuen, Massachusetts. “The reality is, we’re all a big family here, and we need to take care of each other.”

But though he left UNE a force, Martinez compares his college experience to “coming out of a cocoon.” He came to UNE to play basketball, but he wasn’t sure which academic path to take.

With a vague interest in political science, Martinez became an inaugural student of UNE’s Guided Undergraduate Studies program, or GUST, an initiative that allows undeclared students to explore their academic options with built-in support services to help students decide on a major and succeed.

Designed to aid students in discovering their true passions, GUST engages students in seminars and immersive educational experiences while pairing them with faculty members to develop an individualized pathway to graduation.

The GUST program encourages students to take courses in multiple fields of study, a factor Martinez said helped him discover his true passion rather than committing to a program before he even set foot on campus.

“Enrolling in the (GUST) program was one of the best decisions I’ve ever made. It gave me the freedom to see all the different pathways available to me.”

Jeremiah Martinez



“Enrolling in the (GUST) program was one of the best decisions I’ve ever made,” he said. “It gave me the freedom to see all the different pathways available to me. I wasn’t confined to one major or a program that I chose while I was still in high school. I was able to take my time, take courses in a variety of majors, and ultimately choose the program that was right for me.”

In addition to the GUST program, Martinez credits several members of the UNE community for helping him break out of his shell. To name a few: Michael Cripps, Ph.D., professor of rhetoric and composition; James Roche, Esq., associate teaching professor of political science; Brian Duff, Ph.D., associate professor of political science; and Ed Silva, men’s head basketball coach, whose personal mentorship convinced Martinez that UNE was the right place for him.

“Coach Silva stuck out to me as one of the best people I’ve met, even before I started school,” Martinez said. “He made me feel welcome, and he really stuck out to me as someone to make me feel wanted. It’s that sense of community and compassion that made me fall in love with UNE. It’s great people there.”

At Silva’s urging, Martinez took on leadership roles with Brothers of Color and Storming to Change, ultimately changing the trajectory of Martinez’s calling: as a voice for those often left voiceless.

Today, Martinez is studying for the LSAT. Equipped with the critical thinking skills and analytical know-how embodied by a UNE political science degree, he plans to pursue law school with the goal of spending his career improving the lives of people in marginalized communities.

“I’m someone who has big dreams and big aspirations, and UNE taught me that I can explore those parts of myself,” he said. “Everyone at UNE wants to bring change to the world, and they empower you, push you, and give you every opportunity to succeed.”

“I don’t know where I’ll be in 10 years,” Martinez added. “Maybe I’ll be practicing law, or maybe I’ll become a politician. I just know that I want to make change and give people the same chance to succeed that UNE gave me.” ■

FIVE YEARS OF STRATEGIC SUCCESS

So, can a university do big things in the face of uncertainty? The answer is yes, and it is seen in our students and the intricate web of achievements of UNE's strategic plan, which has touched nearly every facet of the University's operations these past five years. As we reflect on these accomplishments, we also look forward to a brighter tomorrow for all — our UNE, our future.

Our World, Our Future

Offered exchange program at the University of Iceland in Reykjavik

of Higher Education based on both number of graduate degrees awarded and levels of extramural research funding

Fundraising

Campaign now in public phase • STRATEGIC PRIORITY VI: A STRONG AND SUSTAINABLE RESOURCE BASE
News on contemporary topics • COM-facilitated programming addressing DEI topics such as health disparities and inequalities

Welcomed the largest incoming undergraduate class in the fall of 2022 • Conducted systematic analyses of program-level enrollment, retention, and completion • Added 15+ new majors, minors, and graduate programs

“What’s Your Part?” campaign • STRATEGIC PRIORITY V: ENGAGEMENT WITH LOCAL, REGIONAL, AND GLOBAL PARTNERS • Offered semester abroad program in Aix-en-Provence, France, with the Institute for American Universities at the American College of the Adriatic

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) • IPE integrated into the curriculum of multiple health professions programs • Recognition nationally as leader in interprofessional education and innovation

College of Business and School of Education • STRATEGIC PRIORITY III: FOCUSED RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP • UNE hosted the 2022 National Health Disparities and Inequalities Conference

Eliminate barriers to success for all members of our community • Implemented test optional admissions • IPE integrated into the curriculum of multiple health professions programs

College of Dental Medicine • STRATEGIC PRIORITY IV: A VIBRANT COMMUNITY • Established the Assistant Provost for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion position to lead the university's efforts to create a more inclusive and equitable campus

Homecoming • STRATEGIC PRIORITY II: EXCEPTIONAL TEACHING AND LEARNING • Established 4 Advisory Groups (Portland, Biddeford, Executive Committee, and Community) to provide input on teaching and learning

“Doing our Part” • High Research Activity (R2) category in the Carnegie Classification • Board of Trustees approved the “Doing our Part” campaign

of UNE undergraduates participate in faculty research by the time they graduate

Reclassified from “Master’s Colleges and Universities” to “Doctoral Universities: High Research Activity” (R2) category

College of Dental Medicine • STRATEGIC PRIORITY IV: A VIBRANT COMMUNITY • Established the Assistant Provost for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion position to lead the university's efforts to create a more inclusive and equitable campus

DEEQO MAHAMUD

(Pharm.D., '26)

Medical Interpreter at Maine Medical Center

Interview by Curry Stover

Above all else, I wanted to be with my mom.

After leaving Somalia and growing up in Kenya with my aunt, my goal was always to come to Maine, where my mother had settled. There was nowhere else I'd rather be.

When I was young, I was impacted by the experience of going to the hospital. I witnessed patients receiving their medications in unorganized boxes or haphazardly wrapped in paper. Even at a young age, I recognized that there had to be a better way.

I began asking myself what career I could pursue that would help others, and pharmacy appealed to me because you're given the ability to help, educate, and truly connect with others. I knew that was the path I wanted to follow.

Supporting my community is incredibly important to me. In my free time, I work at Maine Medical Center as a medical interpreter assisting those who speak Somali and Swahili. I already had plenty of experience going to appointments with my siblings and mom. I thought, if I can help them, then there has to be a family out there who could also use this help.

In exactly five years, I've experienced my highest highs and lowest lows. The lowest point came this year. I was preparing to start my first clinical rotation ... when we learned (my mom) had been diagnosed with cancer. I immediately switched my rotation with another student and took four weeks off to care for my mother.

Everyone at UNE was so understanding, and I am so thankful for all of the support I received from my professors and peers. Today, my mom is doing well, I've completed my rotation, and the whole experience has given me much more strength to continue on the path I've set out for myself.

See more
une.edu/magazine



ONE SLIDE AT A TIME

UNE undergrad joins the enduring quest to cure Alzheimer's

by Zach Brockhouse

Deep within the Pickus Center for Biomedical Research, Jayden Lovely (Medical Biology, '26) points to a cluttered desk surrounded by vial-filled shelves. "A lot of my research is done right here," she said.

Set against the trees on UNE's campus in Biddeford, the research building houses some of the University's most innovative biomedical research. It is here that Lovely, a rising sophomore, is conducting research with tangible implications for Alzheimer's disease.

In another room, she uses a machine called a cryostat to slice a sample and stain it to highlight the focus of her research, the CD2AP protein. She examines the results in UNE's new Olympus Slide Viewer. "I look for the differences and record them," she said. "If all goes as planned, I could be contributing directly to a major breakthrough in the treatment of Alzheimer's."

Lovely is pursuing the pre-physician assistant (PA) track within UNE's medical biology bachelor's degree program, which equips students with the skills necessary to pursue graduate physician assistant studies after graduation. For her, the state's only PA program suits her desire to follow many interests while not being held to the same timeline of a medical degree. She found her niche as a member of the Pre-Physician's Assistant Club, but felt she still wanted more.

When a member of the club mentioned that there were research opportunities available to students, Lovely perked up. It was exactly what she had been looking for. She quickly sent off an email stating her interest and was paired with Madison Meuth, a doctoral student from the University of Maine in the laboratory of Benjamin Harrison, Ph.D., assistant professor of biochemistry and nutrition at UNE, who studies how pain signals are received by the body.

Lovely quickly found herself immersed in Harrison's lab working on a real-world research project with real-world applications.

▶ A BUDDING RESEARCHER LEARNS THE ROPES

Lovely's initial lab work wasn't even related to Alzheimer's. It was about pain.

In 2022, Harrison received \$1.8 million in funding from the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke, a division of the National Institutes of Health, to explore non-opioid treatments for chronic pain at the cellular level. He is using the five-year grant to study how to reduce the electrical firings in nociceptors, which are neurons that transmit pain signals in response to painful injuries. His focus is searching for non-narcotic ways to block how pain is processed in our bodies.

Harrison and his team have discovered that nociceptors contain a protein called "CEL4," an RNA binding protein they theorize inhibits the production of "pro-nociceptive," or pro-pain-sensing cellular components. In essence, they are trying to trick the proteins to limit pain signals. His research focuses on delivering CEL4 into pain neurons, where the protein will limit the synthesis of ion channels, receptors, and other molecules that sensitize them.

RESEARCH BY THE NUMBERS

R2 

A CARNEGIE-CLASSIFIED R2 High Research Activity institution

 41%

of UNE SENIORS who have worked with faculty on RESEARCH PROJECTS, compared to 23% nationally

 \$4M

IN NIH FUNDING IN 2022, more than any other college or university IN MAINE

200+

undergraduate students who have GIVEN PRESENTATIONS at regional and national conferences in the last six years

 16

FULBRIGHT Program-affiliated FACULTY

"The work Dr. Harrison had done was astounding — and intimidating. At first, I wasn't sure of myself. I'd attended lab meetings before, but hearing the lingo and seeing the tools used in this environment seemed completely different," Lovely said.

"I'm on a journey here at UNE, and it's all part of the process," she added. "There is so much that goes into a research project. And there is so much knowledge around from the people I get to work with. It's taking me a while to wrap my head around everything, but I learn something new every time I walk into the lab."

Working with Meuth, Lovely began to learn histology, the study of the microscopic structure of tissues. Together, they aided Harrison with his research, specifically, to study if a locally administered adeno-associated virus can stimulate the production of CELF4 and reduce pain in those areas — an approach known as gene vector therapy.

"Using this novel gene vector therapy approach, we can develop pain therapies that carry fewer risks than conventional opioid medications, such as addiction," Harrison remarked.

"This research could prove beneficial for those living with chronic pain but who do not want to undergo surgeries — which can be expensive and leave people with no sensation at all," Lovely added.

FEDERAL RESEARCH POWERHOUSE UNLOCKS NEW FUNDS

The leap from pain research to Alzheimer's took place when Harrison learned about a new research initiative at the Jackson Lab, a nonprofit biomedical research institution in Bar Harbor, several hours north of UNE's Biddeford Campus. That project involved the CD2AP protein and how its variants can lead to Alzheimer's disease. Seeing the similarities in his research blocking pain signals in proteins, he thought Lovely would be a good fit to research why some proteins actually stop receiving information in Alzheimer's patients.

