

**State of the University
February 9, 2021**

I am grateful to have this opportunity to speak with each of you—indeed, with the entire UNH community—about the state of the university. Over the past year our institution has been tested in ways that were almost unimaginable. I'll talk with you today about these challenges, and more importantly the resilience, creativity, community spirit and genuine decency that you and your fellow Wildcats have shown in response.

We will have about thirty minutes for Q&A at the end of the talk. If you have a question or comment, please use the Q&A button on your screen. We will address as many as we can.

Just over a year ago, I stood before you in the Hamel Rec Center and discussed the real progress we had made on our four strategic priorities, and our plans for doing even more in the upcoming year. We discussed enhancing student success, expanding academic excellence, embracing New Hampshire, and building financial strength. I told you that we had a lot to be proud of and that our momentum was building. We had no idea that this would be the last opportunity I would have for more than a year to speak with you in person.

In March it became frighteningly clear that the coronavirus represented a significant threat to health and even to life in New Hampshire, the United States, and around the world. Like most colleges and universities, we transitioned UNH in a matter of weeks to an on-line mode of teaching and learning. We suspended most research activities and asked faculty and staff to work from home whenever possible. Our community responded admirably to this challenge, and while there were certainly bumps along the way, we were able to complete the Spring Semester successfully.

Hundreds of people then spent the Summer thinking through how we would operate in Fall 2020, and came up with a plan that involved both in-person and online teaching and learning, a gradual resumption of our research activities, and elaborate protocols to keep our community safe. At the end of this talk we will have an opportunity to see and appreciate some of the tireless work of our community members. I would like to say thank you again to everyone who was involved in this effort.

In the very midst of this planning, we learned of the tragic death of George Floyd in Minneapolis. The video of a police officer slowly, methodically, and publicly killing George Floyd sickened many Americans and galvanized our nation to confront racism in a way that I have not seen in my lifetime. UNH has been deeply involved in this response, starting with a student-led demonstration featuring *cris de coeur*, stirring testimonies from several impassioned and eloquent members of our community. I have never been prouder of our students than I was that day.

The university's leadership team also responded by pledging to take action to make UNH a more diverse and inclusive institution, and we spent a great deal of the summer listening, reading, and making commitments to do just that. In a few minutes we'll talk about those plans and some initial successes to which they have led.

Fall 2020 was an unprecedented experience for all of us. We hoped that our planning would pay off, and that we would be able to provide a residential experience with mostly in-person courses for twelve weeks, from September to November. And, through the diligent efforts of faculty, staff, and students, we were indeed able to do so.

In preparation for Fall, several hundred intrepid faculty participated in courses to develop their skills for teaching in an online or hybrid mode. The university performed over 300,000 COVID tests to safeguard the health of our community. (Our noses may never be the same!) UNH Catering team members prepared and delivered over 13,000 meals to students who were in isolation or quarantine every day, including Thanksgiving and Christmas Day. Student leaders in our residence halls went to great lengths to protect the health and safety of our students. Our cleaning crews did a marvelous job of keeping our buildings clean and sanitary. And finally, contrary to the expectations of many, virtually every member of our university community—students, faculty, and staff—wore masks in public settings for all twelve weeks. We truly have a lot to be proud of.

Despite our success at UNH, I want to acknowledge that more than four hundred thousand Americans (and two million around the world) have lost their lives in the pandemic, including more than one thousand here in New Hampshire. Some of those were family and friends of members of the UNH community. Our hearts go out to each of you who lost a loved one.

So now we begin the Spring 2021 Semester with an even more daunting task. Cases of the virus increased dramatically as Winter began, new variants of the virus are emerging, and the vaccine is still months away for most of us. However, our Fall experience convinced me that we can successfully face this together, using the tried-and-true approaches we developed last semester, along with some new ideas that our ingenious faculty and staff have developed, in many cases in partnership with students. I ask for your continued commitment, diligence, and patience as we face these next few months, which will be with any luck the last semester for any of us that will be shaped by a pandemic.

Our wish is not merely to *survive* this crucible, but to find ways to move the university forward, so that we are a stronger and more vibrant institution after COVID than we were before. In that spirit let me talk more about our strategic priorities, which are aimed at just that outcome.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion are central to who and what we are—and what we want to be—as an institution. The President's Leadership Council has decided to incorporate our DEI



initiatives into our strategic priorities framework, rather than treating them as separate activities. We invite you to learn more about our newly-refreshed strategic priorities by visiting this website (unh.edu/future).

