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## Noted UNH Alumna Funds Institute for Effective Families and Communities

By [Sarah Aldag](#)  
*University Relations and UNH Foundation*

May 7, 2002

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DURHAM, N.H. -- University of New Hampshire alumna Marcy Peterson Carsey, a 1966 cum laude graduate in English literature and the producer of such television classics as *The Cosby Show*, *Roseanne* and *3rd Rock from the Sun*, has made a \$7.5 million gift to the university. The gift establishes the Carsey Institute for Effective Families and Communities, created to address the new reality of families and women, work and communities in the 21st century.

The institute will link the university's centers that are already engaged in nationally and internationally recognized research to form a premier institute devoted to the study of family, psychology and health care issues.

"We are extremely grateful to Marcy Carsey," said UNH President Joan Leitzel, on announcing the gift. "We now have the opportunity to build on our strengths in the social, behavioral and health sciences and to provide the newest thinking on the full range of subjects that affect our families and communities."

UNH centers involved in the new project are: the Family Research Laboratory, Crimes Against Children Research Center, the Child Study and Development Center, the Institute on Disability, the Department of Health Policy and Management, the Marriage and Family Therapy Program, Justice Works, the Survey Center and Cooperative Extension.

As a young UNH graduate, Carsey, a Weymouth, Mass. native, began her show business career as a tour guide for NBC, and soon advanced to a position as production assistant on *The Tonight Show*. After marrying John Carsey in 1969, she moved to Hollywood. She formed

the Carsey-Werner Company with business partner Tom Werner in 1981. Carsey-Werner has had a string of hits since its first, *The Cosby Show*, in 1984. During the 1988-89 season, the company became the first independent or studio to sweep the top three rankings with *The Cosby Show* at number one, *Roseanne* at number two, and *A Different World* at number three. Since then, Carsey-Werner has produced many successful comedies, including *Grace Under Fire*, *Cybill*, *That '70s Show* and *Cosby*. She is a founder of Oxygen Media, an integrated media company established in 1998 to serve women through entertainment and information.

"Every program must be worthy of its airtime," says Carsey. "That means bringing together the finest writers, actors, producers and directors, and allowing those talented people to grow and flourish. We can accomplish great things with this institute at the University of New Hampshire using the same strategy. By integrating the university's best resources, people and programs, we will extend the benefits of the work done on behalf of children and families well beyond our current borders." "Solving the complexity of issues facing today's families and communities requires the combined perspectives of many different disciplines," says David Hiley, UNH provost and vice president of academic affairs. "We have outstanding faculty conducting research in such areas as child development, family violence, health policy, disabilities and justice studies. We have excellent educational programs in teaching, community development, nutrition, public health, family therapy, social work and nursing. This new center will enable us to bring these together to provide valuable cross-disciplinary training to our students and important findings to agencies and organizations that work with these populations."

UNH's College of Liberal Arts and School of Health and Human Services will be closely involved in the work of the institute.

"We envision a network of programs that will address critical state and regional needs, while simultaneously providing exciting applied research opportunities to UNH students," Dean of the College of Liberal Arts Marilyn Hoskin says.

James McCarthy, dean of the School of Health and Human Services, adds, "The institute will be a productive collaboration that will attract faculty and students from many departments throughout the university. By drawing on insights and perspectives from many different academic specialties, we will be able to improve the health and well being of people and their communities. The interdisciplinary focus of the institute will be a model for others to emulate."

Carsey is a founding member of the UNH Foundation's Board of Directors and currently serves as co-chair of *The Next Horizon: The Campaign for the University of New Hampshire*, the most ambitious fundraising effort in the university's history. She received an honorary doctorate from UNH in 1988 and was honored with the Alumni Association's highest honor, the Pettee Medal, in 1999. She currently lives in Los Angeles.

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### **Marcy Peterson Carsey**

Marcy Carsey began her show business career as an NBC tour guide, and soon became a production assistant on *The Tonight Show*. Following that, she became a program supervisor at William Esty Advertising. After moving to Los Angeles in 1969, she acted in commercials and worked as a script reader and story analyst.

