

# Provost's Newsletter

## News from the Provost

As we quickly approach mid-term, the campus is teeming with excitement and activity. We had a hugely successful Homecoming celebration October 14-16. Over 1,500 members of the SNHU community attended the weekend's festivities. The Street Fair featured 6 local food trucks, carnival rides and inflatables, over 25 club and departmental activity sponsors, 50+ volunteers, and live student performances by the SNHU Rock Band, Dance Team and more. More than 100 runners took part in the 5K on campus, supported by the Cross Country Team. 35 virtual runners from 18 states, including our COCE students, also took part as one of several virtual components. More than 150 people attended the President's Reception, which featured the Annual Alumni Awards, photo novelties, and an 80s cover band featuring a current SNHU staff member on the guitar.

This year featured two particularly unique events: the Edward S. Wolak Library Learning Commons dedication ceremony and a panel celebrating 50 years of Student Life, featuring current students and staff as well as former Class President Dan Sullivan '66, former Dean of Students Ann Shapiro, President LeBlanc, and others. We had sold-out events, including many classes in the Maker's Space, Specialty Cooking Classes, and a Muse Paint Bar event. Traditions like Greek Night, Super Big Money Bingo, and S'Mores & Fireworks helped cap off a beautiful celebration. Homecoming weekend at SNHU has evolved into a sort of warm and wonderful county fair! Such fun.

New construction on campus is progressing rapidly, and we anticipate the completion of two new buildings in the fall of



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2017: the new Athletic Stadium and a 300-bed, apartment-style residence hall that will include a game room, fitness center, and study room. On December 14, we will dedicate the Williams S. Green Center for Student Success. That building will house Advising, the Deborah L. Coffin Women's Center, the Office of Disability Services, the Center for Community Engaged Learning, the DeColfmacker Veterans Lounge, ROTC, Enrollment Ops, International Student Services, and Residence Life. The new Richard and Joanne Gustafson Welcome Center is slated for opening in late December. I am also very pleased to report that the Board of Trustees has approved the construction of yet another residence hall, as well as an engineering and technology building. The anticipated completion dates of both buildings are yet to be determined.

I am sure students and parents will be pleased to learn that University College will be freezing tuition for the 2017-2018 academic year. Our priority as an institution is to provide an accessible and affordable education to as many students as possible. Controlling the rising costs of a private university education is of paramount importance to SNHU.

Lastly, I am very proud to share with all of you that SNHU has been named a "2016 Most Innovative" institution by U.S. News and World Report. This award recognizes the value we as an organization place in technology and its role in providing a world-class education for our graduates. ■



Patricia A. Lynott  
Executive Vice President and Provost

## SNHU Homecoming 2016: There's No Place Like SNHU

*By Institutional Advancement*

The Offices of Student Involvement and Alumni Engagement – along with the entire Homecoming Committee, with representatives from across our One University – are incredibly proud to share some highlights from another successful Homecoming!

This year, our theme was 'There's No Place Like SNHU,' and alumni, students, families, faculty, and staff took the opportunity to celebrate everything that makes SNHU feel like home. We saw more than 1,500 visitors come to campus, and dozens more participate in events from a distance, such as Virtual 5K runners, participants in the SNHUconnect Meet Up, and those who watched some of the many live streams over the weekend.

### Edward S. Wolak Library Learning Commons Dedication Ceremony and Community Reception

Faculty, staff, students, and alumni joined President LeBlanc, Trustees, senior leaders, community members, distinguished guests, and Ed Wolak '74 for the dedication of the Edward S. Wolak Library Learning Commons. With Wolak's generosity and leadership, the newly renamed building will continue to serve as a hub of resources for the modern student, housing the Shapiro Library collection, the Center for Teaching and Learning, learning resources for students, the Innovation Lab and Makerspace, and an IT help desk.

