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UNH President Joan Leitzel to Receive 2002 Pettee Medal

By [Maggie Paine](#)
UNH Alumni Association
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March 28, 2002

DURHAM -- The University of New Hampshire Alumni Association today announced that Joan R. Leitzel, president of the University of New Hampshire, is a recipient of the 2002 Charles Holmes Pettee Medal. The award is the Alumni Association's highest honor, given in recognition of outstanding accomplishment and distinguished service to the state, the nation or the world.

"We're delighted to recognize Dr. Leitzel's accomplishments in the state of New Hampshire and her contributions to higher education nationally," said Karen Johnson '84, president of the Alumni Association. "No one is more deserving of this honor. Her leadership has catapulted UNH into the upper echelon of public research institutions in the country."

"She has provided tremendous leadership internally at UNH, where she has developed wonderful relationships with faculty, staff and students," added John Lynch, chair of the University System of New Hampshire Board of Trustees. "And she has also provided real leadership for public higher education in the state of New Hampshire, which is something we needed very much."

Leitzel will receive the Pettee Medal at a ceremony April 19, at 3 p.m., in the Whittemore Center on the Durham campus. The award was established in 1940 to recognize individuals who exhibit the devotion to service reflected in the life of the late Dean Pettee, who served as a professor and dean at UNH for 62 years until his death in 1938. The public is invited to attend the award ceremony. Reservations should be made by April 10, by calling 862-2040 or sending an e-mail message to: pettee.medal@unh.edu.

Previous Pettee Medal recipients include former U.S. Senator Warren Rudman, astronaut Alan Shepard, television producer Marcy Carsey and sociologist Murray Straus. The 2001 recipient, jazz legend Clark Terry, was given his award at a ceremony on March 25, timed to coincide with the Clark Terry Jazz Festival.

In her six years as UNH president, Leitzel has initiated changes to strengthen the University's financial condition, improve the physical plant, enhance academic programs and expand research opportunities. Significant accomplishments during her tenure include the following:

- The most successful and ambitious fund-raising program the University has ever undertaken. Originally planned as a five-year campaign, it is nearing its goal of \$100 million two years ahead of schedule. The campaign has strengthened key academic programs, brought state-of-art technology to classrooms and the library, created new opportunities for students and boosted UNH's endowment.
- A new campus for UNH-Manchester. Leitzel was instrumental in creating an urban campus at an historic mill complex in the heart of New Hampshire's largest city. She encouraged that campus to develop programs to meet the specific needs of the Manchester community -- programs in communication arts, engineering technology and business, as well as the Center for Professional Graduate Education at Manchester, which enables working professionals to earn master's degrees in business, public administration, social work, education and engineering.
- A complete overhaul of the way the university conducts its business. UNH consolidated its business affairs into 20 centers, improving services and saving more than \$1 million. In addition, under Leitzel's management, six auxiliary operations that were operating at a deficit, including the New England Center and intercollegiate athletics, balanced their budgets.
- Important new campus facilities. Several outdated buildings were renovated or are slated for renovation in the coming year, including

Dimond Library, Pettee Hall, Murkland Hall, Kingsbury Hall and Congreve Hall. The Environmental Technology Building opened last year, and construction is under way on a new dormitory and dining hall. The university acquired the Coast Guard facility in New Castle, N.H., and secured federal funding for a marine sciences laboratory on the site.

- A dramatic increase in research funding. Funding from government, foundations and industry for competitive research proposals nearly doubled during Leitzel's tenure, jumping from \$43.1 million in fiscal 1996 to \$81.9 million in fiscal 2001. The university is on track to meet or exceed that total in this fiscal year.
- A more diverse student body. Leitzel's commitment to making the university more diverse has prompted a slow but steady increase in minority enrollment at the undergraduate and graduate levels over the past six years.
- A major expansion of graduate programs. Eight new master's programs have been created in the fields of college teaching, liberal studies, accounting, fine arts, environmental education, materials science, public health and management of technology. The university is also now offering doctoral programs in natural resources and earth systems, ocean engineering and materials science. Ö
- A new academic plan for UNH. Leitzel was instrumental in focusing planning and development at UNH on several key goals: improving the undergraduate experience; strengthening selected programs of distinction; and connecting scholarship and research to the needs of New Hampshire residents.

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