But before we discuss our strategic priorities, I want to spend a few minutes discussing the values of UNH in the context of the political situation in our nation. This is an expansion of my January statement and my brief remarks at the Town Hall.

First, as a public university we are committed to the right to free speech, as provided by the First Amendment to the Constitution. We have gone to great lengths to promote free speech, including in some cases speech that was offensive to members of our community. Free speech means that we don't get to choose who speaks or what they say, with very few exceptions such as the incitement of violence. We *can* and *do* regulate the time, place and manner of speech, to ensure that we can always fulfill our educational mission.

Second, the university is not beholden to any political party. We have people on campus who identify as Democrats, Libertarians, and Republicans, and probably many others. None of these is the official party of the university, period.

Third, while a university is a place of free exchange of ideas, it is also a place where we seek the truth, and is the repository of methods for doing so. *Free speech does not mean that one's thoughts and ideas will go unchallenged*; in fact, it is the exact opposite. Asserting that something is true without evidence is simply not how we operate in an academic setting. We use facts, logic, and analysis to reach conclusions, and expect others to do so as well. This is true in the research laboratory, and in the classroom. This is not a partisan statement. It applies across the political spectrum, and encapsulates who we are and what we stand for as an academic institution.

Fourth, we participate in and respect democracy. New Hampshire's citizens are widely known for the unique role we play in the democratic process with our First in the Nation Primary. Democracy is how we elect the leaders who make our laws. We do not countenance those who interfere with the workings of our democratic process.

Finally, I believe that we should hold ourselves to a standard of civility. Free speech and rigorous examination of views work much better when we are simply polite and respectfully listen to one another. Shouting and rudeness have rarely been known to change anyone's mind about anything.

In the coming months, we will create opportunities for dialogue about these values, and what they mean for UNH. You will be invited to participate in these opportunities, and we will provide more detail soon. As Provost Jones mentioned in his recent message, there will be a convocation on these topics for faculty, staff, and students, on February 19th, from 2:10 to 3:10 pm.



You may remember that our overall goal is to be among the top 25 public universities on a set of metrics that make sense for us. We are already in the top 25 on several of them, and believe that the strategies and initiatives we are about to discuss will continue to move us in the right direction.

Our first strategic priority is to **enhance student success and well-being**. Our aspiration is *to ensure that all students graduate on time and are engaged and ethical global citizens. They will be prepared to thrive in their first jobs and throughout their careers. UNH will become a national leader in designing the educational experience from the first year to graduation.*

One of our most important student success initiatives is to enhance our already-strong results for student retention. Our graduation rates are already among the top 50 public universities, and are steadily improving. I have asked **Provost Wayne Jones** to discuss the university's work in this area, and our initial results.

Thank you, President Dean, and thank you to all of our attendees that are joining us today. I am delighted to speak to you about our efforts in Student Success and well-being. This truly sits at the center of everything that we do at UNH. Student Success is Job One. And it is our tradition of an uncommon commitment to that student success that originally drew me to UNH and it is the key to our future.

The leading initiative in academic affairs has been around student retention since I became provost. Student retention efforts have been multi-faceted and grew from four teams of faculty, staff, and students looking at everything from orientation to the sophomore year and beyond. We have been very fortunate in the past year to bring two new senior leaders to these efforts with Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs Kate Ziemer and Senior Vice Provost for Student Life Ken Holmes. Provosts Faculty Fellow Nicky Gullace, along with several groups of talented faculty, staff and students, have initiated several new initiatives:

Our Orientation Program and wildcat days was completely revamped including being placed under new leadership. This effort not only created a more engaged experience, but in response to COVID was able to pivot on-line for summer/fall 2020. This team, working with Res Life and Student Housing, also developed the COVID move in process. Ultimately, this effort improved the yield of deposited students, decreased summer melt, and more smoothly engaged them with professional advisors and faculty. We also expanded the use of the linked-up app which started in Paul College and has now been extended university wide.



Another retention effort that has yielded great success has been our early warning system. During our Early Alerts Pilot program and with the help of faculty across the colleges, personal messages were sent to hundreds of students in the 5th week of the semester. Follow up communications and appointments helped those students know that they had an issue and directed them to support mechanisms to help them. UNH Manchester has developed a similar approach where all students are assigned a professional advisor to assist with their transition and first year success efforts. The Early Alerts program has now been approved by Faculty Senate and will be implemented for all freshman and transfer students this semester.

