



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

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Kent-Conant to be inducted in Aroostook County Health Care Professionals Wall of Distinction

Aroostook County - A highly regarded educator and leader in the health care profession in Maine, Betty Kent-Conant, will be honored as the 2010 inductee to the Aroostook County Health Care Professionals Wall of Distinction at a ceremony at Northern Maine Community College on May 10.

The wall of honor, the concept for which was developed by faculty in the nursing and allied health department at NMCC, was originally unveiled to the public in May, 2008. The selection of this year's inductee holds special significance, as Kent-Conant, who will retire at the end of this academic year, has served on the faculty at the Presque Isle College for 30 years, half of that time as nursing and allied health department chair.

Kent-Conant, of Fort Fairfield, was hired in 1979 by then Northern Maine Vocational Technical Institute as a health occupations instructor in the school of practical nursing. She helped transition the institution from a practical nursing program to the present-day associate degree program and in 1994 took over as department chair.

"Betty has been an innovative leader in the delivery of nursing and healthcare education to residents of Maine, especially the rural rim counties of our state. She has been a driving force in the expansion and outreach of associate degree level nursing to residents of Washington County, southern Aroostook County and the St. John Valley," said NMCC President Timothy Crowley. "Her efforts have put more highly trained registered nurses at the bedside of patients in rural Maine and have transcended nursing and allied education delivery at our college, especially in the area of technology. Today, because of her efforts, NMCC is a leader in the delivery of healthcare education."

Prior to joining NMCC, she held nursing positions at Community General Hospital in Fort Fairfield for a decade and spent a year as an emergency room staff nurse at Franklin Memorial Hospital in Farmington.

At the state level, Kent-Conant was appointed by former Maine Governor Angus King to serve on the Maine State Board of Nursing in 1999 and reappointed to the board in 2003 by Governor John Baldacci. She also serves on the Associate Degree Nursing Council of Maine.

Locally, Kent-Conant is very involved in the community. She serves on The Aroostook Medical Center – Horizons Inc. Board of Directors, the Eastern Maine Health Care Professional Advisory Committee, the Northern Maine Regional Emergency Medical Services Council, and the Northern Maine Rural Health Research Coalition

She also belongs to a number of professional organizations including the National League for Nursing, the Sigma Theta Tau International Nursing Honor Society Kappa Zeta Chapter, the American Nurses Association, Maine Nurses Association, National Education Association, and Maine Education Association.

Kent-Conant is a past recipient of the NMCC President's Award, was selected as an Outstanding Woman of Aroostook County in 2001-2002 and is a three time recipient of Beta Sigma Phi's Woman of the Year honor.

She holds a Master of Science in Nursing degree from the University of Southern Maine, which she earned in 1989, a Bachelor of Science in health sciences/community health education from the University of Maine at Farmington (1979), and a diploma from the registered nurse program at the former Eastern Maine General Hospital School of Nursing in Bangor (1968). She also completed undergraduate course work at NMCC and at the University of Maine at Presque Isle.

Criteria for selection to the Health Care Professionals Wall of Distinction include demonstrated commitment to health care, commitment to health care education, and contribution to the larger community of health care.

“The nursing faculty unanimously selected Betty for this honor because of her commitment to the profession of nursing and dedication to the education of nursing students at the college. She has demonstrated strong leadership in support of nursing education throughout her career. She has always been an advocate for nursing students as the future of nursing, and reminds them that the art of nursing is as important as the science. It has been my privilege to work closely with Betty for over twenty years, and she is truly deserving of this recognition,” said Eileen McDougal, NMCC senior level nursing faculty member.

A reception and induction ceremony for Kent-Conant will take place on Monday, May 10, at 4:00 p.m. The event will be held in the Edmunds Conference Center. It will mark the end of National Nurses Week, which officially begins each year on May 6 and ends on May 12, Florence Nightingale's birthday, as well as the start of National Hospital Week, which runs May 9 through 15.

Family members and friends, College and community officials, and representatives of health care organizations throughout Aroostook County, many of whom serve on the advisory committees for NMCC nursing and allied health programs, have been invited to participate in the induction ceremony for the Aroostook County Health Care Professionals Wall of Distinction.

Kent-Conant will be honored through tributes prepared and presented by NMCC nursing faculty and community leaders. Afterwards, her official photo will be unveiled.

For more information on the Aroostook County Health Care Professionals Wall of Distinction or the upcoming reception and induction ceremony, contact the NMCC college relations office at 768-2809.

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Betty Kent-Conant