### There's No Place Like SNHU: 50 Years of Student Life

The Class of 1966 – the first class to receive four-year degrees, celebrated their 50th Reunion with a series of events on campus, including a panel discussion on student life featuring President Paul LeBlanc, Dr. Ann Shapiro, Merv Newton '66, Dan Sullivan '66 (former class president), Dean Heather Lorenz, and current SGA President Jess Gallant. Learn more and watch the video at [alumni.snhu.edu/classof1966](http://alumni.snhu.edu/classof1966).

### President's Reception

President LeBlanc and the SNHU Alumni Association hosted the President's Reception, where the entire community came together to celebrate the strength of our ties and to honor the 2016 Alumni Award recipients. Learn more and watch the video at [alumni.snhu.edu/presidentsreception](http://alumni.snhu.edu/presidentsreception).

- Michael J. Rizzi '09 '10G '12MBA, Young Alumni Award – Rizzi is a frequent career volunteer on campus, helping UC students on their career development paths. He is also a donor to the Bradley Three Year Business Honors Program Scholarship Fund, and actively engaged in SNHU events and community building.
- Dr. Steve R. Painchaud, Distinguished Service Award – Painchaud has more than 30 years of teaching, management, and consulting experience. A fixture in the organizational leadership department until his retirement last year, Painchaud developed courses and taught in the Three Year Business Honors Program and helped to build



the incredible ties between its students, alumni, faculty, and community leaders.

- K. Brian McLaughlin '88 and Linda McLaughlin '89, Alumni Hall of Fame Award – the McLaughlins met at New Hampshire College in the 1980's and co-founded Granite Group Benefits shortly after graduating. Successful leaders in business, they have remained faithful to their alma mater, creating the McLaughlin Career Development Fund to assist students pursuing professional and experiential learning opportunities. They embody the goals of the institution, and take their roles

as alumni seriously, engaging the community, giving back through scholarships, and hiring SNHU grads and interns.

To learn more, see pictures, and get involved for next year, please visit [alumni.snhu.edu/homecoming](http://alumni.snhu.edu/homecoming).

#### **Institutional Advancement**

If you would like to learn more about working with the Institutional Advancement team to enrich your students' experiences, including the tapping into the SNHU alumni network and career development resources, please contact us at [alumni@snhu.edu](mailto:alumni@snhu.edu) or [careerdevelopment@snhu.edu](mailto:careerdevelopment@snhu.edu). ■

## **New Position: Chief Diversity Inclusion Officer**

*By Dan Martel*

A new position was created to provide strategic leadership to advance the University's diversity and inclusion goals. After a long hiring and interviewing process, Jada Hebra was hired because of her educational background, skills within the area of diversity inclusion, and her experience working within educational institutions. Her values and visions aligned with SNHU's, which made her a perfect fit to fill the role.

Some campuses across the country have been facing difficulties within the realm of diversity inclusion, which began the background brainstorming ensuring SNHU complements what it is already doing. Around the same time, a group of students approached President Paul LeBlanc considering the same subject matter, which made the need for this position even more evident.

This position stretches across all of Southern New Hampshire University's initiatives, not just the ones on campus. When Wil Zemp, Chief of Staff, was asked why this position was created, he responded, "Because it works. Research and best practices say the more work and attention spent on this, the happier faculty is and the better student needs can be met."

Hebra's roles are not limited to any single area. She is a counselor to President LeBlanc and the board on issues of diversity inclusion. She assists human resources to develop a creative and diverse employee-base through recruiting. She complements the Office of Diversity Initiatives by acting as a resource for students. She is also an active member of the strategy team working to find new ways to educate students and develop new strategies to strengthen SNHU's initiatives with diversity inclusion as its foundation.