It is wonderful that COVID did not stop these important initiatives. In fact, I'm happy to report that while retention took a hit nationwide, we saw a modest increase in our retention rate from 85.7 to 86.4. I would submit however, that we have far to go. We believe that we should be above 90%, competitive with the best public universities in the country. In fact, in Durham this year, we hit 90% for in-state students. This goal is achievable if we remain focused.

I also have to highlight the success of our TRIO Scholars programs which added to the early warning system their own engaged peer-to-peer mentoring process with exceptional success including a 97% average retention rate for FY20. An impressive result for our first gen, low income, and students with disabilities and a true testament to our commitment that we want all students to succeed at UNH.

Finally, we should remember that our key measure of success is the success of our students graduating and achieving life-long success. Two key programs saw success this year in supporting our students. First CaPS has been continuing to partner with industry, faculty, and non-profit sectors to create opportunities for students to do internships before graduation. In 2020, 81% of graduating seniors had completed at least one internship while at UNH. This is up 3% from last year. At the graduate level, our writing academies which help graduate students with mentoring, focused time, and peer-to-peer support in the writing process has nearly doubled its participation with over 80 students participating in January 2021 alone.

While COVID may have had a dramatic impact on graduates nationwide, these programs have helped UNH students see success. Last May 91% of undergraduates and 94% of graduate students successfully achieved a post-graduate appointment within 3 months of graduation. A stand out in the graduate student space this year was our Law School which has been ranked top 10 of all Law schools for successful placement of their graduates.



Moving to student well-being, we learned by listening to members of the UNH community that our response to incidents of bias or racism has been inadequate, and we need to do much better. I have personally spoken to several members of the community who feel that the university failed them when they needed us most. I have asked Chief Diversity Officer **Nadine Petty** to discuss two important changes we are making to enhance our ability to respond effectively when people report that they have been the victims of bias or racism.

Thank you, President Dean.

We are making changes to our bias reporting system in direct response to the stated needs of UNH community members to do better, particularly as it relates to how we handle reported incidences of racism via our current bias reporting system.

First, the Affirmative Action and Equity Office has been working tirelessly to replace ReportIt, our current reporting system, with EthicsPoint. EthicsPoint will improve our bias reporting process by making it more comprehensive and efficient for users. It also will make the management process less time consuming.

EthicsPoint comes with an improved Incident Report Form designed to collect tailored information necessary for state and federal regulations as well as the internal needs of UNH and its community members. Many of you listening today have expressed concerns regarding flawed communication with impacted parties after racism or bias is reported. The new Incident Report Form addresses these concerns because it has a mechanism intended to improve follow-up with impacted parties, including those who report anonymously. It also can be used by mandatory reporters to report sexual harassment and assault.

The full rollout of EthicsPoint and more detailed communication to the UNH community will be provided by Communications and Public Affairs and the Affirmative Action and Equity Office later this month.

The second change being made in direct response to incidents of bias and racism involves the creation of a new position with a reporting line to the Office of Community, Equity, and Diversity. This position, titled Bias Response and Support Coordinator, will address concerns related to the experiences of community members and speaks to what has been identified as a gap in care and understanding for many, especially students who engage in the bias reporting process. The Bias Response and Support Coordinator will provide education and serve as a conduit between reporting parties and the offices assigned to manage their cases. The position will work closely in collaboration with The Beauregard Center, Residential Life, Community Standards, and the Affirmative Action and Equity Office along with relevant offices at the Law School and Manchester. I'm happy to report the position posting is currently live with an anticipated start date in July of this year.



Back to you President Dean.

Before we leave student success and well-being, two final points. First, I want to let you know how much graduating students are looking forward to our commencement ceremonies in May. We have made elaborate plans to be able to hold the ceremonies outside in Wildcat Stadium. Because we will have the classes of both 2020 and 2021, we will be holding several ceremonies, and we are in desperate need of volunteers to help. If you are tentatively interested, please visit unh.edu/commencement to register. Thanks for considering this!

