



## College to Celebrate 2009 Commencement

*Ceremony to honor new graduates, distinguished alumni, trustees, faculty and staff, community members*

Colby-Sawyer College will celebrate its 2009 Commencement by graduating 169 students and recognizing numerous individuals for academic excellence, outstanding contributions to society, and service to the college and community.

Commencement will be held on Saturday, May 9, at 10:30 a.m., under a tent on Colby-Sawyer's front lawn. A reception will follow at the President's House.

Mr. Richard N. "Dick" and Mrs. Avone P. Thielen Sunapee, N.H., and Siesta Key in Sarasota, Fla., will receive the college's highest award, the Susan Colgate Cleveland Medal, for their extraordinary service, leadership and philanthropy.

The Thielens are passionate about education, and Colby-Sawyer students have benefitted from their many personal gifts and gifts from their family foundation. In 2003, the Thielens were inducted into the college's Legends Society, which honors philanthropists who have helped to transform the college's learning environment.

Mr. Thielen joined the college's Board of Trustees in 2000. He founded RINET Company, LLC in 1974, a Boston-based financial advisory and investment management firm that was merged into Boston Private Financial Holdings, Inc., as an independent subsidiary in 1999.

"Through their generosity, support, leadership and good spirits the Thielens have made the

college a better place and improved the educational experiences and the lives of our students," says President Tom Galligan.

The keynote speaker is Assistant Professor of Environmental Studies **Laura Alexander**, who will receive the Jack Jensen Award for Excellence in Teaching. The Jensen Award, the highest recognition for faculty, acknowledges the central importance of teaching and each year celebrates a faculty member who encourages intellectual curiosity within and across disciplines, communicates high expectations, and inspires students to do their best work.

Professor Alexander, a resident of Elkins who joined the faculty in 2001, teaches courses such as Environmental Issues, Exploring Nature, Desert Communities, and White Mountain History. She holds a M.S. and Ph.D. in Environmental Studies from Antioch University New England.

A consummate outdoorswoman, Professor Alexander shares her love for and knowledge of the natural environment with her students through walks on and near campus and hiking in New Hampshire's alpine environments.

"Laura is a professor I will never forget," wrote one student. "She is a remarkable teacher and an



Avone and Dick Thielen



Laura Alexander

asset to Colby-Sawyer." Another student described Professor Alexander's classes as "engaging and fun, but her expectations are high."

Professor and Chair of Business Administration **Christopher Kubik** is the recipient of the Nancy Beyer Opler Award for Excellence in Advising. The Opler award honors a faculty member who provides outstanding support for students in their college and professional planning.

Professor Kubik, a Hanover resident who joined the faculty in 2006, teaches courses in finance, managerial accounting, strategic management and introduction to organizations. He holds a Ph.D. in Finance from Anderson University and has earned an M.B.A. from the University of Detroit and a B.S. in International Business and Economics at Madonna University.

Professor Kubik's students expressed appreciation for his support and dedication, as well as his high expectations for them. "He never let me get by with less than my best effort," wrote one student. "He holds me to high standards, but I know that his challenges always have my best interests in mind." Another student shared that Professor Kubik "is kind-hearted yet realistic, and though he expects much of his advisees, he truly seeks success for us all."

**Colin Neal Bellavance** will address his classmates as the Class of 2009 Commencement Student Speaker. A Sport Management major

with a minor in Business Administration, he has been president of the Class of 2009 since his sophomore year. He was a four-year member of the men's soccer team and also competed in track and field. Bellavance serves as a volunteer firefighter with the New London Fire Department.

The Town-Gown Awards celebrate the Colby-Sawyer College and New London area communities' long history of working together to enhance the quality of life in this region. This year the awards honor two individuals, community member **Daniel C. Snyder** of New London and staff member **Barry Caravan** of Newbury.

Daniel C. Snyder is a visible presence in the New London area, whether he's speaking to teachers and parents as a member of the school board, watching children compete in sports at the New London Outing Club, or sailing his boat across Pleasant Lake. An active community volunteer and civic leader, Mr. Snyder enjoys taking on and excelling in each new role, using his broad vision and strategic skills to move organizations and institutions forward toward their goals.