"Not many schools allow students the opportunity to get involved at this level, coming here and jumping right in during their freshman year," Harrison said. "By the time she graduates, Jayden will have a much deeper understanding of the scientific process. Very different than another school!"

Lovely was intrigued. The commonalities between pain and Alzheimer's research were reassuring, she said.



Not many schools allow students the opportunity to get involved at this level, coming here and jumping right in their freshman year.

— Benjamin Harrison

"I felt like I had a good foundation to move forward from," she said. But there was one problem — funding. She and Harrison began the journey that every great researcher must endure — writing grant applications.

Luckily, they were in good company. In 2022, the National Institutes of Health added \$264 million in economic activity in Maine with \$112.7 million in grants and contracts, according to data provided by the federal government. UNE received seven grants totaling over \$4 million — more than any other college or university in Maine.

"Dr. Harrison guided me through every step of the process. It was a little overwhelming, but we got through it and, earlier this year, I

learned that our grant had been awarded," Lovely said, noting that the Kahn Family Foundation paid for her summer housing, provided \$1,000 for research materials, and awarded her a small stipend.

Soon, tissue samples were shipped down to Biddeford to the Pickus Center's 22,000 square feet of state-of-the-art research space, where Lovely could begin her work.

In her project, Lovely is taking a CD2AP variant in mouse brains and comparing them with two normal, "wild-type" brains. Multiple studies have shown an association in changes to the CD2AP gene and the progression of Alzheimer's. Lovely is setting out to prove that mice with the genetic variant have changes in the CD2AP protein which could be used to model degeneration.

While the research is ongoing, Lovely knows the opportunity to learn the ins-and-outs of research as early as her freshman year has opened her eyes to the world of research and how the next big breakthrough could only be a slide away from being discovered.

"UNE does an amazing job to get the word out about research projects. The lab takes in students all the time," Lovely said. "There are lots of students on campus who want to be involved. It's exciting to think about everyone in campus labs who can make a real difference right now. I'm glad to be part of it all." ■



PRESIDENT'S FORUM

The President's Forum is an event series consisting of moderated conversations about controversial issues and timely topics, presenting diverse perspectives in a fair and balanced manner and underscoring the academy's unique role as the ultimate marketplace of ideas.

This past spring, I attended the President's Forum "Transgender Athletes and Competitive Sports: A Conversation," and I took away several valuable lessons from the discussion that I now use in my everyday life.

While I do not have a personal connection with transgender individuals or a strong opinion on the matter, I admired how the speakers were able to converse civilly on a contentious topic on which they have differing perspectives.

Due to the hyperpolarized nature of society and social media, I often consider one perspective on many topics. The President's Forum taught me that it is OK to acknowledge that a conversation may be difficult due to opposing opinions.

Respectful conversation with those of differing opinions allows me to broaden my perspectives. The forum allowed me to acknowledge and appreciate both perspectives on an issue for which I had only previously considered one side. I will take elements from this dialogue, such as respect, consideration, and active listening and apply them when having difficult conversations with colleagues, peers, family, and friends.

In fact, I am already employing these skills in my new career in health care. My job requires me to collaborate with other members of the staff, and I implement several of these concepts when navigating conversations. I strive to consistently acknowledge others' perspectives, create a safe space, maintain a positive and productive attitude, and allow all parties the opportunity to contribute. Open, respectful communication is the key to successful, meaningful conversation and personal growth. UNE provided me with a safe environment to explore multiple perspectives and prepare for real-world conversations.

— E. Mackenzie Greenleaf, B.S. '23 (Health Sciences)

See more
une.edu/magazine



NEW TIDES ON SUSTAINABLE AQUACULTURE

by Zach Brockhouse




It's sunrise on Cousin's Island. The dock at Madeleine Point, just down from a dirt parking lot reserved for commercial fishermen, juts into the water where first light sparkles gently around the moorings. This place, where multiple rivers pour into Casco Bay, is an ideal location to grow oysters.

Michael Scannell arrives at the dock for his internship at Madeleine Point Oyster Farm. The morning light leaves a trail as he rows out to the oyster farm's aluminum boat. "This internship is giving me the opportunity to make a career for myself on the water. It's something I've dreamed about."

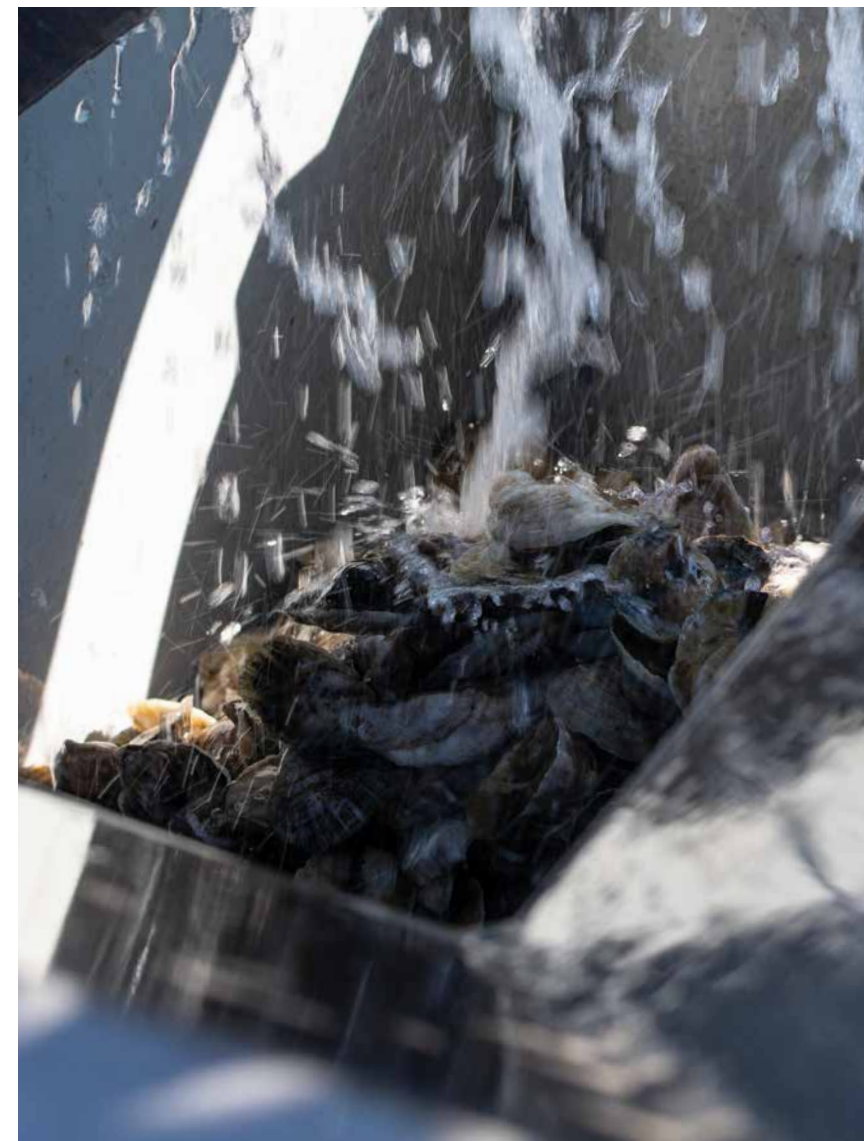
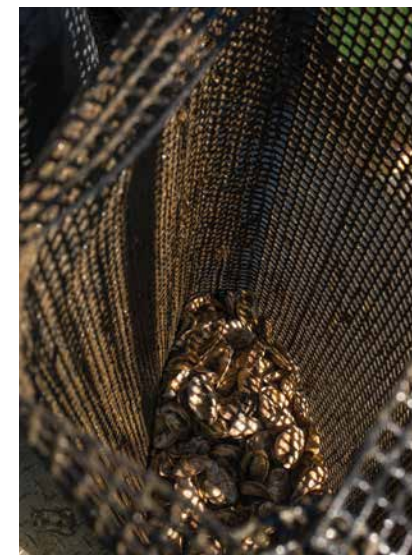
Scannell is a senior marine affairs major at UNE. "This internship really has opened my eyes to aquaculture," he said. "There is so much more to it than people think about." After UNE, Scannell plans to continue a career in aquaculture until he's ready to attend law school. He plans to help aquafarmers negotiate leases for their farms.

He maneuvers the boat back to the dock to pick up the rest of the crew before making their way to the farm site, where the oysters are unpacked from their submerged cages and added to the tumbler, a long aluminum cylinder with drilled holes. The seawater they pump into the tumbler cleans the biofouling off the shells while the holes sort the oysters by size. Post tumbling and back in bags, the oysters get plenty of water flow and phytoplankton. When they are large enough, they will be harvested for customers.

Scannell looks out on the shining bay peppered with islands. "Casco Bay is changing," he said. "I see progress every day here at the farm. It's nice to know that the oysters we grow are sustainable. They help keep these waters fertile and make Casco Bay better for all of us."

 For additional content, visit us online: une.edu/magazine.







REIMAGINING A HEALTH SCIENCES CAMPUS FOR ALL

As a second-year medical student at UNE, I am a firm advocate for the transformation of the Portland Campus for the Health Sciences. The relocation of the College of Osteopathic Medicine to Portland and the increased capacity for team-based learning will offer immense benefits for future generations of students who choose to enroll in all of the University's health professions programs.

Collaboration among different specialties will facilitate a holistic approach to patient care, reflecting the real-world health care landscape. Interacting with peers from diverse health programs will also foster strong interprofessional relationships. This interaction will not only enhance our own knowledge and skills but also cultivate a strong network of professionals who can effectively collaborate in diverse health care settings.

As a hub for medical education facilities and health care services, UNE's Portland Campus will offer future health professions students a unique opportunity to immerse themselves in a rich health care ecosystem. For students, the move to Portland will increase opportunities for research, clinical placements, and practical experiences due to the city's robust health infrastructure.

The opportunity to be engrossed in such an environment will be highly advantageous for aspiring physicians, nurses, pharmacists, physician assistants, and other medical professionals. The campus transformation will grant students access to state-of-the-art educational facilities, foster interprofessional research opportunities, facilitate cultural exposure, and broaden the range of resources available for students to develop personally and professionally.

This new environment will not only enhance the learning experience, but also contribute to an elevated sense of professionalism and dedication to our studies. I firmly believe that this transition will greatly enhance the student experience, both within the confines of the classroom and in the broader living context.

— Tyler Nussinow (D.O., '26)

See more
une.edu/magazine



FIFTEEN MINUTES WITH SHYANNE BARNES

Interview by Tulley Hescock

Shyanne Barnes, D.M.D. '22, grew up working on local farms in her hometown of Caribou, Maine — a rural city near the Canadian border — but always knew she wanted to become a dentist. She attended the University of Maine in Orono and then went on to the University of New England Doctor of Dental Medicine program. After graduation, she decided to return to Aroostook County to practice at White Smiles Family Dentistry in Fort Fairfield.

What inspired you to become a dentist?

