
UNH dedication a grand sendoff for Gregg

By Holly Ramer

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NEW CASTLE, N.H. — The University of New Hampshire paid tribute to outgoing Senator Judd Gregg's commitment to children, crime fighters, and cod yesterday when officials dedicated a marine research complex in his name and praised his support for the school's child research center and justice programs.

Gregg, a Republican who is retiring after three terms in the Senate, attended the dedication of the Judd Gregg Marine Research Complex, built with some of the more than \$400 million he has steered to UNH over the years.

The ceremony also recognized Gregg for his role in starting the school's Crimes Against Children Research Center, which includes a training center for law enforcement tracking child predators online.

"Your willingness to take risks means that you richly deserve appreciation from those of us who have been the beneficiaries, and that includes me, the [Crimes Against Children Research Center], the university, the children of America, the fish of the world — if they could speak," said David Finkelhor, child research center director.

"Maybe some day, because of this research, we'll find out that they do," he joked.

With Gregg's support, the Joint Hydrographic Center that the university runs with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration has become the national leader in ocean floor mapping, and technology it has developed is now routinely used by NOAA and the US Navy, said Andy Armstrong, the center's co-director.

President Mark Huddleston of UNH said the benefits of programs Gregg has helped to fund are felt far beyond the university and its laboratories.

"Thanks to his vision over the last 18 years, the university is a far different and far more robust institution that now stands shoulder to shoulder with the nation's premier research universities," he said.

Though the process of securing money through special spending requests by members of Congress has fallen out of political favor, Gregg has stood by the earmark process as a legitimate way to direct money to worthy projects, as long as the total federal budget is conservative and the earmark process transparent.

Kelly Ayotte, the Republican who won Gregg's seat in November, praised Gregg for earmarks that benefited law enforcement when she was attorney general, but then adamantly spoke out against them after launching her campaign for US Senate.

Also joining yesterday's ceremony was J. Bonnie Newman, the former interim president of UNH.

Gregg gave his wife, Kathy, most of the credit for several of the biggest projects, citing her love of the ocean and the work she did for children while he was governor in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

"But the reason these programs are so successful is not because Kathy and I were involved; it's because of the University of New Hampshire," he said. "It's the talent of the people who are there who make the university successful. This is unnecessary, over the top, and a little embarrassing. All I really wanted was a UNH hockey hat."

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