In 1974 Carsey joined ABC-TV as a general program executive for comedy programming. Two years later she became vice president, prime-time comedy and variety programs, and three years after that, senior vice president of prime-time series. Along the way, Carsey oversaw the shows that put ABC on top of the ratings by the late '70s: *Mork and Mindy*, *Soap*, *Barney Miller*, and *Taxi*, among others.

Carsey went out on her own in 1980 to pursue independent production, and a year later teamed with Tom Werner to form Carsey-Werner. The company now employs more than 100 people.

Carsey has consistently championed the rights of minorities. For six years, Carsey funded a program that brought talented minority high school students to UNH for instruction in music and English. The program was

designed to offer the advantages of the University's strong English and music departments, as well as to enrich the University with the diversity of students enrolling in the program.

Carsey-Werner has won The Emmy, the People's Choice Award, The Golden Globe, The NAACP Image Award, The Humanitas Prize, The Peabody, and humanitarian awards for Carsey and Werner's efforts to produce responsible television. In 1993, Carsey was named one of the top 50 women business owners in the nation. She has helped create opportunities for women in broadcasting and, along with partners Tom Werner and Caryn Mandabach, has joined forces with former Nickelodeon executive Geraldine Laybourne and Oprah Winfrey to create a new venture called Oxygen. This multimedia company fuses a new cable channel with an Internet component, directed to serve women. She received an honorary doctorate from UNH in 1988 and was honored with the Alumni Association's highest honor, the Pettee Medal, in 1999.

In 1996 Carsey, with partner Tom Werner, was inducted into the Hall of Fame of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences, and the Broadcasting and Cable Magazine Hall of Fame. In 1999 they were given the Golden Plate Award from the American Academy of Achievement, placing them in the Museum of the American Dream as two of the 20th century's most extraordinary achievers. In 2000, they shared the Golden Laurel Award from the Producers Guild of America and were inducted into that Hall of Fame. Also in that year, Carsey received the Lucy Award from Women In Film.

Marcy Carsey is a native of Weymouth, Mass. and a 1966 *cum laude* graduate in English literature from the University of New Hampshire.

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**The University of New Hampshire  
Social, behavioral and health science research and  
educational centers**

**The Family Research Laboratory (FRL)** is an independent research unit devoted to the study of family problems. It has established a distinguished

record of research on changes in the family and consequences of both those changes and those in social systems. Themes of domestic violence, single parent family problems, divorce resolution, and parenting practices have produced internationally recognized research as well as training programs for graduate students and post-doctoral fellows. **Co-directors: David Finkelhor, Ph.D. [david.finkelhor@unh.edu](mailto:david.finkelhor@unh.edu) 603 862-2761; Murray A. Straus, Ph.D. [murray.straus@unh.edu](mailto:murray.straus@unh.edu) 603 862-2594.**

Companion to the FRL is the **Crimes Against Children Research Center**. The Crimes Against Children Research Center was created in 1998 at the University of New Hampshire. It grew out of and expands upon the work of the Family Research Laboratory, which has been devoted to the study of family violence and related topics since 1975. Associated with the center is an internationally recognized group of experts who have published numerous books and articles concerning the incidence and impact of violence against children. **Director: David Finkelhor, Ph.D. [david.finkelhor@unh.edu](mailto:david.finkelhor@unh.edu) 603 862-2761.**