I always knew I wanted to be a dentist. I came home one day in middle school and told my mom, "I'm going to be a dentist," and it never changed. I had a really great experience with not only my dentist but also my primary care providers, and it was just a really tight-knit community, so you get to know your doctors. They were a part of my community, so not only would I see them when I visited their office, but I'd see them at the local grocery store or my basketball games. Being a patient was a lot more than just being treated by a doctor; you are being treated by a community member. I am working in a private practice with a dentist whom I met when I was in high school — back then, I told him I wanted to be a dentist, and now here I am.

What motivated your return to practice in rural Maine?

Being a new grad, I didn't want to have to worry about building my own patient population; I wanted to go to a place that already had a high need. My schedule is filled with people and with different types of treatments that I can do. I'm able to dictate what I want to do and what I don't want to do.

Additionally, there is a strong incentive program for students to practice in rural Maine. This past year, Delta Dental donated a grant for alumni and soon-to-be-grads to work in underserved, rural areas. Although the incentive program didn't exist until I was already practicing in my rural practice, I was able to benefit from the grant; however, originally, my incentive was having a great opportunity to work with Dr. White at White Smiles Family Dentistry.

Describe your experience practicing dentistry.

I feel lucky to have this experience coming directly from school. Since I am one of two dentists in our practice, I get a lot of practice and I am encouraged to do as much as I can in terms of treatment. So it's been really nice to be able to advance my skills while also learning from my boss every single day.

As rural dentists, we work interprofessionally with the other health professionals in the community to make sure that we're all on the same page for a specific patient. We all know exactly who you're talking about and know the patient by name. We make sure that we have all the information to give them the best care.

It has come full circle. Now, I get to see my patients and they get to see me in town and involved with the community. I'm making an effort to not only just be a doctor here, but also a community member and a neighbor.

Did you feel prepared to practice after graduating?

I think UNE did really well preparing students to work in rural communities because of the externship program that is a part of the curriculum in your fourth year. To graduate, you have to go to a rural, underserved area and do a 12-week externship there, and you work underneath a dentist who is familiar with and works in that area. For me, I was used to being in rural communities, but I actually saw how having that type of exposure to rural places and people benefited my friends who weren't from rural towns. UNE allows us to make important connections and to build the foundation of what we want to be as providers. I saw exactly the things I like, the things I didn't like, and the role I wanted to play in a clinical setting. The whole experience was really special.

How has rural health care changed since you grew up?

Some of my patients are shocked that a woman can be a dentist. I feel like part of my job is to be a role model to young people and even the older generation. I always experienced an older man who was a dentist when I was young, but now we have more diversity here. I feel really good about being that woman doctor who can make a change.

Describe the need for health professionals in rural Maine.

I've only been here a little over a year, and our private practice is still unable to accept new patients because we're still trying to take care of all of our current patients. The need is high, especially because we have an older population here, which is reflected in our health care providers. They're getting to the point where they're ready to retire and they're ready for people to take over. I recommend that if you really want to help as many people as you can and do different types of procedures, then you know that you need to go into an area that has a high-need population. ■



MOMENTS IN MOROCCO

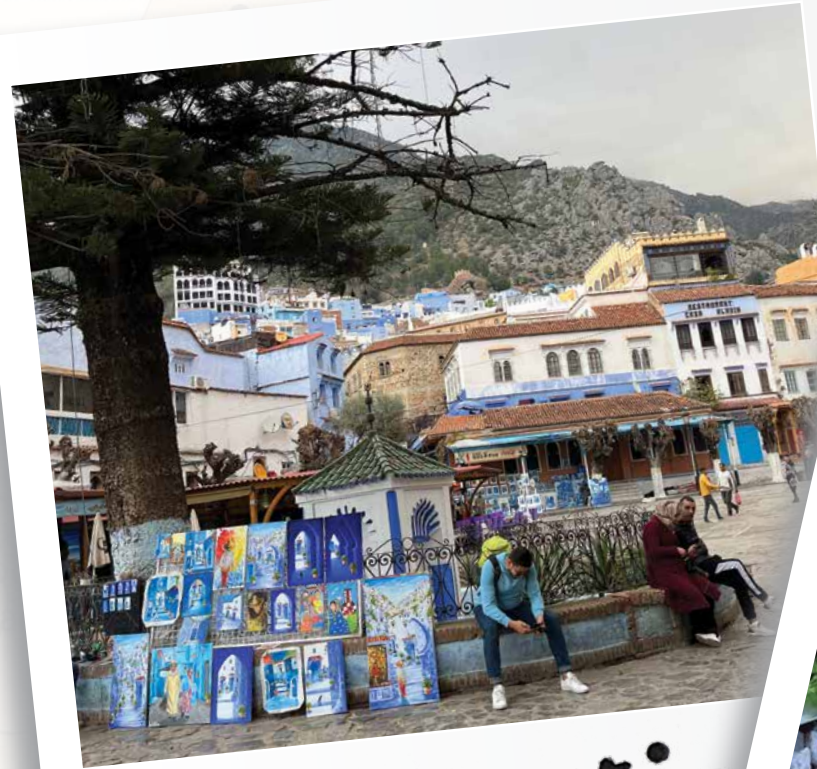
by Jordan Agabin, M.S.O.T. '23, with Joel Soloway



Checking in from Morocco!



The other side of the Atlantic



An overnight in the "Blue City"



Tasty traditional Moroccan meals

Greetings! My name is Jordan Agabin, and I recently graduated with my master's in occupational therapy (OT). During the final year of my program, I had the incredible opportunity to travel abroad to Morocco for 10 days with a group of fellow OT and physical therapy (PT) students and faculty. Our group stayed on UNE's Tangier Campus and with host families. It was an incredibly fruitful experience. I was able to learn more about occupational therapy practice in Morocco and connect with local community members.

The stunning city of Asilah is located about an hour down the Atlantic coastline from Tangier. I remember taking a beat to myself to truly experience every moment here — to reflect on how far I've come in the OT program and check in with myself. Exploring this city was one of those beautiful, picturesque moments you could only imagine in a dream! The warm sun, complemented by the breezy air and refreshing water, had a similar sensation to what we feel on the opposite side of the Atlantic back home in Maine.

Our OT and PT group spent quality time with host families while visiting Chefchaouen, also known as the "Blue City," which is reflected in the architecture and local art. I was welcomed by my host brother for the night. It was incredible to talk with a peer around my age, exchange ideas, and learn more about the culture and what life is like growing up and living in Morocco. My entire host family welcomed me in for a lovely dinner after we explored the city.

I tried so many wonderful and delectable dishes while we were in Morocco. Chicken tagine is a traditional dish of chicken braised with spices, garlic, olives, onions, and lemon. I had this meal numerous times during our trip. Enjoying flavorful North African food is even better when you are seated on the rooftop of a restaurant in Chefchaouen with beautiful views of the "Blue City" and the towering mountains in the distance.



Practicing OT at The Brotherhood



Enjoying the sunrise from the Tangier Campus



Finding hope at the Cave of Hercules



Forming close bonds at the Strait of Gibraltar

While in Tangier, we spent time at the Fraternity Association for People with Disabilities, more commonly referred to as “The Brotherhood,” a school for young children. Acknowledging how the language barrier may limit our ability to connect with the students, my peers and faculty instructors came up with the idea to use Boomwhackers as a way to connect with students through the occupation of music. While exploring the occupation of music and play, we were able to develop a special connection with the students.

I never got over the sight of watching the sunrise each morning from outside my dorm room windows on the Tangier Campus. Wherever you are on campus, the breathtaking views of the city will never cease to amaze you. The campus has a nice blend of modern and classic architecture throughout all the facilities. Staying in the heart of the city, I was able to easily prepare each day for explorations, immersions, and volunteer work with the local community.

The Cave of Hercules is a historical archeological site that’s about a 20-minute drive from the UNE campus. Our group was able to explore the cave and admire its beautiful scenery inside and out. It was like something you would see on a postcard. I remember taking a moment to soak in this unbelievable vantage point. Almost eliciting a feeling of hope, the contrast of the dark cave and the fresh, bright blue water made it seem like there was light at the end of the tunnel or life beyond the cave.

This picture was taken in front of Cap Spartel at the entrance of the Strait of Gibraltar. Our small group of students and faculty grew closer through the shared experience of exploration, service, and learning. We shared unforgettable memories. It was incredible to process our time in Morocco through the lens of an occupational therapist. The experience broadened my perspective of occupational therapy and energized me to know that the world is more than just the comfort of our hometowns and environments.

See more une.edu/magazine



A BULL MARKET FOR BUSINESS EDUCATION

by John Austin

John Austin, Ph.D., is the interim dean of the College of Business and the P.D. Merrill Endowed Chair of Business at UNE.

Facing down the uncertainty of the last five years, the University of New England has guided students through unpredictable landscapes while also reinvesting in high-demand programs.

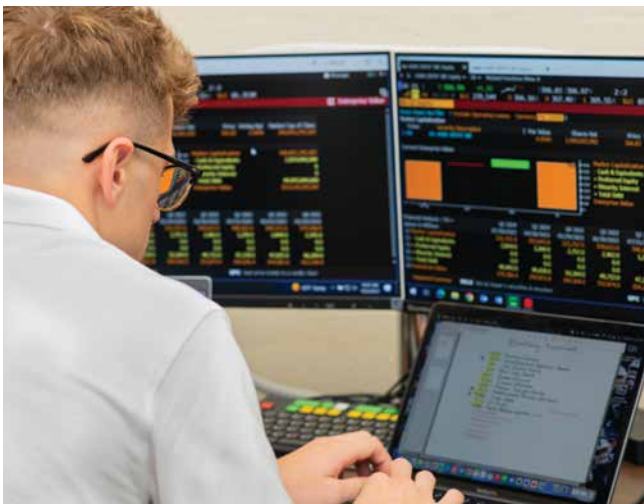
As a result of UNE's financial stewardship, Moody's Investors Service recently upgraded UNE's credit rating from A3 to A2 with a strong financial outlook despite student market challenges.

UNE's flourishing business programs, which have seen substantial growth and achieved several noteworthy milestones, are a shining example of this growing success. In 2022, UNE welcomed its largest incoming class of business students, and this dynamic cohort is tapping into the benefits of the recent investments made by the University, propelling the program into a vibrant future with the establishment of a College of Business.

In a testament to the progress achieved, UNE's new College of Business welcomed two new faculty members in fall 2023, specializing in economics and social innovation and entrepreneurship. During a time when many other universities are struggling to maintain their programs, UNE is taking advantage of its strong financial position to create new learning opportunities to help our students innovate for a healthier planet.

Our exceptional business faculty currently supports four majors — business administration, sport and recreation management, marine entrepreneurship, and sustainability and business. We were thrilled to announce a new major in outdoor business and innovation this fall. The outdoor industry is a significant economic driver in our region. Our coastal location — coupled with world-class marine and environmental sciences programs and growing expertise in sustainable innovation — makes the University well-poised to spearhead the growth and innovation of Maine's outdoor economy.

UNE is taking advantage of its strong financial position to create new learning opportunities to help our students innovate for a healthier planet.



Outside of business, UNE continues to expand offerings in high-demand programs, including data science, criminology, aquaculture, special education, accelerated nursing, and more. The College of Business leverages relationships between these programs to create distinctive, experiential learning opportunities for students.