Finally, last year we created the Student Emergency Financial Assistance fund. Over 2,200 faculty, staff, alumni, parents, students, and friends have donated more than \$400,000 since the start of the pandemic in support of this fund, including a \$50,000 endowment gift. With these funds UNH has provided critical support to more than 500 students, much of which has been reimbursed via the CARES Act, enabling us to support future student emergency needs as they arise.

Our next strategic priority is to **expand academic and research excellence**. Our aspiration is *for UNH to attract increasingly strong and diverse students and faculty from across the country and abroad. The university will be known and respected for the high caliber of teaching, research and advising in its academic programs. Its distinguished research, scholarship and doctoral education will be recognized worldwide, including its contributions to global sustainability challenges.*

Regarding the recruitment of strong and diverse students, we have an exciting announcement about funding for a new scholarship program. I have asked **Pelema Ellis**, Vice Provost of Enrollment Management, to tell you about this.

Thank you, President Dean.

As we all know, UNH is New Hampshire's flagship public research university, and with that privilege, we are fortunate to spend our time and effort serving the Granite State. We operationalize this commitment to New Hampshire with signature initiatives like the Granite Guarantee, which enhances college affordability for pell-eligible students.

Our ability to attract students to UNH is a community effort, and we are fortunate to have such amazing faculty and staff, who offer unrivaled curricular and co-curricular experiences for our students. We do our best in Enrollment Management to convey your best efforts to thousands of prospective undergraduate students and families who are considering UNH. Even with these on campus achievements, we know that financial aid continues to be an important facet of student recruitment and success. Thankfully, President Dean and senior campus leadership understand the challenges



and opportunities associated with the unique nature of our regional demographics. UNH is steadfast in its pursuit to enroll a diverse undergraduate student body, and through the generosity of philanthropy, we are excited to announce progress towards this goal.

To date, UNH has commitments for \$2 million dollars of endowed scholarships to attract outstanding undergraduate students to our community. For the upcoming fall 2021, we will launch two new scholarship opportunities for entering first-year undergraduate students at UNH. These two awards will provide enhanced funding for both NH residents and non-resident domestic students.

More details of these financial aid offerings will be announced in the coming days, and a hearty thank you goes out to Debbie Dutton, the Advancement team, Nadine Petty, and our entire campus community for engaging our donors and supporting this initiative. We anticipate this initial fundraising effort will facilitate future contributions to sustain UNH's overall commitment to a more diverse student body.

I also want to celebrate the growth in our graduate programs, and have asked **Cari Moorhead**, Dean of the Graduate School, to discuss this with you.

Continued graduate program growth is an important strategic priority for the university. Throughout the past 5 years, we have grown enrollments on each of our graduate campuses: Durham, Manchester, On-Line and the Law School in Concord, achieving all-time highs in each. The Graduate School prioritizes diversity and inclusion efforts to create an inclusive and equitable learning community for all. We welcome students from 57 countries and 47 states, including our largest multicultural population ever.

I'll now share some details of our growth with the help of the graph on your screen. Starting with research, our Ph.D. programs represented by the white line are at an all-time high, particularly in STEM programs. Our standing as a land, sea and space grant university is reflected in our world class research, from mapping the depths of the ocean to revealing the mysteries of deep space, and you have already heard about our strength in Biotechnology and its impact.

UNH's primary purpose is learning: students collaborating with faculty in teaching, research, creative expression and service. Our students take those experiences and enhance their communities here in NH and beyond. Students in the Doctorate in Nursing Practice, an online Doctoral Program in the College of Health and Human Services, are working professionals who are using what they learn in their program directly in their work to improve overall patient health outcomes.



Masters and Certificates programs are also at record high enrollments. Congratulations to Dean Carpenter and the faculty and staff at Franklin Pierce UNH Law, in Concord. Represented by the orange blocks on graph, they have had over a 70% increase in the past five years and 30% just in the last year due to their innovative new programs such as the hybrid JD, which makes a top legal education in IP accessible to working professionals across the country.

We are seeing similar growth at UNHM where Dean Decelle and the team there have launched several new graduate programs, such as the Cybersecurity Engineering, Biotechnology, Cybersecurity Policy & Risk Management, National Security Intelligence, and Global Conflict & Human Security which, collectively, have grown nearly 300% in the last five years. In the humanities, the MFA in the Department of English was recently named by Electric Literature one of ten MFA programs for the budget-Conscious. Congratulations to Dean Dillon and the faculty and staff of COLA.

