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## ***Press Release***

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### **NMCC campus, students and employees to play major role in coming USSA Junior Olympics**

**Aroostook County** - When 400 of the nation's top teenage cross country skiers converge on Presque Isle March 5 through 14, their warm Star City welcome will be led in part by Northern Maine Community College, as the campus is opening its facilities and mobilizing its people to help ensure the important event runs smoothly.

The College has partnered closely with the organizing committee on several fronts according to Jason Parent, NMCC director of development and college relations and chair of the cultural events committee for the 2010 United States Ski and Snowboard Association Cross Country Junior Olympics. Among the areas supported by NMCC include live webcasting of the various races throughout the week, hosting of a series of team captains' meetings on campus, students and employees volunteering at the Nordic Heritage Center venue in various capacities, and the hosting and coordination of the final official event – the Katahdin Trust Company Closing Ceremonies – which will be held in the NMCC gymnasium on Saturday, March 13.

“NMCC is pleased to be playing such an important role in the Junior Olympics. The event presents a wonderful opportunity for us to showcase Aroostook County to people from across the United States and will provide the region with a significant economic boost,” said Parent. “Our students, faculty and staff are looking forward to actively participating in the activities and are especially pleased that we will have the opportunity to host all of the athletes and coaches and many of their supporters on campus throughout the week.”

The College will be the site for both the first and last official events on the schedule. Beginning on Saturday, March 5, coaches and other officials of each of the ten regional teams from Alaska to New England will hold the first of five team captains' meetings in the new Hunt Multimedia Center at NMCC. A USSA sport organizational meeting will also be held at NMCC during the week.

A live streaming video feed of all of the ski races held at the Nordic Heritage Center venue during the week of the Junior Olympics will be available courtesy of the College information technology staff and students working in the IT office. The College's IT staff will be connecting a streaming web server to event cameras and configuring the network for the web casts. Live web casts will be fed through the College website and available for viewing to supporters of the athletes across the country and others interested in checking out the races through a link on the 2010 Junior Olympic website on competition days.

"Being able to provide live web casts of the ski races will allow access to the events at the Nordic Heritage Center from anywhere in the world," said Barry Ingraham, NMCC director of physical plant and technology. "We are pleased to help the community by using our available resources to provide this important service to the event volunteers and those from near and far who will be supporting the competing athletes."

While the information technology staff and student workers are webcasting, fourteen students in NMCC's emergency medical services program will be among the many volunteering during the week. Under the direction of instructor Daryl Boucher, the students will assist professionals from the Aroostook Medical Center in providing on-site medical care to the competing athletes.

"Some will serve as medical volunteers on the course, and the rest will be assigned to the first aid station and stadium," said Boucher. "This fits well into the community leadership program of the department. Students are expected to participate in at least ten hours per semester of civic or community events as part of their clinical requirements. This really helps with collaboration and leadership skills, and they see the importance of being involved and volunteering."

While the EMS students care for the athletes at the competition venue, the Aramark dining services staff on the NMCC campus will look after the dietary needs of the more than 120 athletes and coaches of the teams representing the New England and Midwest regions. The two teams will have lunch and dinner in the Reed Dining Commons at NMCC during their weeklong stay in Presque Isle.

For NMCC dining services manager Rob Ottaviano feeding a large number of young competitive skiers is not a new concept. Ottaviano was part of the foodservice team at the University of Maine at Fort Kent in 2004 when the Biathlon World Cup came to that community and the biathletes dined daily at the University. A survey of athletes at the end of that year's World Cup circuit ranked food at the Fort Kent competition above all other sites.

"Having the athletes from these two teams dining on our campus each day will provide a great chance to both introduce NMCC to these soon-to-be college-age students, as well as an ideal way to engage our student body in this important community event," said Parent.

The culmination of the Junior Olympics will also take place on the NMCC campus. The College gymnasium will be the host site for the Katahdin Trust Company Closing Ceremonies on Saturday, March 13, beginning at 6:00 p.m.

A dinner, featuring an array of Aroostook County and Maine food products from locally grown baked potatoes and Maine coast chowder to Houlton Farms Dairy Ice Cream and blueberries for dessert, will be served to upwards of 800 people, including the athletes and their coaches and some parents.

The theme for the evening is consistent with the theme for all of the non-sport events held throughout the week. Cultural event organizers plan to showcase the state through a series of activities that together comprise "The Maine Event." Special attention will be focused on Aroostook County and its traditions, cultures and lures.

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