In the last academic year, the College took significant steps to improve the student experience through access to real-time market data by adding Bloomberg terminals. This cutting-edge technology immerses our students in real-world financial data, preparing them for their future careers. We've also introduced Bloomberg certification opportunities this year, offering students a tangible demonstration of their proficiency for prospective employers.

The future is bright for business at UNE.

Beyond this, we've broadened our certification offerings in a range of fields, including project management, app development, Excel, social media, and agile processes.

UNE is quickly gaining recognition in innovation and entrepreneurship. Students have begun taking advantage of our new minor and concentration in social innovation and entrepreneurship. In partnership with the P.D. Merrill Makerspace, UNE students are transforming their creative ideas into tangible businesses. In the last four years, six UNE student teams participated in the televised round of the Greenlight Maine College Edition, with two students clinching the top prize. These victorious students, Jillian Robillard, B.S. '20 (Marine Entrepreneurship), and Abbie Anderson, B.S. '23 (Sustainability and Business), effectively embody the entrepreneurial spirit nurtured at UNE.

The future is bright for business at UNE. Building off our successes and inspired by ever-evolving market trends, our faculty remain devoted to exploring diverse ways of incorporating new technologies and certifications, cutting-edge instructional principles, and best practices for student success in ensuring we equip our students for the challenges of tomorrow, not merely today. ■



ABBIE ANDERSON '23 IS IN THE BUSINESS OF HUMAN CONNECTION

Anderson is developing an app to help college students find genuine connections on campus.

A mobile app pioneered by recent College of Business graduate Abbie Anderson, B.S. '23 (Sustainability and Business), aims to get its users off their phones and to meet others with similar interests.

The app allows college students to form bonds over shared interests, discover new hobbies and activities, and explore new places on and off campus. The app was inspired by Anderson's own collegiate experience, during which she found it hard to make lasting connections with other students amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

"In my sophomore year, I was feeling lost and isolated from campus and my peers," she said. "I started thinking of ways to help students feel more connected, not only to each other but to campus, as well."

The app has garnered the attention of some of Maine's most influential business leaders. In July, Anderson was announced as the winner of the eighth season of the "Greenlight Maine College Edition," taking home the televised pitch competition's top prize of \$10,000 to spearhead development of her business plan, becoming the second student from UNE to win the contest in just three years.

With the prize money, Anderson employed a software engineering firm to develop the app's user interface and beta-test the app regionally.

Anderson said her curricular experiences at UNE — both as a Shaw Innovation Fellow and creator in the P.D. Merrill Makerspace — gave her the skills necessary to form the startup.

"The guidance my mentors have given me is invaluable, and having that kind of support system, especially as a female entrepreneur, opens a lot of doors and opportunities for me and really helps ensure that I'm going to be successful and that the business as a whole will grow," she said.



VOICES OF OUR FUTURE

Student Activism at UNE



2020

2021

2022

2023



RESHAPING REPRODUCTIVE CARE

by Claire Dudek (M.S.P.A., '24) with Tulley Hescock

A colorful variety of items — including menstrual pads, fuzzy socks, teas, heating pads, snacks, and other comfort items — filled a classroom in Girard Innovation Hall on April 25. I was joined by 30 peers from across UNE's health professions programs — social work, physical therapy, occupational therapy, physician assistant, nursing, pharmacy, and osteopathic medicine — to fill bag after bag, creating menstrual and abortion care kits. Together, we represent UNE's inaugural Reproductive Health Leadership (RHL) program, which educates the interprofessional class on the science and social impacts of reproductive health care and puts UNE's mission of improving access to rural health care into action.

The joy that filled the room was palpable as each table became packed with 100 abortion care kits and more than 1,000 menstrual care kits that would be distributed to local community members by the end of the week. The event was a culmination of the hard work and focused learning we did in the RHL program during the year.

The program is a collaboration between the Area Health Education Center Network, Planned Parenthood of Northern New England, and Service Learning at UNE. It took place as a

combination of five virtual and in-person sessions during the 2022-23 school year. Throughout the program, we listened and held interprofessional discussions around transgender health care, contraceptive counseling, and the clinical considerations of abortion as they relate to a reproductive justice framework.

I am learning through each patient interaction that we, as health care providers, inhabit a unique role that connects us to community members at times when they are arguably their most vulnerable.

The inclusion of interprofessional students enabled us to each bring a different perspective to these discussions — be it direct patient care ideas, pharmacy workarounds for medication access, or patient education suggestions. This experience allowed me to have a new voice in issues of abortion and menstrual care, as conversations about reproductive health have not always been a focus in my education.

I was raised in rural Illinois as a member of the Catholic church. Here, the topic of reproductive health was almost entirely ignored and replaced with multiple "abstinence only" presentations put on by my church and my Catholic high school. According to the Guttmacher Institute, only 16 states in the U.S., as of July, require that schools provide medically accurate sex education.

With the overturn of *Roe v. Wade*, access to reproductive care and abortions has become more restrictive and confusing for more than 22 million people with uteruses in the U.S. All people deserve equitable access to reproductive education and health care. It is for this reason that health care providers must step up to the plate to provide up-to-date, accurate information about reproduction, contraceptives, and abortion to their patients. As a future physician assistant (PA), I want to fill this role, and the RHL program has been the perfect place to start.

I chose to become a PA after working as an undergraduate research assistant in a cognitive neuroscience lab, where I discovered my love for interacting with patients, solving problems, and educating others. Now halfway through my PA education at UNE and transitioning to clinical rotations, I am learning through each patient interaction that we, as health care providers, inhabit a unique role that connects us to community members at times when they are arguably their most vulnerable.

One of my favorite reflections as a part of the program was during a session with Planned Parenthood. We asked, "Whose goals are we meeting during vulnerable conversations? Are they the provider's or the patient's?" While a classroom can do its best to model the needs of the real world, we cannot fully understand them without immersing

ourselves within our community. Service provides the opportunity to enter community spaces, learn from those who inhabit them, and simultaneously invest in their well-being.

Service learning at UNE is particularly important because it allows for direct collaboration between professions. While planning and assigning roles for our abortion care kit team, I witnessed this collaboration firsthand. Each profession utilized unique connections to resources that elevated our effort, including fundraising opportunities, community groups who offered to spread the word about our project, and knowing an individual willing to hand-sew 100 heating packs. The interprofessional nature of the program provided a positive impact for health care students and those needing care.

Each health profession at UNE has an important role in advocating for, and maintaining the access to, health education and reproductive care that we so desperately need in this post-Roe era. Throughout this past year, the Reproductive Health Leadership program has increased my knowledge and broadened my perspective on these topics. While I acknowledge that I've had to come a long way in the area of reproductive health education, I believe that even the most experienced student will learn a lot from this program. It is a space for providing perspective, holding discussions, and dismantling past viewpoints. Ultimately, this results in better care for future patients, no matter one's profession, gender, or knowledge on this topic. ■





UNE ATHLETICS: A BEACON FOR WOMEN'S SPORTS

by David Ambrose

Breaking through the barriers of underrepresentation in athletics, the University of New England emerges as a trailblazer for women in sports. With a dynamic infusion of new women's sports and establishing the Female Athlete Alliance (FAA) club, UNE is rewriting the playbook, ushering in an era of inclusivity and empowerment. Like a masterful brush on a canvas, UNE's efforts paint a dynamic narrative where progress basks in the spotlight.

UNE women's rugby and the team's head coach Ashley Potvin-Fulford, B.A./B.S., have been at the forefront of the women's athletic movement at UNE.

"UNE has a different perspective on women's sports. I'm not sure of another school that has added women's sports at the rate we have," said Potvin-Fulford, who is also the advisor for the FAA.

In the last few years, UNE has added three varsity women's sports teams: rugby was added in 2016, track and field in 2021, and golf in 2023.

The women's rugby team has made strides in the emerging sports category for the NCAA, establishing itself as one of the premier teams in the nation. UNE Rugby has advanced to the National Intercollegiate Rugby Association Division III Championship every competitive year since 2019, except for the 2020-21 season due to the pandemic.

The FAA club, which has doubled in size in the last few years, promotes gender equality in sports through activities, education, and community outreach at UNE. The group also provides a safe, supportive environment in which UNE students can openly discuss concerns and experiences. Potvin-Fulford has also been named the top club advisor on campus.

"Our group looks to empower women athletes to fight against societal norms and spark conversations about the state of women's athletics and how we can move everything forward," said Potvin-Fulford. The club gives the students a stronger voice on campus and has promoted

UNE has a different perspective on women's sports. I'm not sure of another school that has added women's sports at the rate we have.

— Ashley Potvin-Fulford

many programs that help empower women athletes, like National Girls and Women in Sports Day and the Champions of Equality event, which have become annual events on campus.

The University of New England has strong representation of women, with around 70% of students identifying as women. While the FAA has helped make strides in the athletics department, many women's sports have had tremendous success.

The UNE field hockey team consistently plays one of the toughest schedules in Division III. It has advanced to the Commonwealth Coast Conference championship game in 11 of the last 13 years, winning six titles, including a crown last year. Women's cross country pulled off a stretch of seven-straight conference titles and has not finished lower than third since 2008. The basketball team had a similar stretch, winning six consecutive titles from 2013-2018 and has been in the semifinals since 2009. The soccer team won consecutive titles in 2018 and 2019 and has made the semifinal round each year since 2018.

UNE women's sports are all about showing that we're not just in compliance with Title IX, but we are playing the game and actively prioritizing women in athletics. — Ashley Potvin-Fulford

With the addition of women's golf, UNE has 12 women's sports teams competing each year, said Heather Davis, M.A., director of UNE Athletics.

"We are thrilled to add women's golf to our current offerings of varsity sports," Davis said. "Not only does this provide more participation opportunities for female student-athletes, but it also closely aligns with the rapid growth of women's golf in and around our conference."

Potvin-Fulford said she sees the positive trajectory of women's sports at UNE.

"UNE women's sports are all about showing that we're not just in compliance with Title IX, but we are playing the game and actively prioritizing women in athletics," she said.

Amid the triumphs of its women's athletics and the flourishing FAA club, UNE emerges as an exemplar in enhancing the student-athlete journey for women at institutions across New England and the nation. UNE's resounding mission to empower women athletes and amplify the significance of women's athletics paves the way for others to emulate. ■

PLAYING SINCE ...



COMING SOON: GOLF (2024) AND TENNIS (2025)



A HAT TRICK OF ACHIEVEMENTS

by David Ambrose

Alex Sheehy, College of Business graduate and former captain of the men's hockey team, like many student-athletes at University of New England, succeeds on and off the ice.

The University of New England men's ice hockey team has found great success over the last few years, due in no small part to the effective leadership of captain Alex Sheehy, B.S. '23 (Business Administration). Sheehy led the team in 2022-23 and anchored a squad that went 66-16-6 during his four years of wearing the blue and white.

Sheehy came to UNE from his hometown of North Salem, New York, where he attended the Millbrook School and spent two seasons with the Connecticut Junior Rangers prep team. While with the Rangers, UNE head coach Kevin Swallow and former assistant coach Jack Ceglarski reached out to Sheehy in hopes of bringing his talents to Biddeford.

