

Jay Kahn

Mayoral Candidate

Why I'm running for Mayor of Keene

I believe I can add value to the mayor's role. I've formed deep relationships across our community and region through my executive roles at Keene State College, leadership roles in major organizations, and as a State Senator over the past six years. While my senator term ended in 2022, I've continued to advocate for state organizations because of my relationships with legislative leaders, state government commissioners, and national organizations.

Keene needs a leader who can advocate for its needs. Success in government is built upon relationships. I intend to use my community, state, and national relationships to form partnerships to advance our community and regional needs.

Keene's next mayor will lead the City into the next decade, the 2030's. The City, like any organization, needs a strategic plan, a vision defining its goals, how it will execute that plan, and how it will assess its success and make adjustments. The plan needs to incorporate strategies for greater housing, workforce development, infrastructure improvement, and community engagement. These are all issues on which I have experience and can forge partnerships to work towards success.

Resume

I came to Keene in 1988, having been recruited to serve as Keene State College's Vice President for Finance and Planning. At the time I was one of the youngest vice presidents of finance in the country. What made the position so compelling was the planning side of the role. Keene State had recruited a talented faculty that developed some unique programs. However, they were under-resourced. That defined my mission, to help the college and its faculty grow its programs with necessary staffing, facilities, technological and managerial resources.

As you will see in my resume, my executive role at Keene State College opened up opportunities for me to serve the college, city, state, and national organizations in substantial leadership roles. My academic credentials culminated in 1988 as well. Just before moving to Keene, I completed my doctoral degree in Public Policy Analysis from the Political Science Department at the University of Illinois-Chicago. Public service has been a means for me to apply my academic interests as well as my community and professional interests.

My wife Cheryl found Keene and the Monadnock region provided much more than just a home base. As a business education teacher, Cheryl taught in the region for 23 years. We raised our two children, David and Denise, in Keene. They attended and graduated from Keene schools. We greatly enjoyed the relationships we formed with educators and families in the region. Today, Cheryl serves on The Community Kitchen Board of Directors and is a trained CASA, a court-appointed special advocate. In her CASA-NH role, she helps families, social services, and family court work through difficult child safety, abuse, and neglect cases.

Resume

Education

- BA in Communications with minors in Psychology and Education – Northern Illinois U.
- PhD. in Political Science – Public Policy Analysis from the University of Illinois-Chicago

Professional

- 45 years in higher education leadership and public service
- 28 years at Keene State College
 - 27 years as Vice President for Finance and Planning
 - 1 year as Interim President
- Higher education consultant
- Instructor of management and economics

Professional Service

- Director on the Society for College and University Planning
- Chair of National Association of College and University Business Officer Comprehensive and Doctoral Institutions Council
- Commissioner on New England Association of Schools and Colleges —Commission on Institutions of Higher Education, the regional accrediting commission
- Author of articles and presentations on strategic planning, budgeting, and facilities planning

Honorary Awards

- American Institute of Architects – NH Chapter, Lifetime Honorary Member
- Keene State College – Honorary Lifetime Alumnus

Community Service

- Member of NH Workforce Investment and Opportunity Board
- Member NH Coalition for Business and Education Board
- Keene City Councilor

- Past Chairman
 - Greater Keene Chamber of Commerce
 - Cheshire Medical Center
 - Monadnock Economic Development Corporation

Personal and Family

- Family oriented
 - Husband to Cheryl, Retired High School Teacher, Married 50 Years
 - Father to David and Denise
 - Grandfather of Joshua and Andrew
- 50 years as a distance runner
- Hobbies include gardening and sports of all sorts