This new Chief Diversity Inclusion Officer role is important and it instills the curiosity if more related positions will

be created. There actually are not any plans for more positions to be created to support diversity inclusion and the reasoning behind this is so there is more responsibility put on everyone working for SNHU to actively participate in diversity initiatives. Creating too many positions designated solely to this have been found to be less efficient than having a few energetic individuals drive these values across the entire organization. Zemp's response to the hiring of Jada Hebra was simply, "having her in this role is a way to make a great organization even better." ■

*Headshot of Jada Hebra.*



## New Dean of Wolak Library Learning Commons

By Dan Martel

Southern New Hampshire University welcomes several new faces to campus this year, including Bill Mayer, the new Dean of the Wolak Library Learning Commons. Working in academic libraries his whole career, Mayer enjoys the role and understands the important function libraries play in society.

After spending 10 years in Boston, Mayer and his wife moved to Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C., to raise their daughter. This highly political location brought interesting opportunities for Mayer. He worked as the University Librarian at American University. He also spent a few years working for the government in the National Archives. When asked about this job, Mayer shared that, "I was privileged to have this role taking care of the charters of this nation."

Living only a few houses behind the Capitol Building, one of, if not the most interesting event Mayer was able to partake in was a nationalization ceremony at the Rotunda of the National Archives. Watching 30 individuals being sworn into the U.S. as citizens is a rewarding experience that builds lasting memories. What makes this particular event even more incredible, however, is that he was sitting less than 10 feet away from President Barack Obama, and Obama personally swore in these 30 individuals as citizens.

Mayer and his family wanted to relocate from Capitol Hill back to New England. His wife, working in the healthcare industry, was able to transfer to New England, and a new home in Portland, Maine, was found. Mayer was eager to return to the world of higher education, and the opportunity at SNHU stood out to him. The values and motivations of SNHU aligned with his own, and Mayer has found that the job has lived up to his expectations. According to Mayer, "it's an incredible environment to serve students in and it's rewarding to see how excited students and faculty are about their work."

Mayer was eager to return to the world of higher education, and the opportunity at SNHU stood out to him. The values and motivations of SNHU aligned with his own, and Mayer has found that the job has lived up to his expectations. With over an hour and a half commute to campus from Portland, ME, he gets to experience the on-campus aspects of the community, as well as the experience of working remotely from home. He considers this opportunity a "unique perfect storm. It's not just that I'm the right guy for the job, but it was the right time, and a series of interconnected events made me feel lucky to have this opportunity."

Dean Mayer has a vision for SNHU, as well. He understands that the library embodies SNHU's dedication to student success. The university is an incubator for success, and in his role he is able to focus on the overall mission and values

that SNHU embodies. Mayer's goal is to create the best possible environment for success. As the campus evolves and grows, the library must evolve with it, while finding new ways to provide academic services to students wherever and whenever they may need them.

Mayer stressed that he and the faculty and staff throughout the Wolak Library Learning Commons are here to be allies with students in their journeys. The more students make it clear what they need to be successful, the better the university is able to design and deliver those services. When asked about the direction of the Learning Commons Mayer responded with, "I want to work to change some of the more passive behaviors that we currently have. Instead of waiting for students to come to us when they need help, I want to be out there starting the dialogue with students and finding out what they want and need from us."

With all the great opportunities presented to our new Dean of the Wolak Library Learning Commons, from career options, to experiencing his daughter's birth, to being able to proudly talk about being best friends with his wife for 35 years, his life has been humbling to say the least. Not to mention the countless Grateful Dead tours that Mayer and his wife were able to enjoy together created a fun, unique, shared passion over the years. This passion expanded to include John Mayer after seeing him on tour this past summer. When asked what he looks forward to, Mayer closed out by saying, "with the way my life has worked out and the opportunities I've had, I realize that my morning coffee is something to look forward to. I'm lucky to be here and I'm grateful for all the opportunities I've had in the past, as well as all that the future holds for me." ■

Headshot of Bill Mayer.