"I didn't know much about the school, but once I was there, I loved the campus. I saw a game live and loved the atmosphere and the environment," Sheehy said.

Off the ice, Sheehy is a perennial Commonwealth Coast Conference (CCC) All-Academic honoree and member of the Chi Alpha Sigma National College Athlete Honor Society. He credits John Austin, Ph.D., interim dean of the College of Business, as a mentor who always pushed him to pursue his interests.

"Alex was always thoughtful and quick to make practical connections in class," said Austin, who is also the P.D. Merrill Endowed Chair of Business.

Since graduation, Sheehy has accepted an internship with the billing department at Unum Insurance in Portland and plans to work in finance afterward.

In his time on the ice at UNE, the defenseman played in a little over half of the games in his first year, scoring one goal and adding 10 assists on a team that won the CCC regular season title that year.

The Nor'easters hoped to rebound in the 2020-21 season but were only able to play four games. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, the team finished 4-0. Sheehy earned a starting role the next season and helped UNE to its most-successful season at 23-4-1. The Nor'easters captured the CCC Championship at home in a thrilling 3-2 overtime victory over longtime rival Endicott College, a game in which Sheehy taps as his favorite memory as a student-athlete.

"The feeling of winning the title at home was awesome," Sheehy remarked. "We always have a great crowd, but that was the loudest I've ever heard the Forum."



UNE's program-record 13-game winning streak would come to an end in its first-ever national semifinal appearance.

Expectations were high for the squad again last season, and after — by his standards — a slow start, Sheehy took some time away from the team for a unique experience: playing for the United States in the World University Games. He received a call from Ceglarski, his former coach, notifying him of the opportunity to represent the U.S. on a world stage.

"It was a great experience being part of a national team. I loved the competition," Sheehy said.

The Nor'easters once again were one of the final four teams in the country in 2023, knocking off, at the time, the No. 1 team in Division III, Utica University, on the road in overtime to reach the semifinal round. The season came to an unfortunate end in a high-scoring, 8-7 extra-time loss to defending national champion Adrian College in the final four.

Coach Swallow said Sheehy's resilience throughout the pandemic, one of the most difficult times to play sports, is a legacy he'll carry on to the next steps of his hockey career.

"Last year, he was a go-to guy for us. I think that everything he went through in those first three years helped him be a tremendous leader for us," Swallow said.

Sheehy will be continuing his hockey career close to UNE as a member of the Maine Mariners, members of the East Coast Hockey League (ECHL), who play their home games at the Cross Insurance Arena in Portland, less than 20 miles from campus. ■



HOMECOMING 2023

Homecoming is a breath of fresh air for many – a wonderful time to learn more about each other and build community. Many of us students are so focused on our studies that we often forgo weekend activities, but Homecoming gives us a chance to explore new activities and meet new people. The best part is that no matter who you are or where you are from, there is always a group of individuals here to welcome you.

This year, I attended the Summer Undergraduate Research Experience symposium, the tailgate, and the football game. I was excited to learn more about the research my peers conducted over the summer. The symposium is an amazing opportunity to share these projects with the broader community. Especially with the new “Doing Our Part” campaign, research plays a key role in the UNE student experience.

President Herbert announced the campaign during the Homecoming football game. UNE’s unique character already attracts intelligent students who want to give back to our surrounding communities, and I firmly believe that “Doing Our Part” will provide students with experience-rich academic and research programs unlike any other.

As a senior, my Homecoming experience was bittersweet. I had an amazing time with my friends and their families, but it has now hit me that this will be our last year here, at Homecoming, together. While my family wasn’t able to visit, I was still in good company. At UNE, your roommates and peers actually become family.

The vibrant atmosphere created by students, family members, community members, and alumni makes Homecoming one of my favorite events. I am so appreciative of all the volunteers and staff who make Homecoming weekend possible. We will remain part of the UNE community, and I am excited to return as an alum!

– Emily Walsh (Medical Biology, '24)



See more
une.edu/magazine



PUTTING RESEARCH INTO PRACTICE

by Angela Coulombe

The hands-on creation and application of knowledge through research prepares University of New England students for what lies ahead of them after they graduate. That has been the case for Brandon Hotham, B.A. '12, M.P.H. '14.

"The research I did at UNE informed my career path," said Hotham, who is the chief experience officer at the Dempsey Centers located in Lewiston and South Portland, Maine, and online at Dempsey Connects.

As a double major in psychology and English, Hotham participated in the Summer Undergraduate Research Experience twice, where he produced a documentary film on queer assimilation versus radicalization in Maine and a literature review focused on privacy law in a growing social media- and technology-driven environment. He also worked on initiatives to support local community health interventions for at-risk youth and engaged with nonprofit organizations to assist in direct public health program evaluation.

"If you don't have research experience, it is hard to find information and sources you can trust," Hotham said. "The research work that I did at UNE helped me to look objectively at reading materials and all content purporting a certain outcome or analysis."

In his role at the Dempsey Center, Hotham supports individuals navigating cancer using evidence-based care services and by removing barriers for his staff so they can focus on clients.

"What I like the most about research is studying something objectively, then putting those evidence-based results into practice," he said.

Hotham said he finds the center's variety of care options compelling. He explained that the oncology providers administer the medical treatment needed to address cancer, and the center helps clients navigate the changes in their lives that come with a cancer diagnosis, treatment, and the general impact of cancer.

For Brandon, the Dempsey Center is a natural fit.

"I very much believe folks should trust their intuition and follow their passions. That has definitely led me to where I am," he said. ■

"The research work that I did at UNE helped me to look objectively at reading materials and all content purporting a certain outcome or analysis."

— Brandon Hotham



SHIELDING CHILDREN FROM HARM

by Angela Coulombe

Shanequa Kimble Stepps, M.S.W. '18, has always worked to ensure the safety of children.

Already equipped with a bachelor's degree in social work, Stepps wanted to take her career to the next level. While working for Georgia's Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities in Atlanta, she considered pursuing a local, in-person master's program. Instead, she opted for UNE Online for its diversity in course offerings and faculty expertise.

"UNE's online option offered a more extensive selection of specialized courses and reputable professors from all around the world," she said. "This was something that a local program could not match."

The flexibility of the online program made pursuing a master's degree possible, Stepps said.

"Being able to access the course materials and lectures from anywhere with an internet connection allowed me to balance my studies with other responsibilities, such as work and family commitments, and has been crucial in helping me manage my busy schedule effectively," she said.

As vice president of federal services for an organization that works to eliminate commercial sexual exploitation of children, Stepps oversees all direct service programs, supports other social workers who work with youth, and spearheads projects to protect children from human trafficking.

Through UNE Online, Stepps connected with professionals and peers from diverse backgrounds and geographical locations and credits her cohorts and professors for providing a supportive environment whereby she could ask questions and gain feedback and insight into her work.



"Interacting with a broader network broadened my perspective and exposed me to different ideas and approaches within my field of study ... (It's) just like we would do in

a traditional classroom setting," she said. "UNE helped me dive into the discourse around the world of human trafficking. It opened my eyes to how I could serve other populations." ■

class Notes

1946

Loisjean Fenoglio writes: I am living in a CCR retirement home and am enjoying the easy life. I moved to North Carolina after my husband retired from Georgia Tech Research Institute to be closer to family. I am a grandmother to two great kids.

1958

Barbra Thompson writes: I recently moved to a community living setting. The residents are friendly and interesting, and the staff are very helpful. Everyone is authentic, my kind of people. The grandchildren are quickly becoming adults, and the family is well.

Sandra Putnam Brown writes: Life has been good and blessed me with five children, 17 grandchildren, and nine great-grandchildren. I am married to the same great guy as I was at graduation 65 years ago. I am still working part time at a tourist destination in Ogunquit. I look forward to seeing many of my classmates in June.

1959

Barbra Wadsworth Spinney writes: After 60 wonderful years together, my husband, Donald, passed away in June of 2022. I am now keeping house with my three cats! My six grandchildren range in age from 11 to 32, and I have a great-granddaughter, age 3. How time flies! In the warm weather, I tend to my flower garden. I enjoy volunteering at town hall and keeping active with COA activities. Days spent with family and friends are very special to me. I have fond memories of my two years at Westbrook Junior College.

1962

Roberta Taylor Ladetto: We are back home in Michigan with our eldest son, Mark, and his wife and son. Bob and I have been married for 59 years this August. We try to get back to Massachusetts at least once a year to visit family and friends. I hope that all of my Westbrook classmates are doing well.



Susan Deschambault

1963

Ann Hooper Hernandez writes: I have been retired for almost 10 years. I have traveled to San Francisco, Puerto Rico, New York, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire.

1966

Linda Zavalick writes: Hello to all! Since moving to Massachusetts in 2007, I have continued to work in banking, and am currently a part-time teller. My days are filled with work, exercise, family, and friends. I continue to run races, spin at my gym, and exercise with my personal trainer once a week. My husband and I celebrated our 54th wedding anniversary in July. My granddaughters are 18, 16, and 7. We are indeed blessed.

1968

Kenneth Scott writes: "Doc" Downs was an astounding member of the faculty of St. Francis College and the University of New England. I hope for the long-lasting vitality of the beautiful and historic Biddeford Campus.

1969

Jennifer Hargreaves writes: We are looking forward to summer here on the Maine coast. We were able to go to Pawleys Island for a month in February, and it was very relaxing. I would love to hear from Judy Conway (my roommate in Melville).

1971

Susan Deschambault writes: After serving four terms as a state senator, I have resumed volunteer work for the city of Biddeford. I was reappointed to the Biddeford Planning Board. I am also on the board of the Biddeford Cultural and Heritage Center, where I am archiving the donated 19th century ledgers of the Société de Saint Jean-Baptiste Bienfaisance.

1973

Cheryl Morin writes: I have been retired from MaineGeneral Medical Center for a few years now, and my husband sold his business and retired a year and half ago. We are enjoying visiting and traveling with our daughter's and son's families (three grandchildren in all). We spend mid-January to mid-April and some time in the fall at our place in Florida. Loving retirement!

Please email your news and photos to alumni@une.edu, post on UNE Connect at www.alumni.une.edu, or mail to the UNE Office of Alumni Advancement, 716 Stevens Avenue, Portland, ME 04103. College of Osteopathic Medicine news should be emailed to RSAS@une.edu.

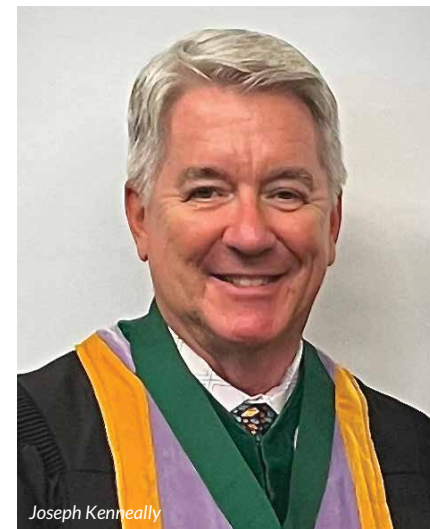
PLEASE LIMIT SUBMISSIONS TO 75 WORDS OR LESS. SUBMISSIONS MAY BE EDITED FOR LENGTH AND CLARITY.

