NMCC and NMCC Alumni and Friends Organization name 50 Shining Stars

Aroostook County - As part of the 50th anniversary celebration for Northern Maine Community College, the NMCC Alumni and Friends Organization is pleased to announce their selection of a constellation of “50 Shining Stars,” featuring one alum from each of the graduating classes, as well as three community members who have played a key role in the development of the College.

The individuals will be honored in the coming months through a media campaign launched by the College and at the NMCC 50th Anniversary Gala Banquet on September 10. According to members of the selection committee, the stars collectively represent the array of academic programs (past and present) and the breadth and depth of the impact the College and its alumni have made over five decades.

“We were looking for and selected a really good mix of people who have been successful in their own right and have made a positive difference in their profession, community and in the lives of others around them,” said Cindy Albert, member of the selection committee. “As individuals and as a group, these ‘shining stars’ tell the true NMCC story and really demonstrate the very positive and profound impact the College has had on the economic development of The County and the quality of life of our community through the years.”

NMCC was founded in 1961 after legislation creating the school was passed by the 100th Maine Legislature and signed by Governor John H. Reed. The first students entered in 1963 and the first graduates were sent off into the workforce in 1965.

Over a period of several months last spring and summer a specially formed committee of the NMCC Alumni and Friends Organization held several meetings and work sessions to identify alumni from each of the classes dating back to 1965. The group set a goal of finding individuals who collectively represented the impact the College and its alumni have made throughout the region, state and beyond over five decades.
To capture those stories, several current NMCC students spent the latter half of last summer and a good part of last fall conducting interviews with the outstanding individuals. In the coming months, the student’s work and the “shining stars” success stories will be shared with the community through a College-initiated marketing campaign and in a number of campus publications.

In addition to the 47 stars that represent each of the graduating classes for NMCC and its forerunners, Northern Maine Technical College and Northern Maine Vocational Technical Institute, the Alumni and Friends Organization solicited public input earlier this year to find three community leaders to honor alongside the graduates who have made a significant difference in the evolution of the institution.

After receiving nominations from the community, the group recently named the three remaining “stars”. They include: Richard Engels, a Presque Isle attorney and former NMCC Foundation Board chair; Floyd Harding, a Presque Isle attorney, former state senator and one of the founders and key benefactors of the college; and Mary Smith, a native of Presque Isle and philanthropist who has contributed significantly to the College and surrounding community to improve the lives of others.

“We decided that it would be most appropriate to honor some of NMCC’s community friends who have helped advance the College in meaningful ways over the past five decades. These three individuals have certainly been staunch advocates of the College,” said Scott Carlin, president of the NMCC Alumni and Friends Organization. “Their efforts are reflective of the critical and much appreciated support NMCC has received from throughout the region since the days when the institution was just a dream to the very real success it is today. It also goes well with our group’s inclusive mission to engage all alumni and friends of the College.”

Each honoree will be presented with a special star award designed and crafted by Dennis Albert, NMCC welding and metal fabrications instructor, and his students. Each of the 50 individuals will also have a poster featuring their photo and a quote about their NMCC experience that will be unveiled at the September 10 Gala. The posters will then be hung throughout the corridors on the campus.

The list of all NMCC 50 Shining Stars follows:

1965  Gary Cleaves of Lascassas, Tennessee, Retired, Maine Military Authority
1966  Kenneth Knight, Deceased
1967  Eugene McCluskey of Presque Isle, Director of Admissions, Northern Maine Community College
1968  Robert Kervin of Houlton, Architect
1969  Robert Grant of Falmouth, General Manager, Young's Furniture
1970  William Cassidy of Raymond, Retired President, Washington County Community College
1971  Michael Kelley, Sr. of Washburn, Regional Vice President, TD Bank in Presque Isle
1972  Pauline Bouchard of Fort Kent, Executive Secretary, Northern Maine Medical Center
1973  Galen Dickinson of Caribou, Chief Finance Officer, Cary Medical Center
1974  Robert Lilly of Scarborough, President/Owner, New England Tech Air
1975  Robert Clark of Fort Fairfield, Executive Director, Northern Maine Development Commission
1976 Dennis Albert of Presque Isle, Instructor, Northern Maine Community College
1977 Michael Thibodeau of Presque Isle, Accounting Manager, MMG Insurance
1978 Diane Gough Pratt of Chapman, RN, Cardiovascular Lab, The Aroostook Medical Center
1979 Scott Carlin of Mapleton, Owner, Star City/Mars Hill/Hillside IGAs
1980 John Guerrette of Portland, Mason, Diocesan Construction (DICON)
1981 Sylvia Forte of Houlton, Nurse Manager, Houlton Regional Hospital
1982 Barbara Lambert of Presque Isle, Administrative Associate, University of Maine at Presque Isle
1983 Kenneth Murchison of Caribou, Geographic Info. Specialist, Northern Maine Development Commission
1984 Nancy Putnam of New Limerick, Nurse Practitioner, Houlton Family Practice
1985 Bryan LaPoint of Mapleton, Owner, Ashland Auto Supply
1986 Betty Searles Walker of Caribou, Volunteer Coordinator, Cary Medical Center
1987 Charlie Nickerson of Oshkosh, Wisconsin, Director of Operations, Mercy Medical Center
1988 Fred Steeves of Minot, Auto Collision Repair Instructor, Oxford Hills Technical School
1989 Carolyn Dorsey-Durepo of Fort Fairfield, Assistant Professor, University of Maine at Presque Isle
1990 John Stubbs of Caribou, General Sales Manager, Griffeth Ford
1991 Spencer Bragan of Presque Isle, Building Trades Teacher, Presque Isle Regional Career & Technical Center
1992 Eric Nelson of Monticello, Owner, Nelson Construction
1993 Ammie Toby of Houlton, Teacher, Region 2 Vocational Education
1994 Dr. Leigh Forbush, DO of Hampden, Physician, Family Practice in Bangor & Hampden
1996 Darrell McCrum of Mars Hill, Farmer/Co-Owner, County Super Spuds
1997 Jane Mattila of Pinewood, Minnesota, Nurse Officer – U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS) Commissioned Corps., Red Lake Indian Health Service Hospital in MN
1998 Ryan Guerrette of Mars Hill, Operations Manager, Big Rock Ski Area
1999 Dan Lalonde of Limestone, Microcomputer Technician, University of Maine at Presque Isle
2000 Kelly Lundeen of Mars Hill, Administrator, The Aroostook Health Center
2001 Mark Kelley of Mapleton, Owner, Country Farms Market in Easton
2002 Justinian Engels of Lakewood, New York,
   Heavy Duty Service Engineer, Cummins Inc.
2003 Robbie Dumond of Bellevue, Nebraska, Flight & Critical Care Nurse,
   Children’s Hospital & Medical Center
2004 Martha Frank of Caribou, Co-Owner, Big Cheese Pizza
2005 Brian Mosher of Presque Isle, Program Director, Citadel Broadcasting
2006 Tim Dionne of Hodgdon, Manufacturing Engineer, Smith & Wesson
2007 Michaele Black of Portland, Accounts Payable, Gobeil's Furniture
2008 Kristina Braley of Chapman, Defense Finance Accounting Service (DFAS)
2009 Emily Chandler of Presque Isle, Nanny
2010 Robert Gagnon of Madawaska, County Plumbing & Heating
2011 Dustin Graham of Mapleton, NMCC 2011 Graduate and Student at the University of Maine