To fulfill our mission of enhancing the pool of people who can access educational experiences to improve their lives and the lives of those around them, the Graduate School is strengthening educational pathways. For example, UNH undergraduate students can save both time and money by enrolling in one of our roughly 80 accelerated masters programs offered. In collaboration with Cooperative Extension, we continue to support our workforce, particularly in NH, through career development from digital badges to degree programs. We recognize how important flexibility is to working professionals. Our faculty and staff are meeting those needs through a growing number of academically strong on-line programs. Enrollments, represented by the black line, have grown almost 120%. In recognition of its strength, the Paul College Online MBA was recently ranked #40 in the US news report.

Thanks to all in our graduate community for your outstanding support of graduate education.

I also want to celebrate the success that UNH has enjoyed in research, so I will turn again to [Provost Wayne Jones](#).

Academic excellence can take many forms, but the research, scholarship, and creative works of our faculty are the centerpiece of this distinction. We recognize this in many ways, including the numerous faculty awards and fellows that have been designated in the past year. Just recently, researchers at Stanford did an unbiased assessment of scholarly output by constructing a set of nuanced metrics around publications and



citations. We were delighted to see 46 UNH faculty, current and emeritus, were identified as being in the top 2% of their discipline.

A center piece of our community recognition of faculty is at our own Faculty Excellence Awards dinner, cancelled this year due to COVID. I would like to take this moment to recognize all of the award winners shown on the screen. You will learn more about them over the spring semester through highlights on the university web page. We will also be recognizing them at commencement in May.

We have seen a number of our programs also achieve success with top rankings in their fields. I continue to be impressed with the excellence of many of our programs that contribute to our top 5 ranking in Sustainability. These types of success are something we have to leverage more in this challenging higher education market.

Another measure of research success is often reflected in grant funding. In the past year, in spite of the pandemic, research awards increased by \$17.2M and expenditures increased by \$12.3M including major awards in Ocean Mapping, Acoustics, Space Science, and Childhood Development.

Of course our ability to attract and retain faculty and the excellent students they work with hinges on our facilities. With the outstanding support of the state of NH and key donors, our facilities team has been able to advance construction of the new Biological Sciences Initiative and Spaulding hall. This new facility will support core research and teaching in life sciences, health sciences, and, through the vivaria, psychology. We also received one-time support from the state for the new Health Sciences Initiative which is constructing a state-of-the-art nursing simulation center and much needed growth space for HHS on campus.

Finally, I would like to update you on the Post-doctoral Diversity and Innovation Scholars program announced last year. This effort is designed to engage recent PhD recipients from diverse background in a post-doctoral program that includes mentoring, professional development, and resources to initiate their own independent scholarship. This year we welcomed our second cohort including 5 scholars and at this time we have identified and are making offers to 5 more to join us in the fall. The goal is to help bring more diverse candidates to future faculty hiring pools, which along with the efforts noted by Nadine earlier, will further aid our recruitment and retention efforts.

We also made a commitment in our strategic plan to **embrace New Hampshire**. We said that



UNH will work hard to make everyone in New Hampshire incredibly proud of their flagship public university. Students will grow up wanting to come to UNH, and it will be the first choice for the best and brightest students from New Hampshire and around the world. UNH will build collaborations that support New Hampshire's economy and quality of life, sustainability and resilience and will be a trusted, valuable and consistent partner.

One of the ways in which we have built a strong partnership with the state of New Hampshire is in the area of COVID testing. I have asked **Marian McCord**, Senior Vice Provost for Research, Economic Engagement and Outreach to say a few words about how we are supporting the citizens of New Hampshire with our testing program.

Thanks, President Dean.

Not long after the pandemic began almost a year ago it became apparent to senior leadership that if we were going to re-open for in-person learning, we would need access to frequent and reliable testing, and the best way to guarantee that was to create our own testing labs.

The plan was challenging but straightforward. We needed to have labs in Durham and Manchester ready to perform ongoing regular testing across all three campuses to keep the transmission rate in check. This meant that essentially starting from scratch, we needed to be open and ready to perform about 25,000 tests per week in about 100 days.

Originally, we planned for only enough testing capacity to meet the needs of the university's three campuses, but soon realized an expansion would build capacity for the entire university system, as well as backup capacity for our own population. Though the testing road had some bumps, we were thrilled that the labs in Manchester and Durham remained fully operational throughout the semester, quickly identifying asymptomatic individuals and keeping the infection rate low most of the semester. Even with promising emerging data about vaccines, it became clear that COVID wasn't going away and there would be a need for continued testing in the spring, so UNH committed to doubling its testing capacity by the end of February.