Kathleen Vachowski writes: After 50 years in dental hygiene, I officially called it quits! It was a big decision for me, but I was ready. Having some of my family living in Alaska and some here in Maine, I needed to make some time for visiting and spoiling the four grandchildren that we have. My husband, John, and I celebrated our 50th anniversary on June 23rd. We have been traveling in our motor home, some winters in Florida but with COVID-19, many plans were canceled. We explored our wonderful state of Maine this summer. I have been volunteering with the Lovell Area Food Pantry and I am the president of the board of directors for our small village library.

Lindsay Barkin writes: We're presently living in New Orleans while my husband, Irwin, finishes up a large project rehabbing Charity Hospital, a mixed use renovation which was ruined in Katrina. I can't say I'm enjoying the heat and humidity of the South, and look forward to our next move to the midwest where two of our sons live. We've got one in Steamboat Springs, Colorado — Wesley — and one in Bozeman, Montana — Taylor. We'll settle in Livingston, Montana, where there is a nice community. Our oldest of our three sons, Zachary, lives in Norfolk, Virginia, and is getting married to a fantastic gal, Casey, this upcoming October. So, our whole family is happy and healthy. But, unfortunately, I am living too far away to make it to this reunion, perhaps the next one. Enjoy!

1973

Nancy Nelson writes: In May, my husband and I sold our home in Massachusetts and moved to Portland! We love living on the peninsula, five minutes away from our daughter, son-in-law, and two-and-a-half-year-old granddaughter. Our son-in-law, Simon Williams, was recently inducted in to the Maine Basketball Hall of Fame. If any classmates are still (or back) in the area, I'd love to meet and catch up. My email address is lula627@gmail.com.



Joseph Kenneally



Jane Carreiro



Peter Bell

1976

Joseph Kenneally has been the chief staff officer of the International College of Dentists (ICD) since 2020. The ICD is the world's leading international dental honor society. It promotes, creates, supports, and provides hundreds of humanitarian dental projects worldwide. Joe's job is virtual and part time which allows him to enjoy his retirement activities such as golf and pickleball.

1977

Carol Knybel Graziano writes: My husband, Rick, and I retired to North Carolina last August. We live about 10 feet away from the beach. Our granddaughter got engaged last year. The wedding will be in 2025 at a local vineyard!

1981

Kim Hubbard writes: John and I still live in our house in Parsonsfield. I still work in Special Education. We have been empty nesters for a number of years now. Both of our children are doing well and live close by. We are expecting our first grandchild in October! I'm lucky to still have both my parents living and doing well. My mom, **Dorothy Carvalho Noble WJC '50**, is 92 and my dad is 93. All is well in our world.

1984

Peter Bell, D.O., writes: I was recruited to be the University Vice Provost and Dean of the proposed College of Osteopathic Medicine at Baptist Health Science University. The newest COM was announced in Memphis, Tennessee, 21 months later.

1987

Kathleen Harper, D.O., has been published among the Top 50 Most Distinguished Professionals in Medicine for her dedication to cardiology and for achieving excellence in patient care. Harper has served her community for over three decades. Harper's focus is particular to all facets of cardiology with a particular interest in women's heart health, including prevention of cardiac problems and heart failure.

1988

Jane Carreiro, D.O., vice president for Health Affairs at the University of New England and Dean of the UNE College of Osteopathic Medicine, has been named chair-elect of the Board of Deans of the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine. Carreiro succeeds Shane Speights, D.O., who became chair at the end of April.

Cindy (Wilber) and **Mark Melanson** are enjoying retirement in West Virginia. They have been traveling in their RV and enjoy having the grandkids four houses away.

1989

Susan Dowd writes: My daughter has committed to UNE! I am so excited.

Russell Schilling, D.O., recently joined Choptank Community Health Center's Bay Hundred Medical & Dental Center as a family medicine specialist. Dr. Schilling specializes in comprehensive family medicine with more than 26 years of medical experience serving local communities. He is board certified by the American Board of Family Medicine.

1991

Kimberly Davis, OTD, received an American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) Roster of Fellows Award in April at AOTA in Kansas City.



Russell Schilling



Susan Dowd



Alyn Welchel



Suzanne Gavenous



Mark Montgomery



Meredith Raboin Renda



Michelle Osterhoudt

1993

Christine O'Dea writes: Cheers to 30 years, Class of 1993! I work in an extremely busy practice in Concord, Massachusetts. This year, I will be traveling to Alabama and Oklahoma and will be going on a cruise out of West Palm Beach. Wishing everyone health and happiness!

1994

Lisa Dussault, OTR/L, CLT, presented at the American Congress of Rehabilitation Medicine Annual Conference on "Meeting the Needs of a Vulnerable Population: Adolescent and Young Adult Oncology Rehabilitation" with other members of University of Wisconsin, Carbone Cancer Center Adolescent and Young Adult interdisciplinary team.

1995

Dawn-Marie Dunbar, P'20, and Karen Pardue, Ph.D., RN, HA'20, co-authored a paper published in Nurse Educator in November 2022 titled "Exploring the Development of Nursing Clinical Judgment Among Students Using Virtual Reality Simulation."

Suzanne Gavenous, M.S.W., writes: I currently work as the Director of Counseling and Wellness at the North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics in Morganton, North Carolina. I live in Burnsville, North Carolina, with my husband, Gary, who is a Superior Court Judge. We have three adult children.

1998

Virginia Cole, M.S.W., writes: I have worked in small private practice in Rochester, New Hampshire, since 2010.

2000

Alyn Welchel, P.A., writes: As a member for the leadership team of the Colorado Academy of Physician Assistants (CAPA), I was able to help pass important legislation to modernize physician assistant practice in Colorado. CAPA's SB23-083 Physician Assistant Collaboration Requirements was signed into law on April 26, 2023. My PA education at UNE prepared me for this dedication to my profession and the ability to advocate for patients with meaningful legislative change at the state level.

Krista Sawyer writes: I'm so happy that my daughter, Delaney, decided to pursue a degree in Elementary-Middle School Education from UNE. She loves it!



Tiana Vallie, Cameron 'CJ' Vallie, and baby girl Adalyn

2003

Mark Montgomery, M.S.Ed., writes: I have recently accepted the position of Interim Provost at SUNY Polytechnic Institute.

2005

Mohammed Safur, D.O., writes: As of May 2022, I have joined the Faculty Group Practice at NYU Long Island School of Medicine in the Department of Anesthesiology, Perioperative Care, and Pain Medicine. As a fellow of the American Society of Anesthesiologists (ASA), I am honored to be among the highest designation of the ASA, which recognizes excellence and leadership in the field of Anesthesiology. Looking ahead, our department is eagerly anticipating the arrival of the first group of residents in Anesthesiology in 2024 as part of the NYU Langone Health Residency program — Long Island Track. As we continue to grow, I hope to welcome UNE COM students to our department!

2009

Meredith Raboin Renda gets her son James Fisher Renda Gerri ready for a family vacation in Hills Beach, Maine.

2010

Heather Keeling was presented with a membership, gold lapel pin, and engraved gold key for conspicuous service rendered in the art and science of dentistry from the International College of Dentists.

2011

Julia McDonald, D.O., recently published an opinion piece, "Commentary: Maine Law Fails Patients Who Need Abortions Later in Pregnancy," in the Portland Press Herald.

2015

William Cowen, Ed.D., has been promoted to full teaching professor at Villanova University, where he is director of the public relations and advertising program.

Courtney Larson Cernohous, Pharm.D., and a team of colleagues placed first in the 2023 University of Minnesota Interdisciplinary Health Data Competition. Their winning presentation highlighted disparities in diabetes care ratings based on clinic area characteristics. For example, they found the diabetes care ratings of clinics based in rural areas tended to lag behind urban clinics. Courtney plans to complete her MBA at the Carlson School of Management in 2024.

2016

Bethany Meehan Poulin, M.S.Ed., writes: Exciting news here in Western Maine. I recently accepted a new administrative position in Regional School District 10. I will be serving as the district's assistant special education director. I look forward to helping students, staff, and families learn and grow as part of our amazing team! I am very grateful for the opportunities UNE opened up for me through my educational leadership program.

2017

Michelle Osterhoudt, M.S.Ed., was recently appointed superintendent at a special meeting of the Margaretville Central School Board. Previously, she served as the assistant high school principal in the same district. Osterhoudt also writes a monthly column for The Daily Star of Oneonta, NY.

Tiana Vallie writes: I got married on June 11, 2022 (to **Cameron "CJ" Vallie '16, D.P.T. '19**). We live in Nashua, New Hampshire, where I work as a dental hygienist. We recently welcomed our first baby girl, Adalyn, on April 29, 2023. We have so much to be thankful for and are very fortunate that we were able to get to know one another on UNE's cross country team in the fall of 2014. UNE holds a special place in our hearts, and we are filled with many wonderful memories.

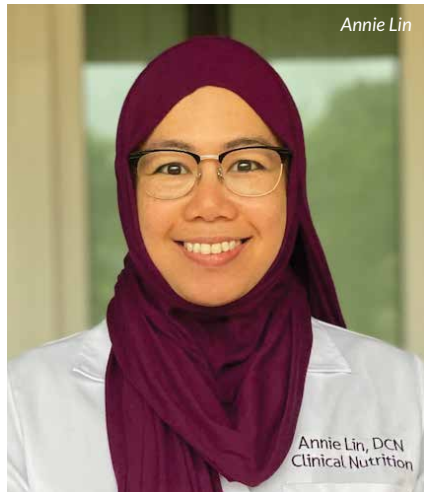
2019

Nikolaos Moraros, Ed.D., is the founder of SIMPLICITY, a nursing education curriculum framework that helps all pre-licensure nursing programs to align and meet the national NCLEX standards. Moraros was recently promoted as Dean for the School of Nursing at Wayland Baptist University.

Annie Lin, M.S., writes: The Master of Nutrition program at UNE put me on the path to becoming a board certified nutrition specialist and licensed dietitian nutritionist. I have since opened a clinical practice, joined several universities as adjunct faculty, and received my doctorate in clinical nutrition. I am so thankful for my time at UNE which helped pave the way to my career.



Nikolaos Moraros



Annie Lin

Annie Lin, DCN
Clinical Nutrition



Diana Goodwin



Melissa Garrett Mariano



Shelby Giese

D'Angelo Taylor, Ed.D., is the inaugural vice president of Belmont University's Office of Hope, Unity, and Belonging. The office is dedicated to diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging initiatives, carrying out the institution's desire for all community members to experience a meaningful and authentic sense of connection.

2020

Gilberto Pérez, Ed.D., writes: I am serving as the vice president for student life and dean of students at Goshen College. I was in Cambridge and almost made a trip to the Biddeford Campus, which I've never been to. I'll be back in Cambridge for my son's graduation from Harvard College. Perhaps this time I will make it to campus. I still remember well the amazing support I received from my Ed.D. program.

