

1-8-2013

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University Advancement Communications

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Recommended Citation

Billings, Kim, "UNH Announces The Thomas W. Haas Professorship" (2013). *UNH Today*. 4137.
<https://scholars.unh.edu/news/4137>

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Media Relations

January 08, 2013

UNH Announces The Thomas W. Haas Professorship

DURHAM, N.H. – The University of New Hampshire Foundation has announced a \$1 million gift to the Sustainability Institute that establishes The Thomas W. Haas Professorship in Sustainable Food Systems. The gift from the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation was generated from a donor-advised fund established by Durham philanthropist Tom Haas.

The Haas announcement comes on the heels of recent news that Jo Lamprey made a lead gift to the Sustainability Institute establishing the Josephine A. Lamprey Fellowship in Climate and Sustainability. “Jo told us she was going to reach out to some of her friends and she has,” said Debbie Dutton, president of the UNH Foundation and vice president for advancement. “We’re truly delighted with the momentum their gifts provide to us. Both Jo Lamprey and Tom Haas understand how important philanthropic support is for programs like this.”

“I am proud of our state’s university and its leadership in the nation as an institution committed to sustainability,” said Haas. “For future generations it is important that we embrace the principles of sustainability now. I am pleased to do what I can to move the dialogue and the work forward.”

The focus of the Haas professorship will be on leading Food Solutions New England, a public-private partnership that promotes collective action to achieve a healthy, prosperous, just and sustainable food system in New England. Food Solutions New England is currently providing intellectual leadership to the development of a statewide Sustainable Food System Plan.

“Tom Haas has steadily built a pattern of philanthropy that is always timely and impactful,” said Tom Kelly, UNH’s chief sustainability officer and director of the Sustainability Institute. “His grasp of sustainability and the critical role sustainable food systems play for long-term quality of life is unique and has led to a series of critically important gifts, including the Haas professorship, that will enable scarce faculty resources to focus on long-term network design and planning for our state and regional food systems. This is a great gift not only to those whose work will be enabled, but also for future generations of Granite Staters and New Englanders.”

Haas is well-known as a philanthropist who follows his passion. His projects and commitments vary from combining his love of aviation and the natural world by flying wildlife missions for Lighthawk to ensuring low-income families in the Seacoast can access fresh, local foods at their farmer’s markets. He is a pilot and flight instructor, flying in the Northeast for more than 34 years. He long has been a supporter of UNH, from funding eelgrass research to giving major works of art to the University Museum of Art.

The work of Food Solutions New England (www.foodsolutionsne.org) is part of UNH’s broader sustainability leadership. Sustainability is a core value of UNH, shaping culture, informing behavior, and guiding our work. As a nationally recognized leader, the Sustainability Institute acts as convener,

cultivator and champion of sustainability on campus, in the state and region, and around the world. Learn more at www.sustainableunh.unh.edu.

The University of New Hampshire, founded in 1866, is a world-class public research university with the feel of a New England liberal arts college. A land, sea, and space-grant university, UNH is the state's flagship public institution, enrolling 12,200 undergraduate and 2,300 graduate students.

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