



News Release

Contact:
Jason Parent
Development and
College Relations Office
33 Edgemont Drive
Presque Isle, ME 04769
Phone: (207) 768-2808
Fax: (207) 760-1101
jparent@nmcc.edu

February 17, 2010
NR10019

NMCC campus mourns the loss of transformational leader with passing of Harold Mailman

Aroostook County - Although it has been three decades since his retirement as director (the title given to president at the time) of what was known then as Northern Maine Vocational Technical Institute, the legacy of Harold Mailman looms large on the campus he is credited with transforming into a remarkable institution of higher learning. With Mailman's passing at age 83 on February 14, Northern Maine Community College is remembering the visionary who led the campus from 1969 through 1979.

"Mr. Mailman was loved and respected by the NMVTI, and later NMTC and NMCC, community. Harold and his wife Beatrice reached out to students and staff in very personal ways that fostered the growth of students and staff alike," said NMCC President Timothy Crowley. "Harold had an impact on this campus that administrators hope to achieve. He supported student development, nurtured staff members and expected excellence. He had a profound influence on the development of this college."

That impact was recognized by the campus community in 1991, when the College celebrated Mailman's legacy by naming the trade and technical occupations building in his honor. The facility, one of many constructed during his tenure, houses the residential construction, plumbing and heating, diesel hydraulics, and automotive technology programs, as well as the welding lab.

One of the individuals who works in the Mailman Trades Building each day is NMCC's longest-serving faculty member Sonny Michaud, welding instructor. Michaud, who was hired by Mailman, recalls the leader as one who inspired confidence.

"He was a true gentleman, an extremely nice man and a great president. His main focus always remained on the school and the students. He would always seek out the advice of others, saying that he wanted to hear more than his own opinion on a matter before moving forward," said Michaud. "Like we do today, we had budget cuts back then, but despite it all Harold always remained positive. He would go out of his way to speak with students and faculty."

Mailman took over at the College from former director Ralph Sylvester in 1969 just as construction began on the first permanent building at the institution – the Augusta K. Christie Building, which serves as the main classroom and administration building today. He came to NMVTI from the State Bureau of Vocational Education, where he served as coordinator of vocational education programs. He was previously a teacher and coach.

During his decade-long tenure, Mailman oversaw the construction of the first campus residential hall – Andrews Hall, the building trades shop – later named in his honor, a new shop for the auto body repair program, and north and south wing additions to the Christie Building, including an auditorium-style lecture hall, gymnasium and electrical/electronics wing.

On the academic side, under Mailman NMVTI was granted authority to award associate degrees to business education and trade and technical program students, the plumbing and heating program was added to the curriculum, and the institution was voted into membership in the New England Association of Schools and Colleges.

Dennis Albert, a 1976 graduate of the then NMVTI sheet metal program, was a student at the college when he first met Harold and Beatrice Mailman. The couple left a lasting impression.

“I was a student here when he was director and then went away for a couple of years after graduation. When I came back, he hired me then oversaw construction of the building I work in today,” said Albert. “Harold was always looking to increase enrollment at the College and turned the school over from the old military base to the buildings we see here on campus today. I will always remember how easy to talk to he was. He and his wife were quite a team. He took care of things on campus and Bea (Mailman) was the one who looked after the political side of things for us. They were a powerful team.”

Mailman was also responsible for extending the school’s outreach through northern Maine. In 1972, an adult education specialist was added to the College staff, allowing for greater expansion of programs County-wide. The institute began serving communities from Millinocket to Fort Kent, offering programs to meet individual needs for pursuing a specialized ambition, an associate degree or programs needed by industry.

His impact in the local community has also been lasting. During his tenure as director of NMVTI, Mailman oversaw the start of what would become an on-going three decade plus partnership between the College and Presque Isle Kiwanis Club to build a home for an Aroostook County family. Referred to as the Sinawik (Kiwanis spelled backwards) project, the initiative is now in its 33rd year and involves five of NMCC’s trade and technical occupations programs.

Mailman has been a longstanding supporter of the NMCC. He and his late wife Beatrice donated to the NMCC Foundation and its scholarship fund on multiple occasions.

Mailman retired from NMVTI in 1979 and relocated to the Bangor area, where he went on to serve as adult education director at Husson College. He also started, along with his son-in-law Les Hunsinger, MHR Sheet Metal and served as company president until 1999.

Mailman was active in his local community, serving on Hermon Town Council, and was a member of Hammond Street Congregational Church and Rotary Club International. He held a life membership in the American Vocational Association and is listed in the 1973-1974 edition of Outstanding Educators in America.

He was predeceased by his wife of 59 years, Beatrice Mailman. He is survived by three children, Raymond and his wife, Pamela, of Houlton, Deanne and her husband, Butch Greenlaw Jr., of Alexander and Cynthia and her husband, Les Hunsinger, of Hermon; six grandchildren, nine great-grandchildren; three brothers, Raymond, Earle and his wife, Georgette, all of Saco, and Gearld and his wife, Francis, of Portland; several nieces and nephews. A service of remembrance will be announced at a later date.

#####



Former NMVTI (now Northern Maine Community College) Director Harold Mailman (left) with Instructor Dennis Albert at the 30th Anniversary Celebration of the Sinawik Project in 2007. The trade and technical occupations building at NMCC is named in honor of the former campus leader and visionary.



Former NMVTI (now Northern Maine Community College) President Harold Mailman (right) as photographed just prior to his retirement from the College in 1979, reviewing plans with former NMVTI drafting instructor Dick Baird.