



News Release

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Service Learning Project has NMCC students focus on world famine and feeding the hungry in The County

Aroostook County - The issue of world hunger and the work of local non-profit agencies to ensure that Aroostook County residents do not go hungry will be tackled in a hands on way this month by students in classes taught by Northern Maine Community College instructor David Raymond.

During the month of April, 27 students enrolled in the two sections of Raymond's ethics class this semester will either become engaged in volunteer work at an area soup kitchen or food pantry, or experience firsthand the reality of hunger, while simultaneously raising funds to help feed the hungry. According to the instructor, the purpose of the assignment is to put theory into practice by helping to lessen hunger in the local community, in the country and in the world.

"Most communities in Aroostook County have some sort of food pantry, soup kitchen or free meals program. The students are asked to make contact with one of these groups and offer their time to help in any way the organization deems fit," said Raymond.

Alternatively, students can choose to join Raymond in participating in the national 30 Hour Famine for Hunger sponsored by World Vision. Now in its 19th year, World Vision's 30 Hour Famine raises awareness and money to fight hunger both overseas and in the United States.

"The goal of this project is for the students to solicit sponsors for their 30 hour fast in support of world hunger relief," said Raymond. "The number 30 is significant in two ways. First, it represents the amount of dollars needed by relief agencies (in this case, World Vision) to feed a child for a month. Thirty is also the amount of time (hours) that you need to go without eating to experience the reality of hunger. Not eating for a day is difficult but relatively easy to do, a minor annoyance. Starting with the second day the hunger becomes an ever-present reality. It is only then that you begin to realize what people who lack food go through on a daily basis."

The students who are taking part in this effort will be fasting on April 22 and 23 as part of the nationally coordinated 30 Hour Famine initiative. The fast will begin after breakfast (8:00 a.m.) on Thursday, April 22 and end at noon on Friday, April 23.

At noon on April 22 Raymond will lead a discussion on hunger that will include past participants sharing their thoughts and feelings about the 30 Hour Famine. When the fast ends at noon on April 23, participants will come together for a group meal that will consist of a typical ration given by relief agencies to famine victims.

“Even for the students who opt to work in a local food pantry, I am recommending that they give up a meal or two during the 30 Hour Famine if they are in good health and able. There is nothing like personal experience to make an issue real,” said Raymond.

Students participating in the 30 Hour Famine are turning to the NMCC campus and local community to help them raise money by making a donation to support their efforts. Donations are being accepted on their behalf in the NMCC college relations office, just off the Christie lobby. Donations are tax deductible, and receipts will be provided.

“Every dollar counts,” said Raymond. “One dollar can help feed and care for a child for a day.”

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