**The Child Study and Development Center** is a laboratory school affiliated with the university's Department of Family Studies. A laboratory school is one with multiple missions: not only to provide outstanding care to young children, but to serve as a resource for UNH students and as a setting for research that can have an impact far beyond the center itself. Children attending the center, and the students working at the center, benefit from the highly trained teaching staff and from the family studies faculty. CSDC enrolls more than 100 young children each year, and involves a greater number of students in its work. Research is of fundamental importance at the center. Recent projects have studied the effects of infant childcare on attachment and the development of emergent literacy. The research agenda and capability of the CSDC will be greatly enhanced by the recently announced Samuel Paul Chair in Developmental Psychology. This chair, which will serve jointly between the College of Liberal Arts and the School of Health and Human Services, will allow the university to recruit an outstanding senior faculty member to enhance our research on early

childhood. **Interim Director: Lora James 603 862-2146.**

**The Institute on Disability** was established in 1987 to provide a university-based focus for the improvement of knowledge, policy, and practice related to the lives of persons with disabilities. Its mission is to promote the full inclusion of people with disabilities in their communities. The institute works directly with government agencies at all levels to devise, implement, and evaluate programs for the disabled. It has programs throughout the state, centered in schools, community organizations, and businesses, through which services are evaluated. Students are engaged in both provision of services and training; faculty and staff also work with program development and evaluation. The Institute on Disability is affiliated with the Center of Genetics and Child Development at Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center; and the Institute for Health, Law, and Ethics at the Franklin Pierce Law Center. Together, these organizations compose New Hampshire's University Center of Excellence (UCE) in developmental disabilities. **Director: Jan Nisbet, [jan.nisbet@unh.edu](mailto:jan.nisbet@unh.edu) 603 862-4320.**

**The Department of Health Management and Policy** has provided outstanding training at the undergraduate and graduate level to more than 1,000 students over the past 25 years, students who are now working at all levels in the health care system. The department has developed particularly strong expertise in the broad area of rural health, and more recently in health economics. The health economics focus has been greatly strengthened by the appointment of the first Forrest McKerley Professor of Health Economics, a post shared between the School of Health and Human Services and the Whittemore School of Business and Economics. Related to the department is the **New Hampshire Institute for Health Policy and Practice**, a collaboration between UNH, Dartmouth Medical School, and the New Hampshire Division of Health and Human Services, that provides research and policy expertise to New Hampshire and the region. **Director: Edgar Helms, Jr. [ehelms@cisunix.unh.edu](mailto:ehelms@cisunix.unh.edu) 603 862-5030.**

The Marriage and Family Therapy Program, a part of

the Department of Family Studies, provides assistance to individuals, couples and families experiencing a wide range of personal or relationship problems. The program is committed to a treatment approach in which individual growth and development are best understood and promoted within the context of family and community relationships. Program therapists are advanced graduate students specializing in marital and family therapy. They are mature individuals with diverse life and professional experience. Therapists are supervised by senior staff that are all clinical members and approved supervisors of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT). **Director: Barbara Frankel, Ph.D. 603 862-2138.**

**Justiceworks** is a consortium of academic and applied researchers across New England committed to the development of programs that address socio-legal issues in the region and nation. The consortium has brought together state law enforcement agencies, prison and remediation programs, school security officials, and academic researchers to explore issues of juvenile crime, victim assistance, and coordinated information systems which will allow greater coordination of efforts to reduce crime across geographic and functional areas. **Director: John T. Kirkpatrick, Ph.D. [ted.kirkpatrick@unh.edu](mailto:ted.kirkpatrick@unh.edu) 603 862-1959.**

**The Survey Center** is a full-function facility capable of developing, carrying out and analyzing survey studies across the region. It has an ongoing telephone and on-line capacity to implement studies on behalf of private and public sector clients, and has staff trained in all aspects of analysis and evaluation. The center regularly conducts surveys for state agencies and local governments as well as for private sector clients. **Director: Andrew Smith [andrew.smith@unh.edu](mailto:andrew.smith@unh.edu) 603 862-2226.**

Cooperative Extension at the University of New Hampshire has a long and distinguished history of providing vital services to the state's communities. Although the tradition of cooperative extension programs emerged out of the university's initial focus on agriculture, cooperative extension today includes a wide array of community development activities, including many focused on the needs of families and



youth. **Dean and Director: John E. Pike**  
**[john.pike@unh.edu](mailto:john.pike@unh.edu) 603 862-1520.**

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