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UNH Chronicles Quest For Sustainability In New Book

Beth Potier

UNH Media Relations

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UNH Chronicles Quest For Sustainability In New Book

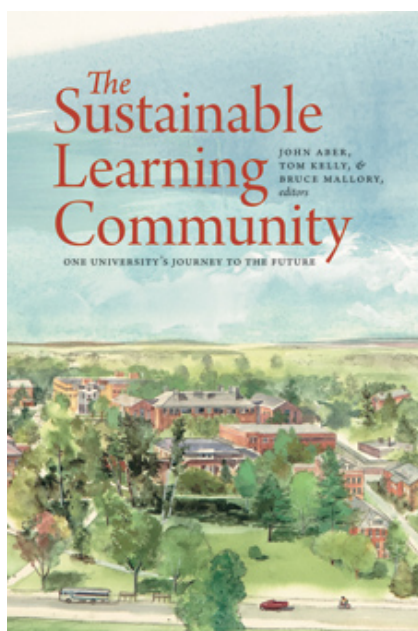
Media Contact: [Beth Potier](#)

603-862-1566

UNH Media Relations

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Reporters and Editors: Tom Kelly, UNH chief sustainability officer, can be reached by calling 603-862-8564 or e-mailing alaina.pritchard@unh.edu.



UNH recently published a book detailing its commitment to sustainability. More than 60 authors from across and beyond campus describe the history of sustainability at UNH in more than five-dozen case studies. Credit: University Press of New England, artist Dennis Balogh and the UNH Foundation, Inc.

DURHAM, N.H. –As sustainability gains a firm foothold in the mainstream consciousness, educational institutions around the world have embraced its concepts and sought ways to integrate its principles into their core missions. Now, one of the nation's leading sustainable universities has chronicled its journey toward sustainability in a new book.

"The Sustainable Learning Community: One University's Journey to the Future" (University Press of New England) details how the University of New Hampshire, home to the oldest endowed office of sustainability in the nation, has been integrating sustainability across its curriculum, operations, research, and engagement in the last 10-plus years. Edited by UNH University Professor and Provost John Aber, chief sustainability officer Tom Kelly, and former provost and current education faculty member Bruce Mallory, the book shares the perspectives of more than 60 authors from UNH and beyond on subjects ranging from curriculum to climate change to compost.

"Sustainability at UNH is about being clever and creative; about doing many things at once; about finding synergistic solutions to a number of issues in all sectors; and mostly, about involving everyone across campus," writes Aber in the book's preface.

"What you will encounter in the more than five dozen stories that make up the heart of this book is a multiplicity of creative solutions that enhance the quality of the living, working, and learning experience on campus, while reducing our environmental footprint."

Organized in chapters that mirror UNH's four areas of sustainability focus – curriculum, operations, research and engagement, or CORE – the book offers essays and case studies that explore sustainability in its myriad forms at UNH, including:

- How decomposing garbage from a nearby landfill is stabilizing the university's energy source and costs;
- How the Space Shuttle Challenger disaster spawned a program that has introduced two decades of K-12 students to biodiversity and ecosystems;
- What campus landscaping and public art have to do with sustainability;
- How unlimited meals and always-open dining halls reduced waste and overeating.

"This is not an academic exercise," says Paul R. Epstein, M.D., associate director of the Center for Health and the Global Environment at Harvard Medical School and a reviewer of the book. "The Sustainable Learning Community describes the 10-year transformation of a university with ideas and aesthetics: using organic farming techniques to train and feed students; constructing a 12.7-mile pipeline to bring landfill gas to a new co-generation plant; and fostering lively engagement in public policy. An outstanding accomplishment! A privilege to read. A beacon and blueprint for all."

UNH has earned many accolades for its sustainability initiatives, including awards and recognition from the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education, Sustainable Endowments Institute, Sierra Club, Princeton Review, and Business NH Magazine. Highlights of its sustainability commitment include EcoLine, an innovative landfill gas-to-energy project that will provide up to 85 percent of the university's energy needs; having the largest transit system in the state; being the first in the nation to receive an EPA Energy Star building rating for residence halls; a new EcoGastronomy dual major; and innovative research and engagement efforts like Carbon Solutions New England and the NH Farm to School program. For more information, go to www.sustainableunh.unh.edu or discoversustainability.org.

"As this book chronicles, sustainability presents a challenge to individual and institutional cooperation that tests our imagination and culture on a scale unique in human history," said Kelly, founding director of UNH's endowed sustainability program. "We are off to a great start, but there's much, much more to do."

"The Sustainable Learning Community: One University's Journey to the Future" can be ordered through the University Press of New England at www.upne.com/1-58465-771-5.html.

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 11,800 undergraduate and 2,400 graduate students.

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Caption: UNH recently published a book detailing its commitment to sustainability. More than 60 authors from across and beyond campus describe the history of sustainability at UNH in more than five-dozen case studies.

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