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News Release

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Cariani to lead free playwriting/screenwriting workshop for interest community members at NMCC

Aroostook County - It isn't everyday that Aroostook County residents have the opportunity to participate in a writing workshop led by a Tony Award nominated actor and acclaimed playwright, but that's just the opportunity Northern Maine Community College will offer the public when John Cariani returns to the Star City in the coming week.

Cariani, who is visiting Presque Isle to act in the hometown premier of his play *Almost Maine*, has added to his itinerary a free playwriting/screenwriting workshop for interested community members. The session will be held at NMCC on Friday, March 18, between 12:00 noon and 2:00 p.m. in the Edmunds Library.

"There are so many different kinds of writing. There are essays, novels, short stories...and I found out that my favorite way to write was to write people *talking*, writing what's *spoken* - which is...writing plays and screenplays and teleplays. This is just another way to look at writing," said Cariani. "It's surprising how many people who don't think they're writers find that they have a gift for writing dialogue, people talking--for writing stories that aren't meant to be read, but that are meant to be spoken and watched and heard. I just want people to think about that kind of writing."

The style is evident in Cariani's *Almost Maine*, which depicts a mythical town in the northern part of the state and the romantic happenings on a cold night. The play was named by Dramatics Magazine as the most performed production in North American high schools in 2010.

"I want to do this because there are some great stories that need to be told by people who are from northern Maine. In this day and age, anybody can make a movie or write a play - and get them produced! There are theaters in Presque Isle - places to put on plays. And we can all make movies now. So, make them. Make movies, write plays...and get some stories about northern Maine into the world. Northern Mainers have a unique perspective on the world. And they have excellent stories to tell. So let's tell them," said Cariani.

In addition to penning *Almost Maine*, Cariani had a recurring role on the NBC television show *Law and Order* and made his Broadway debut in the 2004 revival of *Fiddler on the Roof*.

Before the playwriting/screenwriting workshop begins, a READ poster featuring Cariani will be officially unveiled in the Edmunds Library. The American Library Association READ campaign is a literacy program designed to encourage reading for enjoyment. The national program features posters of notable Americans and celebrities who are photographed with their favorite book to lend support to the simple but powerful message: READ!

Cariani posed for the READ poster at NMCC during a visit to campus in December 2010. The newest poster will be hung in the library with others that include former Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell, Jerry “The Beaver” Mathers, and former NMCC Mitchell Peace Scholars.

The public is invited and encouraged to participate in the free session. For more information on the playwriting/screenwriting workshop to be led by Cariani on March 18 or to register (pre-registration recommended for planning purposes), contact Gail Roy in the Edmunds Library at NMCC at 768-2734.

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