Diana Goodwin, Ed.D., writes: I have been the chair of the education department and assistant professor of education at Bacone College in Muskogee, Oklahoma, since fall 2021.

Kailene Jones, M.P.H., has been busy working on multiple projects to improve the lives of mothers, children, and families in the underserved rural regions of New England. Through her position in Dartmouth Health's Population Health Team, she has provided project management support to Families Flourish Northeast, a New Hampshire nonprofit developing a residential treatment center for pregnant and parenting women who suffer from substance use disorder and co-occurring mental illness. Kailene is also a founding board member of the recently established nonprofit known as the WOMB Initiative.

2021

Ashley Wais, M.P.H., writes: I want to thank UNE staff for all of their amazing work and for preparing me so well. I just accepted an epidemiologist position, and it truly is a dream come true.

Melissa Garrett Mariano, D.O., was welcomed to the National Resident Matching Program Board of Directors. Mariano is an internal medicine resident physician at Mount Auburn Hospital in Cambridge, Massachusetts. In 2021, Dr. Mariano was selected as the recipient of the Sauter Award for Graduate with Distinction, for her demonstrated commitment to patient compassion and care.

2022

Ash Griffith took a position at the Audubon Aquarium in New Orleans as a Husbandry Assistant and has recently been hired as a full time aquarist with them.

Sarah Piehler wrote a proposal to Maine Sea Grant and received a \$500 award for her work designing and building a nutrient sensing buoy.

Joseph Mooney, M.S.O.T., became a Certified Stroke Rehabilitation Specialist.

Mary Ryan, M.S.O.T., obtained a LSVT BIG certification from LSVT, Global Inc. LSVT BIG trains people with Parkinson disease to use their body more normally.

2023

Shelby Giese, D.O., was surprised and excited to meet two UNE COM alums during her Sports Med elective rotation at AHN in Erie, Pennsylvania. She let us know that **Jeffrey Kim, D.O. '03**, and **James Pash, D.O. '19**, were both incredible teachers, and exemplified quality patient care.



BELLA,
Occupational
Therapy '24
Adaptive Sports
Advocate

See Students' Stories



This world needs all of us.
what's your part?



UNIVERSITY OF
NEW ENGLAND

With a lifelong interest in pediatric care and adaptive sports, future occupational therapist (and ice hockey forward) Bella wants to help kids engage in the activities that are most meaningful to them. On campuses in Maine and Morocco, as well as online, we provide the people, resources, and opportunities you need to make a difference — in the health professions, the sciences, business, and beyond.

