Taylor Chace ’11

In 2002, when he was 16, Taylor Chace ’11 suffered a spinal cord injury while playing hockey with the New Hampshire Junior Monarchs. His goal had been to play Division I college hockey and then play in the NHL. Initially paralyzed from the waist down, Chace underwent lengthy spine surgery and more than a year of rehabilitation. While he regained the ability to walk unassisted, Chace was convinced he would never play hockey again.

In the winter of 2003, Chace was introduced to Northeast Passage at UNH and the adaptive sport of sled hockey. Two years later, he was invited to try out for the U.S. Sled Hockey Team. He also decided to attend UNH where he could pursue his education, play sled hockey with Northeast Passage, and train for his sport at the highest level.

Chace has been an integral part of the U.S. Sled Hockey Team’s success since 2005. He scored the game-winning goal in the bronze medal game in the 2006 Paralympic Games in Torino, and won back-to-back gold medals in the Vancouver and Sochi Games, a first in Paralympic sled hockey history. In Vancouver, Chace was named the tournament’s top defenseman and 2010 Paralympic Sportsman of the year by the U.S. Olympic Committee. He is a four-time International Paralympic Committee World Championship medalist, was named top defenseman in 2013, and was named to the all-tournament team in 2012. He is one of the team’s longstanding leaders, having served as alternate captain in 2007-2008, team captain from 2011-2013, and alternate captain in 2014.

Chace graduated from UNH in 2011 with a degree in sports studies. Since his return from Sochi, he has worked as the director of public relations and communications for the Portland Pirates in Maine. He continues to work for Northeast Passage, coaching sled hockey and speaking to groups to promote awareness of recreation and competitive opportunities for youth and adult athletes with disabilities. He also serves as coach-in-chief, New England Hockey District, Disabled Section.

Following his graduation from UNH, Chace’s family established the Taylor Bent Chace ’11 Fund for Athlete Development to provide support for athlete development at Northeast Passage.