



# News Release

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## County connection prominent in leadership of Maine Community College System

**Aroostook County** - The newly elected leadership of the Maine Community College System Board of Trustees includes two familiar Aroostook County faces. Kris Doody of Caribou and Robert Clark of Fort Fairfield will serve for the next two years as chair and vice chair respectively of the 13-member board that oversees Maine's seven community colleges.

Meeting on the Northern Maine Community College campus in Presque Isle on June 23, the NMCCS Trustees elected Doody and Clark unanimously. The County leaders were congratulated by another Aroostook native Daniel Wathen, the outgoing chair of the board and former chief justice of the Maine Supreme Judicial Court, who was raised in Easton. Before calling the vote, Wathen asked directors if there were any other nominations "before we have a complete Aroostook County sweep."

This will not mark the first time that Doody and Clark have teamed together to help advance community colleges in Maine. In 2007-2008 the two joined former NMCCS trustee board chair and current NMCC Foundation board chair Brian Hamel as tri-chairs of the Presque Isle college foundation's first-ever major gifts campaign. The "Campaign for The County's College" raised over \$2.5 million dollars to support student scholarship and instructional technology, as well as to help the institution meet immediate community needs.

Doody, the CEO of Cary Medical Center in Caribou, and Clark, the executive director of the Northern Maine Development Commission, headquartered in Caribou, were both appointed by Governor Baldacci to serve as system trustees in 2006.

In addition to her role on the NMCCS Board of Trustees, Doody was appointed to serve on the Governor's Community College Advisory Council. She has been actively involved with Northern Maine Community College over the years, serving in the past on the nursing program's advisory committee.

"NMCC has educated in excess of 60 percent of the nursing staff we employ at Cary Medical Center, so we recognize the value of the community college system," said Doody. "We now need to translate that across the entire State of Maine to our seven campuses because the community college system has a huge economic impact for the entire state."

Clark is a former member and vice chair of the NMCC Foundation. In addition, he is a 1975 graduate of Northern Maine Vocational Technical Institute, a forerunner of NMCC.

Doody and Clark will work closely with the other trustees from throughout Maine and MCCS President John Fitzsimmons, who has served as leader of the system for two decades, to move the community colleges forward at a time of great challenge and opportunity.

“We are looking at some very challenging times. At the same time, we are expecting our system to continue to grow next fall. So even in the face of difficult economic conditions for our colleges, we are bringing more people in. We have grown 62 percent since 2003 and have the second-fastest growing community college system in the nation, so people are pouring into our colleges. We have to keep those doors open,” said Fitzsimmons. “Kris Doody has a lot to offer our system, and we are just thrilled that she will be in a position to help us move forward.”

The Maine Community College System is Maine’s comprehensive two-year college system, offering over 300 career and transfer programs, continuing education and customized training for business and industry. The seven community colleges are located in Auburn, Bangor, Fairfield, Presque Isle, South Portland, Calais, and Wells. Off-campus centers are located in Augusta, Bath, Dover-Foxcroft, East Millinocket, Ellsworth, Houlton, Madawaska, South Paris, and South Portland.

The Community Colleges served over 16,300 students in degree and non-degree programs and courses in fall 2009.

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*Aroostook County is well represented in the leadership of the Maine Community College System Board of Trustees. Three County natives, (left to right) Daniel Wathen, Kris Doody and Robert Clark, all trustees, were present at a recent meeting of the MCCA Board at NMCC in Presque Isle. Wathen, who graduated from Easton High School, is the board's outgoing chair. Doody, CEO of Cary Medical Center in Caribou, is the newly elected chair of the board. Clark, executive director of the Northern Maine Development Commission, is the newly elected vice chair.*