University of New Hampshire

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Sustainability

Changemaker Fellowship: Resilience & Building Community

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2020

Guest blogger & photo credit: Caitlin Durnbaugh, Class of 2021

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In its second year, the

Changemaker Fellowship is a cohort of first-year and transfer students – 42 students strong this year (up from 10 in last year's pilot)! This is a new signature program of the UNH Changemaker Collaborative, a partnership at UNH between the Sustainability Institute, the Paul College of Business & Economics and the Carsey School of Public Policy. The Changemaker Collaborative offers high-impact programs

and events for all students, no matter your major or your interests, to help you graduate with the courage, confidence and skills to create a world where people, planet and economies all thrive.

Fellows are matched with a peer mentor, engage in professional development and sustainability-related learning, attend monthly meetings and have opportunities to participate in experiential programs through the Changemaker Collaborative.

2020 is no stranger to unconventional beginnings and the Changemaker Fellowship is no exception. That being said, the Fall cohort has proved just how powerful collaboration and innovation can be, even in times of uncertainty.
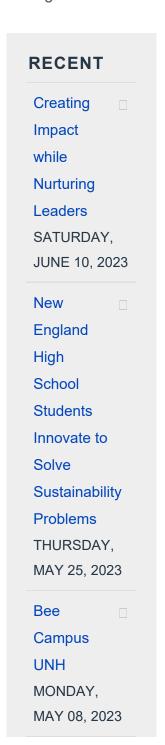
The Fellows kicked off the semester with a socially distanced welcome. They enjoyed sunshine, a game of cornhole, and got to know their cohort, as well as their peer mentors, the Changemaker Coaches. Although the Fellows had met over Zoom this summer, this was the first time they all were all able to see each other in person!

September brought professional development opportunities; Fellows had the chance to write bios and get headshots taken to use for LinkedIn and other professional endeavors. They were also introduced to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are the primary focus during their monthly meetings, also known as "Happy Hours", and they planned the SDG topics that they wished to explore throughout the semester. At each Happy Hour, the cohort investigates and presents on powerful innovations that are taking place around the world pertaining to each month's spotlighted SDG.

October really brought the Happy Hours to life! Split into groups and led by Changemaker Coaches, students presented on innovations on this month's SDG: Quality Education! Presentations ranged from local initiatives such as ecoText to academic ingenuity taking place in Uganda. In addition to presentations, Fellows were visited by a member from UNH's very own ECenter by Zoom, who talked about powerful entrepreneurial opportunities they have as Fellows, right here at UNH.

October's Happy Hour wrapped up with plans for next month's SDG: Good Health and Well-being. With November quickly approaching, both Changemaker Coaches and Fellows are looking forward to learning about new innovations and collaborating to improve their own Wildcat community.

Caitlin is a senior dual majoring in Human Development & Family Studies and Spanish. She is a Semester in the City alumna and Changemaker Coach. Learn more about Caitlin's UNH experience.

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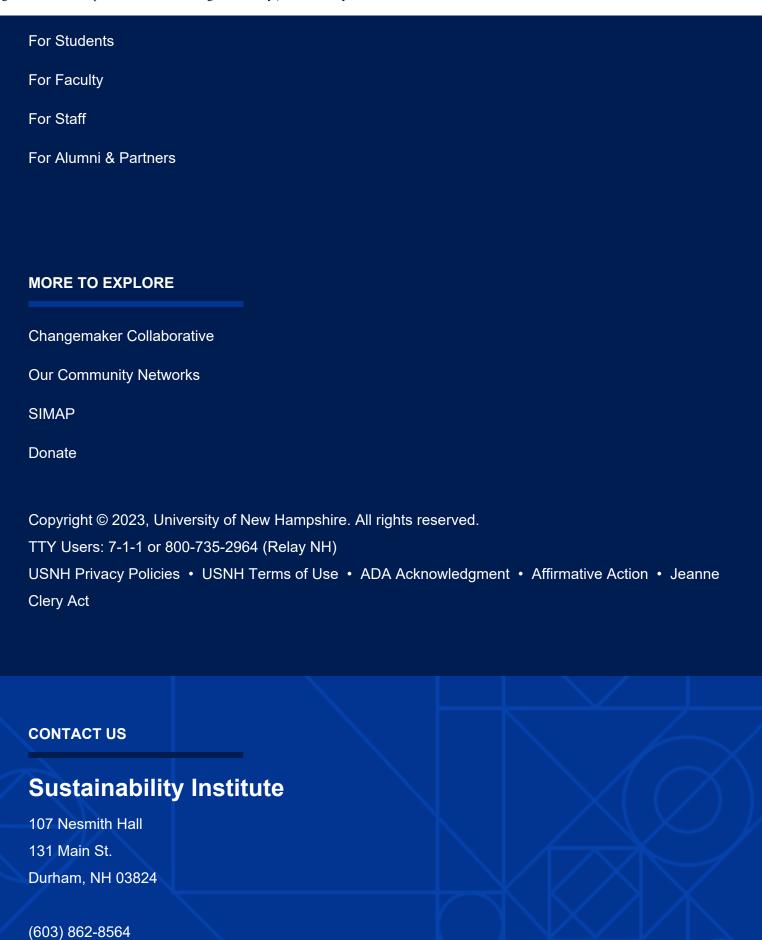Creating Impact while Nurturing Leaders
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