Just before Thanksgiving, positivity rates in the state grew significantly, and the Department of Health and Human Services identified the need for routine testing of staff in long term care facilities, jails and shelters. With our move to remote instruction, we were able to redirect existing capacity to help the state meet that need. We're now providing testing for many of our state's most vulnerable populations and will use any extra capacity—after meeting the needs of our own community—to provide testing for other essential industries.



We continue to plan for the future. When Governor Sununu announced a new funding allocation for our lab infrastructure we were able to purchase a genomic sequencer that will allow us to detect variants of the virus. As you probably know, scientists and public health officials from around the world have recently identified several new fast-spreading variants, and findings suggest that variants may diminish the effectiveness of the vaccines. Public health experts are calling for widespread genomic surveillance, and UNH is already collaborating with the state to develop and implement a surveillance plan that will provide vital information to stem the spread of the virus. We are well-positioned to help answer critical scientific questions such as: what does COVID transmission look like pre- and post-vaccination and can people transmit COVID if they've been exposed even after vaccination.

I'm proud that UNH has built arguably the finest and most successful COVID testing program in U.S. higher education. It has brought out the best in us and proved, yet again, the value that public higher education brings to its community and region.

So many UNH faculty and staff at all three campuses have contributed to this effort. Special thanks to Kelley Thomas, Rick Cote, Mike Decelle, Kristen Johnson, Marc Sedam, Mike Ferrara, Peter Degnan, Chris Clement and Paul Dean for their leadership, to Patrick Messer and research computing, Jeff Lapak and the IOL staff, Keli Poirier, UPD, Melissa McGee, Brad Manning, and most importantly, to the dedicated lab staff and student workers who are on the front lines every day so the rest of us can be safe.

Speaking of thanks, I would also like to thank Chief Operating Officer Chris Clement, Chief of Police Paul Dean, Captain Lee, and Ron O'Keefe, Alumni Relations Officer Megan Brunelle, and Catering Services Director Dorrie McClintock and their teams for facilitating the meetings of the New Hampshire House and Senate over the past few months. Here is the text of an email we received after the last meeting from Terry Pfaff, the Chief Operating Officer of the General Court of New Hampshire. He wrote:

We continue to be in awe of the team you have built at UNH. You should be proud of your fabulous staff!!

Your team has an infectious "can do" attitude to solving any issue that arises. We're very proud to be associated with the University.

UNH is a true NH gem. Thank you!!

I would like to ask **Ken LaValley**, Vice Provost for University Outreach and Engagement, to talk about some of the other ways in which we are embracing New Hampshire.

UNH Outreach and Engagement programs have continued to forge and strengthen partnerships across the state in alignment with the University's strategic priority to



“Embrace New Hampshire.” There are many examples, and the following are just a few highlights.

To strengthen relationships with NH schools and administrators. A K-12 Engagement Council was formed. The group focuses on enhancing the University’s partnerships with K-12 educators, high schools, families and communities. The 30 members of this council represent a wide cross-section of University faculty and staff.

They are working on the creation of an online engagement hub, development of a tool kit for faculty and staff who perform outreach activities and coordinated learning pathways for younger students through engagement opportunities and for teachers through professional development.

UNH has also become a member of the NH Superintendents Association which will provide new opportunities to engage with SAU leaders, high school teachers and school counselors.

We have come together to meet the needs of NH residents during the pandemic. For example, UNH’s Institute for Health Policy and Practice hosts new resources to help stakeholders understand changes to practice and payment systems during the COVID-19 pandemic.

To address widespread food insecurity, Extension created the digital NH Food Access Map. This enables organizations to effectively offer their services with the public. This resource is in partnership with food pantries, school systems, N.H. Department of Health & Human Services, N.H. Department of Education, N.H. Food Bank and N.H. Hunger Solutions. NH Sea Grant has helped seafood producers move to direct sales by creating the online Seafood Finder Map.

Finally, our university outreach programs have focused efforts on helping businesses overcome the challenges of the pandemic. For example, UNH Extension developed a program with the N.H. Dept. of Agriculture to expend \$10 million CARES Act funds for farms hurt by the pandemic.

