



News Release

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NMCC's Mitchell Peace Scholar to speak about his experiences in Ireland on November 17

Aroostook County - A Northern Maine Community College student who spent four months studying abroad in Ireland earlier this year will share his experiences with interested members of the campus and local community on Tuesday, November 17, at 12:00 noon in the E. Perrin Edmunds Library at NMCC.

Lucas Ireland, 20, of Mapleton, a senior with a double major in residential construction and computer-aided drafting at NMCC was one of two Maine Community College System students selected as a 2009 recipient of the George Mitchell Peace Scholarship. He spent the months of February, March, April and May of this year living in Cork, Ireland and studying at the Cork Institute of Technology. The Scholarship fund was created in 1998 to honor former U.S. Senator and Maine native George Mitchell for his work and dedication in helping to establish peace between Northern and Southern Ireland.

"It was incredible. The experience of a lifetime," said Ireland. "Words cannot express the opportunity that being selected a Mitchell Peace Scholar provides for students. It was very enlightening to go and see how other people live and to appreciate the world view of others. I gained a lot of appreciation for my heritage and learned a lot about myself and others."

In addition to being immersed in the Irish culture, Ireland looks back upon his experience as an opportunity to truly understand and appreciate what it is like to be a citizen of the world. Aside from short trips to England and Spain during his time overseas, he lived in an apartment block in Cork with many students from other foreign countries.

He also became an active member of the International Student Society, comprised largely of foreign exchange students. The organization included people from Finland, France, Spain, Germany, Czech Republic, Croatia, and South Africa among others.

"I made a lot of friends from all over the world. I was very interested to hear about life in their countries, and the others were very interested to hear about life in Mapleton, Maine. I often shared pictures of The County," said Ireland. "I was exposed to so much more than just the Irish culture. In the end, participating in this program has given me a much greater appreciation of where I come from."

As a college student, the experience was centered on an academic program, which for Ireland was construction management. He completed a full semester at the Cork Institute of Technology, taking five courses, which included construction management, measurements and estimates, construction law, cost planning and control, and construction technology.

“It reactivated my thirst for learning,” said Ireland. “It has made me a much more open person. I apply things I learned in the classroom in Ireland here at NMCC, as I used information from NMCC in Ireland.”

Ireland is in his next to last semester at NMCC. He will graduate in May.

The public is invited and encouraged to attend his presentation on November 17. For more information, contact Gail Roy in the E. Perrin Edmunds Library at NMCC at 768-2734.

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Northern Maine Community College student Lucas Ireland (right) celebrates St. Patrick's Day in Cork, Ireland. The senior in NMCC's residential construction and computer-aided drafting program spent four months studying in Ireland as a Mitchell Peace Scholar.