## A Different Take on the SNHU Experience

By Michelle Shreeves

In 2012, I embarked on an academic journey to continue my education here at SNHU to complete my Master's Degree in English & Creative Writing. Originally an aspiring children's author with published writing experience under my belt, I was focused and ready to start my journey. Around 2013, I realized I wanted to learn as much as I could about writing, English, literature, and more to lay the foundation for becoming a children's author. While working on my degree, I decided to begin a double Master's Degree in English, while also working on my Master's Degree in English & Creative Writing.

Balancing all this with an outside full-time job and part-time writing positions, including an advice column and a contract to write a non-fiction academic book, was not easy. This resulted in taking a break from the MAE degree to finish up the MAECW degree.

During my thesis class of my MAECW degree, I ended up facing the academic challenge of a lifetime, failing the class. The situation was beyond stressful, but thankfully I was granted an extension to improve my grade. By doing so, I ended up passing the course, but had to post-pone graduation by one month.

My dean, parents, and the rest of SNHU helped me get through that really difficult semester. Although incredibly grateful for the mentors surrounding me, the situation made me think about how much I belonged in Grad school. More doubt was created from this tough experience on my ability to finish my second Master's degree.

After eventually registering for classes, I got through five classes and maintained my 3.8 GPA. Then came my final capstone class again. Learning from past experiences, I requested Dr. Marlen Harrison as a capstone mentor, whom I felt was the best professor I ever had at SNHU. He was the one teacher that pushed me the most during my stay here at SNHU. I knew if I worked hard and could earn a good grade for him, that it was a grade well deserved.

While it was not easy, I am happy to report that I did in fact pass, thus earning my second Master's degree from SNHU. I completed my thesis on how reading and writing can help children and adults cope with parent loss. I plan on writing several books for children and teens one day regarding this subject matter.

For academic and financial advisors, remember, students are taking online courses for a reason. Be sensitive to the fact that many of these students are working adults with full-time jobs, kids, spouses, and sick family members. While the students agree to take the courses regardless of outside obligations, the ability for professors to get to know students on an individual level pays off incredibly for those students.

For professors, make sure you are doing everything you can to ensure the success and enhanced knowledge of every student you teach and every student who passes through your classroom. Do everything possible to bring that passion to teach into each lesson. The employees, staff, and teachers, are the forefront upon which students decide whether they want to stay in college and graduate or leave prematurely. I am proud to say that I graduated from SNHU despite the obstacles that were presented to me. SNHU faculty is well staffed and capable of enhancing every student's college experience. ■

## Majors in Minutes- Major Exploration for New Students

By Lindsey Goddard

Every fall, the Academic Advising Office sponsors a major exploration event for our new students to explore academic majors available at the University. The Advising Office has spent some time reviewing the format of this event (formerly called the Major/Minor Fair and then the Academic Exploration Fair) and we have decided to implement changes for this year. The goal of this event will remain the same – to provide an opportunity for students (especially new students) to gather information about the majors we offer.

The event, now named Majors in Minutes, will take place on Tuesday, November 1, from 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. in the Dining Center, Second Floor.

Using a model similar to speed-dating, upper-class students will be representing their majors at tables where other students can sit down and learn about their respective major. Students are able to visit as many tables (majors) as they wish during the event. Students will visit tables for approximately five minute intervals to encourage exploring several different majors. This is a format that has been adapted by several colleges around the country.

The advisors have reached out to department chairs for recommendations for student representatives. The students who will represent their majors will be asked to provide a brief explanation of their major, detail the courses and concentrations that are available, and then highlight any pre-professional experiences students can participate in. At the end of their designated time at the table, students will be asked to move to another table to learn about a different major. This will continue for the first portion of the event. The final fifteen minutes will allow students the opportunity

to return to any of the tables that they would like to return to ask additional questions.

We will continue to co-sponsor with Student Government Association to have this event recognized by the Penmen Pride points program. Additionally, students in attendance will be given the opportunity to enter to win textbooks for the spring semester.

