It’s not surprising that Todd DeMitchell was named team captain and most valuable player for his football team at La Verne College in California. To his colleagues in the UNH Department of Education, the one-time All-American still fulfills those roles as a leader, top scholar, teacher, mentor, and friend.

As his colleague Associate Professor Tom Schram says, “The simple important truth about Todd is that he cares deeply, and he carries this ethic of care into every facet of his life and work. In his remarkable, self-effacing way, he excels at what he does while constantly reaching out to those around him with encouragement, support, humor, and gentle guidance.”

A leading authority in the field of educational law and policy, DeMitchell knew as a 20-year-old undergraduate student that he wanted to be a college professor. After earning a string of degrees in California, he came to UNH in 1990, where his contributions teaching graduate courses in administrative leadership and school law to prepare leaders in K-12 have helped make the University’s education programs among the best in the country. DeMitchell is one of the preeminent voices in the field of education law, having published more than 135 scholarly articles and five books.

Here, he says, he has found everything he has ever wanted: a sense of security, a genuineness in the people, a chance to be part of a larger community.

Several years ago, he and his wife—an attorney and educator who is also a published author—returned to California’s wine country, thinking that was where they would eventually retire. They soon discovered that the so-called laid-back California lifestyle no longer suited them, and when DeMitchell’s colleagues in Durham learned about his UNH homesickness, they eagerly welcomed him back. “Overall, the quality of life is just better here,” he says. “I’m home.”

~Lori Wright