Everyone has a part to play. What's yours?
Together, let's find out. www.une.edu

1939

Eileen Garsoe Gerry
Westbrook Junior College
April 27, 2023

1940

Esther Holden Hopkins
Westbrook Junior College
January 21, 2022

1943

Natalie Small Hague
Westbrook Junior College
January 28, 2021

Elaine Patterson Shabeck
Westbrook Junior College
July 7, 2022

Frances Rand Snook
Westbrook Junior College
July 28, 2021

1944

Miriam Janes Borden
Westbrook Junior College
June 20, 2010

Louise Davidson Norcross
Westbrook Junior College
May 13, 2022

Barbara Lowther Sjoberg
Westbrook Junior College
December 22, 2022

1945

Patricia Conway Howes
Westbrook Junior College
March 13, 2004

Priscilla Smith Scheiner
Westbrook Junior College
November 12, 2022

Marjorie Whalen Smith
Westbrook Junior College
November 13, 2021

1946

Frances Robertson Amidon
Westbrook Junior College
June 8, 2014

Lucille Naylor Waite
Westbrook Junior College
November 13, 2013

Jane Rogers Walk
Westbrook Junior College
December 27, 2016

1947

Martha Whitney Davis
Westbrook Junior College
January 30, 2023

Bernadette Qualey Hunt
Westbrook Junior College
August 19, 2022

Phyllis Howes Rockwood
Westbrook Junior College
February 7, 2020

1948

Ann Dibblee Bamford
Westbrook Junior College
December 3, 2016

Virginia Murdy Cobb
Westbrook Junior College
August 25, 2018

Elizabeth Stetson Marston
Westbrook Junior College
January 5, 2020

Marcia Tripp Stoenner
Westbrook Junior College
June 26, 2022

1949

Anne Kingsbury Donahue
Westbrook Junior College
June 16, 2020

Alice Smith Fife
Westbrook Junior College
January 14, 2019

Margaret Smith Goode
Westbrook Junior College
July 24, 2023

Helen Gribizis
Westbrook Junior College
January 17, 2020

Renee Simpson Isserlis
Westbrook Junior College
June 19, 2020

Elaine McFarland Johnson
Westbrook Junior College
December 18, 2022

Amo E. Kimball
Westbrook Junior College
July 30, 2019

Patricia Davis Klingenstein
Westbrook Junior College
February 11, 2023

Natalie Jenckes Lefemine
Westbrook Junior College
May 19, 2022

Marilyn Anderson Swenson
Westbrook Junior College
May 23, 2022

Gary M. Weiner
St. Francis College
August 14, 2022

Maryon "Billie" Bilodeau Zilbersher
Westbrook Junior College
April 16, 2020

1950

Claudette Beem Hoke
Westbrook Junior College
January 3, 2022

Dianne Kenney Maxwell
Westbrook Junior College
November 21, 2021

Martha Luce Mellen
Westbrook Junior College
September 21, 2015

Ruby Rosenberg Steinhardt
Westbrook Junior College
October 15, 2021

1951

Betsy Hunter Ambach
Westbrook Junior College
July 2, 2020

Elizabeth Rust Philbrick
Westbrook Junior College
February 7, 2023

Judith Eames Wells
Westbrook Junior College
July 25, 2017

1952

Jane LaFleur Olson
Westbrook Junior College
September 23, 2021

1953

Mary Ellen Flaherty Ronnenberg
Westbrook Junior College
July 6, 2022

Helene Fink Scheinin
Westbrook Junior College
October 2, 2008

1954

Elaine Bennett Lowe
Westbrook Junior College
November 22, 2021

Janet Mattson McComb
Westbrook Junior College
January 15, 2023

1955

Ann Blanchard
Westbrook Junior College
March 1, 2022

1956

Shirley Scoville Barto
Westbrook Junior College
November 3, 2022

Nancy Legro Bettencourt
Westbrook Junior College
September 29, 2021

Faith Cummings
Westbrook Junior College
August 30, 2015

Susan Miller Davis
Westbrook Junior College
December 25, 2006

Margaret Martin Kiamie
Westbrook Junior College
January 18, 2019

Carol Stevens Kirchdorfer
Westbrook Junior College
January 12, 2017

1957

Jean Henrikson Spaulding
Westbrook Junior College
April 30, 2023

Doris Briggs Wunderlich
Westbrook Junior College
September 7, 2022

1958

Shirley Holmes Anastas
Westbrook Junior College
October 31, 2018

Frances A. Dunning
Westbrook Junior College
February 25, 2021

Carol Chapman Jensen
Westbrook Junior College
December 31, 2019

Barbara Ernst Magovern
Westbrook Junior College
November 7, 2018

Judith Colwell Parker
Westbrook Junior College
October 1, 2022

1959

Andrea Stevens Anderson
Westbrook Junior College
June 14, 2022

Oral Normandin Foster
Westbrook Junior College
October 10, 2022

1960

Nancy R. Foster
Westbrook Junior College
June 18, 2023

Margo Siemen Lopez-Cepero
Westbrook Junior College
August 11, 2019

Carol Pearlman
Westbrook Junior College
November 6, 2021

Susan Holmes Tolles
Westbrook Junior College
February 23, 2016

1961

Judith Berube Boulanger
Westbrook Junior College
June 27, 2021

Ingrid Carlson Coyle
Westbrook Junior College
October 28, 2022

Joanne St. Peter Maloy
Westbrook Junior College
November 23, 2021

1962

Sandra Sawyer Hallet
Westbrook Junior College
March 15, 2022

Beverly Matthews Hayes
Westbrook Junior College
August 16, 2017

Julia Martin Sawyer
Westbrook Junior College
March 6, 2023

Charlene Morris Whitten
Westbrook Junior College
July 21, 2022

1963

George Bergeron
St. Francis College
April 17, 2023

Frank Birmingham
St. Francis College
July 31, 2023

Donna Blanchard Legary
Westbrook Junior College
October 1, 2022

Peter Makuk
St. Francis College
June 21, 2023

Eugene Previdi
St. Francis College
March 19, 2023

Jean-Pierre Troadec
St. Francis College
January 21, 2023

Emily Adams Watkins
Westbrook Junior College
September 23, 2022

Karen Hunt Witherbee
Westbrook Junior College
January 5, 2020

1964

Nancy M. Bain
Westbrook Junior College
May 18, 2017

Barbara J. Baker
Westbrook Junior College
October 3, 2021

Neil B. Curley
St. Francis College
May 21, 2023

Peter L. Lynch
St. Francis College
November 7, 2022

1966

Laura Wolfe Caccia
Westbrook Junior College
October 12, 2022

James Hayes
St. Francis College
June 11, 2022

John Hughes
St. Francis College
July 15, 2023

William Jerram
St. Francis College
December 10, 2022

Vicki Alward Keniston
Westbrook Junior College
June 4, 2023

1968

Susan Reid Siegel
Westbrook Junior College
October 17, 2022

Lorraine Woodman Tosti
Westbrook Junior College
May 3, 2023

1969

John Pence
St. Francis College
May 19, 2023

James Zoll
St. Francis College
May 12, 2023

1970

Katherine A. Foster
Westbrook Junior College
June 21, 2023

1971

Michael Belanger
St. Francis College
June 17, 2023

Frieda Sundermann Hanlon
Westbrook Junior College
June 27, 2023

Patricia Dobbins Osborn
Westbrook Junior College
February 10, 2022

1972

Joyce Carter Gendron
Westbrook College
September 20, 2022

1973

Susan Destino
St. Francis College
September 4, 2020

Karen Walker Gammon
Westbrook College
May 3, 2020

Deborah Hefler Laird
Westbrook College
November 10, 2018

Anne Miller
Westbrook College
July 14, 2013

1976

Linda G. Grimes
Westbrook College
March 29, 2023

Jane Bradley Hansell
Westbrook College
June 24, 2023

Susan Emerson Reid
Westbrook College
October 17, 2022

1978

Mark C. Snow
Westbrook College
March 2, 2019

1979

Carole B. Wright
Westbrook College
February 6, 2022

1980

Catherine Sevigny Sanborn
Westbrook College
April 5, 2023

1981

Gina A. Stivaletti
Westbrook College
July 23, 2023

Judith E. Thompson
Westbrook Junior College
January 13, 2021

1982

Elizabeth Knopf Moreau
Westbrook College
March 21, 2023

1984

Sally Gaffney
Westbrook College
February 26, 2023

1985

Molly Anton
University of New England
March 22, 2023

Thomas R. Flood
Westbrook College
February 8, 2022

1986

Andrea Haskell-Varnum
Westbrook College
March 28, 2022

1988

Christine Hanscome
Westbrook College
March 15, 2021

1991

Judith Hartogh Brigham
Westbrook College
February 9, 2023

1994

Michael Dunn
University of New England
April 2, 2023

2012

Kenneth Sitterson
University of New England
January 12, 2023

2014

Jodi Veeder
University of New England
March 8, 2023

2015

Tynicia D. Walton
University of New England
September 5, 2022

FRIENDS

James Robert Caruso
March 25, 2023

Gary Cole
June 1, 2023

Bernard Featherman
July 14, 2023

Sherry F. Huber
June 4, 2022

Carol Farley Kessler
January 3, 2023

Edith Lambert
January 2, 2016

Diane Curl Roberts
December 20, 2022

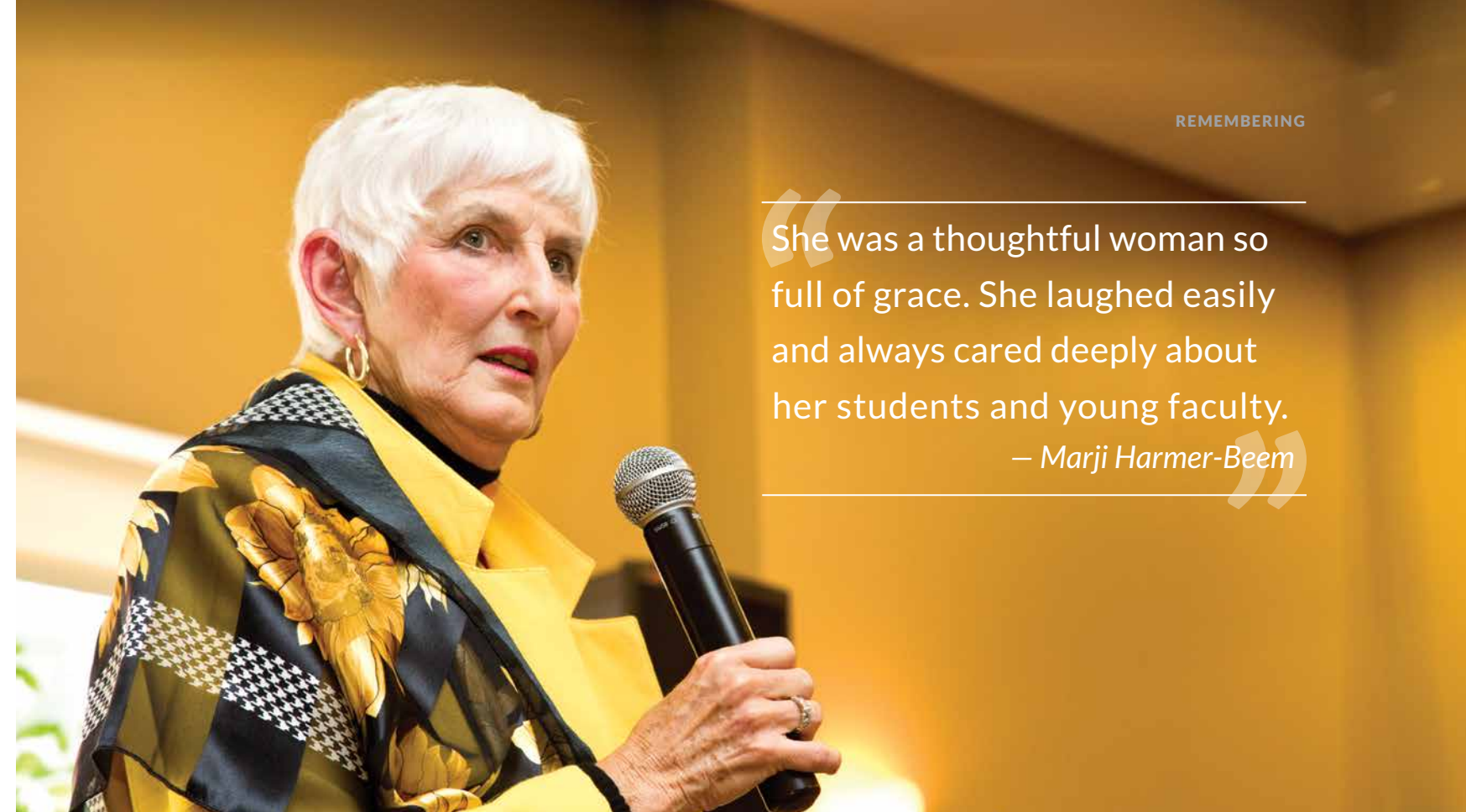
Rudolph A. Michaud
September 9, 2020

Irving Selvage, Jr.
August 15, 2016

Robert Tanner
October 27, 2021

Alvin H. Watkins
July 1, 2021

Betsy Webb
November 24, 2022



“She was a thoughtful woman so full of grace. She laughed easily and always cared deeply about her students and young faculty.”
— Marji Harmer-Beem

REMEMBERING: MARGARET “DIANE” CURL ROBERTS

by Amy Haile

Margaret “Diane” Curl Roberts, former chair of the Dental Hygiene program at Westbrook College from 1971 to 1982, passed away on Dec. 20, 2022. During her tenure, the program flourished. She developed a curriculum that advanced students’ dental clinical expertise while providing opportunities for them to develop skills in public speaking, advocacy, and research. Roberts also created opportunities for students to use their education to care for others, such as treating youth from the Maine Youth Center and traveling to Mackworth Island to provide care to students at the Governor Baxter School for the Deaf. Many of these opportunities are still available to students in the University of New England’s Department of Dental Hygiene today.

Marji Harmer-Beem, WC ’77, M.S., Dental Hygiene program director, who served as a faculty member under Roberts, said she considered her a mentor.

“She was a thoughtful woman so full of grace. She laughed easily and always cared deeply about her students and young faculty,” Harmer-Beem said.

Roberts served as a Maine representative to the American Dental Hygienists’ Association and the American Dental Education Association, which brought Westbrook College into national conversations. She was also president of the Alpha Beta Chapter of Sigma Phi Alpha National Dental Hygiene Honor Society. Under her leadership, Westbrook College student board scores soared, and dental hygiene student numbers grew.

Roberts did all of this with a sense of humor and a demonstrable love of life, Harmer-Beem said.

Westbrook changed Roberts’s life, too. On a trip to Bermuda that she won in a student fundraising raffle, Diane met Gordon Roberts. The two fell in love, were married in Cape Elizabeth in 1982, then moved to Ontario, Canada, where they spent the rest of their lives.



Five Westbrook College dental hygiene (DH) students are inducted into Sigma Phi Alpha, the National Dental Hygiene Honor Society, by DH Faculty and Department Director Diane Curl, in this 1977 black and white Wendell White Studio photograph. The five DH students wear their white uniforms and banded white caps with white nylons and shoes. Each holds a red carnation. Diane Curl wears her white uniform, also, and holds a plaque upon which the five student names are engraved along with previous Westbrook College Sigma Phi Alpha inductees.

REDUCE, REUSE, RESTYLE

by Joel Soloway

Thrifting has become an increasingly popular activity among younger generations — like a modern treasure hunt. Miranda Carrabba (Marine Affairs, '26) and Abby Tasca (Marine Biology, '25) are bringing the trend to UNE.

Although many people thrift to be frugal, Carrabba and Tasca recognize the environmentally friendly impacts a thrift store will also have on the campus community. For them, thrifting represents a counterculture movement highlighting the inequities, injustice, and environmental harm of the “fast fashion” industry, in addition to being an environmentally responsible practice of financial management.

With oversight from the UNE Office of Sustainability, and a select group of undergraduate students, Carrabba and Tasca are set to provide guidance for the thrift store project.

The shop — Surplus with a Purpose, or SWAP — will become a place where anyone in the UNE community can bring used and unwanted items to find a second home. UNE’s SWAP will provide a sustainable alternative to waste incineration. Instead of throwing out copious amounts of waste that are in good — or sometimes new — condition, this initiative will empower students to be environmentally conscious with an alternative approach to decluttering.

The SWAP will be based in Gregory Hall, a small building at the center of UNE’s Biddeford Campus that will receive new life thanks to the project. The shop will accept items like clothing, electronics, décor, school supplies, and small furniture items. Preparations for the new space will take place throughout the 2023 fall semester with plans to open in early 2024.

As a part of UNE’s Eco-Rep program, in which members raise awareness of campus environmental concerns and initiatives, Carrabba has always been skeptical of fast fashion. “I like to thrift a lot of my clothing,” she said. “It’s a really conscious effort that we make as Gen Zers to find ways to eliminate waste and help reduce climate change.”

Tasca is no stranger to secondhand clothing. And as a student employee at UNE North — a center committed to fostering the environmental health of the North Atlantic and Arctic — Tasca saw that the project could lead to making a long-term community impact and eagerly agreed to help with the development of UNE’s SWAP thrift store. “This project is really attainable and something the student body can all get behind,” she said.

Alethea Cariddi, M.S.Ed., associate director of sustainability at UNE, noted that the project falls in line with UNE’s strategic expansion of environmentally sustainable practices, as outlined in its 2017 Climate Action Plan, which addresses best practices for reducing UNE’s carbon emissions, as well as UNE’s strategic plan, Our World, Our Future.

“Sustainability projects like SWAP foster civic agency to support UNE’s goal of achieving climate neutrality,” Cariddi said. “Having a thrift store on campus will help address the predictable and urgent need to sustainably recover waste from the annual ‘move-out’ process.”

It’s common for college campuses to see recycling bins and waste receptacles overflowing when students move out of residence halls at the end of an academic school year. According to Cariddi, there is typically a spike in waste generated by college students during move-in and move-out.

Carrabba is confident that this is something the UNE community and SWAP can address. “Every year, first-year students move in and forget so many things,” she said. “With the campus thrift store, they could just go over and pick up their needed notebooks or dorm essentials.”

It’s a really conscious effort that we make as Gen Zers to find ways to eliminate waste and help reduce climate change. — Miranda Carrabba

The SWAP team, which has grown to nine UNE students participating at the grassroots level, was recently awarded the 2023 Millennium Fellowship, a campus leadership development program organized by the United Nations Academic Impact and the Millennium Campus Network. The fellowship includes a semester-long curriculum focused on enacting social change through the lens of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, accompanied by a campus sustainability project of their choosing.

While the Sustainability Office has ideas about how the SWAP will function, Cariddi notes that there will be a lot of learning and stakeholder engagement that goes into the campus thrift store development. “The Millennium Fellows have a big task ahead of them to figure out logistics and best practices that will work for the whole community,” she said.

Tasca envisions the SWAP Shop as a staple resource on UNE’s Biddeford Campus. If she were to come back to campus in five years and ask current students if they know about the SWAP, she expects “a lot of them to roll their eyes and say, ‘Of course we do,’ because it was the first place they checked out when moving in freshman year.” ■





INNOVATION FOR A HEALTHIER PLANET

Office of Communications

716 Stevens Avenue, Portland, ME 04103, U.S.A.

follow us     