Students are often anxious about whether they have chosen the right major, or how they will even chose just one major. This event is designed for them. It is about giving students time to talk to several different majors in the same safe space. We are very excited about this new approach to helping first-year students explore their major options. If you have any questions about this event, please contact us in the Academic Advising Office. ■

## Welcome, Bill Jamieson

*By Dan Martel*

SNHU has a new math professor on campus: Bill Jamieson. Jamieson completed his undergraduate and graduate degrees in Mathematics at the University of Rhode Island (URI). In URI's unique graduate program, Jamieson was able to teach all six years without having to go through the Teaching Assistant stage. His grad school specialization was in Difference Equations (discrete dynamical systems). He also spent some time as a visiting assistant professor at Wheaton College in Norton, Massachusetts.

A variety of factors led Jamieson to SNHU as a math professor. For starters, with his fiancé teaching math at Fitchburg State University, he wanted to find a position in a location where they could get a house that enables them both to have a reasonable commute. As a man going through the job market for the second time, he had more experience and knowledge, which helped him know what to look for. Seeing the unique opportunity SNHU had really set it apart from other universities. According to Jamieson, "the feeling on campus matched exactly what was presented to me in the job offer and interview process." Jamieson added, "The online program SNHU has is also unique. The way in which this University operates, with a strong business model backing it, creates additional opportunities for students and faculty."

This enabled Jamieson and his wife to settle down in a home in Amherst, MA, allowing them both to be able to easily commute to work.

Professor Jamieson currently teaches two Intro to Calculus courses (MAT-225), one Intro to Statistics course (MAT-240), and one Applied Linear Algebra course (MAT-350). Looking towards the future, he will be teaching a Stats II: Regression & Analysis course (MAT-300). When asked if there were any other courses he would like to teach on campus, he responded, "I love to teach and I'd be ecstatic to teach any math course."

The best part is that when you teach a class, you remember it forever." Stop by his office in Robert Frost 223, say hello and welcome to campus!■



*Headshot of Bill Jamieson.*

## Pro Bono Environmental Law Work in Cambodia

By Paul A. Baressi

Paul Barresi, Professor of Political Science and Environmental Law in the School of Arts and Sciences, recently returned from his second trip to Cambodia, where he has been serving as a pro bono legal advisor to the Ministry of Environment's effort to create a comprehensive Environmental Code. In that capacity, he has served as a principal contributor to the development of the environmental impact assessment (including strategic environmental assessment) titles of the Code. This has necessitated meeting in-country with a wide variety of governmental, nongovernmental, and private sector stakeholders, drafting proposed Code language, and returning and commenting on interim Code drafts. He has also reviewed and commented on drafts of the water pollution control titles of the Code. ■

*The new Ministry of Environment building in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, in July.*



## Faculty Mentors for Honors Thesis

By Andrew Martino

Since its inception in 1995, the University Honors Program has grown to include over 140 students, drawing from every offered major on campus. The program's culmination is a senior thesis (HONORS 401). The 401 (as it is known in the program) is a year-long course undertaken by the student with a faculty mentor of his or her choice. The student works with that faculty mentor on a topic of his or her choice through a course by arrangement format. This project lends itself nicely to Undergraduate Research Day in the Spring, as well as many other opportunities that the thesis creates for students. The student receives 1.5 credits in the fall and 1.5 in the spring.

The University Honors Program is beginning to build a database of faculty who may be interested in working with some of the brightest and self-motivated students on campus. If you are interested in the possibility of mentoring a senior honors student please send us your name and area(s) of expertise. The mentor receives a small honorarium for his or her service. Please send your information to David Moloney (d.moloney@snhu.edu) or direct questions to University Honors Director, Andrew Martino (a.martino@snhu.edu). Mentoring honors students in this one-on-one format is a rewarding experience that allows faculty to weave areas of expertise with the interests of the student. We look forward to hearing from you! ■

*Honors students presenting at Undergraduate Research Day.*