Partnering with the New Hampshire Community Development Finance Authority and the N.H. Municipal Association, Extension assessed the short- and medium-term needs resulting from the pandemic, particularly for local business. The assessment led to technical assistance programs for communities and businesses, conducted in partnership with the N.H. Small Business Development Center, N.H. Business and Economic Affairs and area chambers of commerce.

Our fourth and final strategic priority is to **Build Financial Strength**. Our aspiration is to be a national leader in cost management, sustainable investing and aligning our budget and



resources with our strategic priorities. UNH will become more accessible and affordable for students by diversifying revenue sources and managing resource use expenses. UNH will meet the full range of student needs by providing world-class faculty, facilities and organization.

As you know, we committed to do a deep dive on our finances to build financial strength, and we utilized the services of Huron Consulting to help us. This effort was a focus of my presentation to you a year ago. Teams of people across the university have examined our costs in a number of areas relative to similar universities. Based on these efforts, we have reduced our costs considerably in areas as diverse as Information Technology, Fleet Services, and the Library.

Each of these areas has done excellent work designing for the future—examining how higher education’s financial challenges intersect with changes in their own fields, and re-envisioning how to efficiently provide the services most critical to the campus.

For example, the team in the Library examined the foundational shifts in scholarly communications, moving UNH from reliance on “big deal” journal packages to more economical ways of providing articles to faculty and students, and supporting sustainable, open access publishing.

We are continuing to examine other areas of the university, including Athletics, which has had a task force working on reducing expenses for several months. We are confident that we will find opportunities there as well.

One of the biggest projects we have taken on is in Financial Services. We originally committed to create a new organization in the area of the Chief Financial Officer. Once the other institutions in the University System and the Board of Trustees saw what we were doing, the project was enlarged to become system wide. We have created a new structure for our financial organization and are currently matching people to positions. We believe that this project alone could save us up to \$3 million.

Another major initiative we undertook to build financial strength was the COVID Enhanced Retirement Program, or CERP. This initiative provided funding for early retirement for faculty and staff who met the criteria. We had 58 faculty and 233 staff take advantage of this opportunity. While we will simply refill some of these jobs, we will attempt to reassess and reorganize the work so that we can perform the university’s vital functions with fewer people. Of course, losing this many people within a few months leads to concerns about the experience and know-how they will take with them. To be precise, the people who are leaving us represent in total 7,700 years of service. We are working hard to capture as much of this as possible before people leave. This initiative will allow us to redeploy resources to areas where we have been understaffed, for example in certain academic areas.



I would now like to take a few minutes to acknowledge the contributions of our colleagues who will be leaving us via the CERP with this brief video.

Finally, we committed to initiating a new capital campaign as part of our strategic plan, a crucially important component of building financial strength. Although we are still in the early stages of that campaign, we set a fundraising goal for this year of \$40 million, a big jump from last year's goal of \$30 million. We are currently on track to meet that goal. I would like to give a shoutout to the development team led by Debbie Dutton and Troy Finn for all of their successes, which facilitate the teaching, research and service mission we all pursue. Keep up the good work!

Where does all of this leave us in terms of our goal to Build Financial Strength? Of course, the pandemic has caused significant pain to the university, including the costs of testing and lost revenue due to students leaving early last Spring and some staying home this past Fall. But we have made progress as well. An analysis done over the summer estimated that we would need to save approximately \$40 million by Fiscal Year 2023 in order to achieve financial sustainability. It looks as if we are roughly on track to do this. Our success will depend on our ability to reorganize our work based on the Huron projects and our success with CERP, as well as our ability to maintain and strategically grow enrollment during this complicated time. Provost Wayne Jones and Chief Operating Officer Chris Clement are visiting with each area of the university to explain our financial status in more detail.

At this point my colleagues and I are happy to take questions from you, using the Q&A feature on your screen. We are happy that Tom Haines, Associate Professor of English, has agreed to moderate the Q&A. Thanks, Tom! What is our first question?

Before we conclude, I want to celebrate all the members of our community who have come together to keep the university operating safely and moving forward over the past year. We have created a slide show of some of these individuals, who have inspired me with their passion, their commitment to service, and their creativity in finding solutions to really challenging problems. If you recognize someone in the slideshow, please reach out to thank them. You have heard me say many times that our response to this crisis has shown me just how special this community is. As always, I am proud to serve you as president of UNH. Thank you.

