

# The Tagliatela College of Engineering

## Competing on a Drop of Gasoline and High Hopes

*Mechanical Engineering Students Enter Supermileage Competition*

Just about everyone who owns a car wants better gas mileage. The truly committed buy hybrids or convert their cars to run on recycled vegetable oil, but the UNH chapter of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers did them one better: Chapter members built their own high-mileage vehicle, and entered it in their very first race.

SAE, a society that advances mobility engineering, sponsors a Supermileage Competition each year. This year, 45 teams from across the nation signed up for the race, although just 30 actually made it to Marshall, Michigan, with the hopes of competing. And before even putting a vehicle on the track,

teams needed to pass a technical inspection. By the time the race began, just 23 teams qualified for competition, with UNH among them.

"This alone, we learned, was a tremendous accomplishment," said UNH Chapter President Michael Ingmanson '10, Mechanical Engineering. "Most first-year teams never complete technical inspection, let alone compete in the race." Club member and driver Tom Ruggieri '10, Mechanical Engineering, pushed the car to its limits, completing five laps before the drive chain tore apart. A quick repair and four laps later, the chain

severed again, and the race was over. But the team was elated: the vehicle's race mileage was 240 miles per gallon, 14 times the fuel efficiency of the average U.S. automobile.

"One of the biggest benefits to attending the competition was the wealth of inspiration and knowledge we found in other teams' designs and ideas," Ingmanson said. "We were able to come away with pages of ideas and plans for improving our designs and producing a better car next year."

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*Michael Ingmanson  
'10 B.S., president,  
UNH Chapter of  
American Society of  
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