Mr. Snyder views education as a catalyst that empowers individuals and communities. He has committed himself to involvement in the local schools at every level and angle: he has brought computer technology to the Windy Hill School on campus and supported the construction of much-needed new classrooms at the New London Elementary



Christopher Kubik



Colin Bellavance

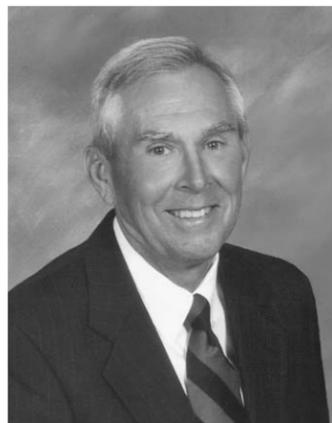
school. Mr. Snyder has served as a leader on the Kearsarge Regional School District's school board and its related Municipal Budget Committee, and he has created rare educational opportunities for Colby-Sawyer students through his commitment and generosity.

"Dan has a wonderful ability to identify opportunity and to envision solutions," says Elizabeth Cahill, vice president for Advancement at Colby-Sawyer. "He has helped the college uncover opportunities to broaden student experiences while benefitting the greater New London community."

Mr. Snyder served as a field artillery commander in the U.S. Army prior to joining Atlanta-based Equifax Inc., a national credit bureau, rising to vice president of the company. He later led a national financial services and insurance company before taking on the presidency of Abacus Direct Corporation, a Denver-based marketing database company. He took that company public in 1996 and successfully merged it with a New York-based internet company in 1999.

**Barry Caravan**, a staff member in the Facilities Department and recipient of the Gown Award, is involved in the New England Handicapped Sports Association (NEHSA) and organizes an annual dinner for disabled veterans.

Every weekend from December to April, Mr. Caravan can be found at Mt. Sunapee Resort, teaching students of all ages how to snowboard as one of the head instructors in NEHSA's



*Daniel C. Snyder*



*Barry Caravan*

program. Mr. Caravan has also worked with Sodexo Dining Services and Colby-Sawyer to organize a dinner for veterans from around the country who participate in NEHSA's Winter Sports Clinic for Disabled Veterans. He has also coached Little League baseball teams, directed an elementary school ski program, and played a major role in the creation of Fishersfield Park in Newbury, New Hampshire.

"Barry's nature is to be helpful in any way that he can. While he goes about his work around the college, he always has his eye out for the best interests of the students, which carries over to his volunteer activities as well," says Doug Atkins, vice president for administration. "He very much enjoys snowboarding and takes great satisfaction from showing dis-

abled people that they, too, can enjoy the slopes. Barry works very hard each year to put together the dinner for the veterans, and he shows the same dedication to his work at the college."

In recognition of her commitment and service to the world community, alumna **Hannah "Haydi" Caldwell Sowerwine '60** will receive the Distinguished Alumni Award. For more than a decade, Mrs. Sowerwine has been committed to improving the quality of life for rural people in Nepal.

In 1996, Haydi and her husband, O. David Sowerwine, founded Ecosystems, a company



*Haydi Caldwell Sowerwine*

that provides safe, inexpensive and environmentally sound transport and energy systems in Nepal. Their first product, a bridge system designed for Nepal's rugged and remote regions, allows people to safely cross chasms, gorges and rivers, shortening their daily trips to schools, health centers and marketplaces from hours to minutes. They are currently developing a human-powered generator and electricity distribution system which will bring electricity to rural Nepal. Their innovative designs have won a number of awards, including the San Jose Tech Museum award in 2003 for their bridges and a grant from the World Bank for their new electricity project.

Previously, Mrs. Sowerwine worked with IDEO, a product design firm in Palo Alto, California. When she and her husband moved to Nepal in 1991, she became involved in Active Women of Nepal (AWON), for which she was instrumental in establishing a scholarship program for Nepalese students. For several years, they assisted the Nepalese people in horticulture, forestry and waste management before



*Elizabeth Cressman*

starting Ecosystems as a way to offer rural people feasible transportation and electricity.

The Senior Achievement Awards are presented to two graduating seniors who have distinguished themselves by displaying leadership qualities in their active involvement in the co-curricular life of the college.

**Elizabeth Cressman**, a Child Development major, has shown extraordinary dedication to the college and to the clubs and organizations she is involved in. She has been a residence hall assistant and member of the Student Government Association and the Campus Activities Board, always doing her best work for her fellow students and these organizations. One of her major accomplishments has been to manage and maintain an \$80,000 student government budget.

Biology major **Noah Richard** has provided strong leadership for the Biology Majors Club, organizing a group of highly enthusiastic students into an effective and active organization.

He has also been active on the Wesson Honors Program Advisory Committee, serving as an effective liaison between students and faculty members.

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For more information about the student award recipients, please visit [www.colby-sawyer.edu/commencement/studentawards.html](http://www.colby-sawyer.edu/commencement/studentawards.html).

To learn more about Commencement 2009 at Colby-Sawyer College, visit the Web site at [www.colby-sawyer.edu/commencement](http://www.colby-sawyer.edu/commencement).