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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

Creative Writers Reading Series to take place at NMCC in April

Aroostook County - The public is encouraged to join Northern Maine Community College in the celebration of both National Community College Month and National Poetry Month. NMCC is hosting a Creative Writers Reading Series to be held in the Library during the month of April. Each week a noon-time session will feature a guest writer as well as students from the college.

The reading series will take place on three consecutive Wednesdays, April 13, 20, and 27. Each session begins at noon and lasts for about an hour. Students who are in the Creative Writing class at the college will each participate by briefly reading their own original work, followed by a guest speaker. The guest speaker for the day will read a passage from their published work and then answer questions about the work, their experiences as a writer, or other areas of interest the audience members may have.

“The featured guest will be reading different forms of literature. During each reading there will be a specific genre of writing: poetry, fiction, and non-fiction. Maine is fortunate to have a wide range of talented writers,” said Jan Grieco, NMCC instructor and coordinator of the reading series. “I am impressed with the number of professional writers who are willing to share their writing styles and experiences with the public and students attending NMCC.”

The reading series gets underway on Wednesday, April 14, with writer Shonna Milliken Humphrey. The Houlton Native now resides in Gorham, Maine. She received her Masters Degree in Fine Arts in Writing and Literature from Bennington College in Vermont.

The former executive director of Maine Writers and Publishers Alliance is now her own consultant. She takes pride in coaching groups or individuals on writing, editing, marketing, and development skills. Her own work has been featured in literary journals, local magazines, and *Maine Voices: an Anthology of Maine Writers*. She will be reading a passage from her first novel, *Show Me Good Land*, which is fiction—a departure from her normal genre of writing, non-fiction. The novel touches upon a fictional town and the hardships such as poverty, loss, and redemption that the characters’ experience.

“This year in particular is unique since Shonna will be hosting a book signing that same evening,” said Grieco. “She is encouraging the public to visit the NMCC library at 7:00 p.m., where they can meet and purchase a personally signed copy of her novel. This is the first year in which the featured guest will be selling a copy of their book on the same day of the Creative Writers Reading Series.” There will be light refreshments served along with a guest performer, Travis James Humphrey, Shonna’s husband, who will be entertaining the audience with his music.

The April 20 reading will feature Michael Macklin, who is a poetry writer for the *Café Review*. He is not only a poet but is also a carpenter for the Waynflete School in Portland, Maine. He graduated from Vermont College with a Master’s Degree in Fine Arts, and he went on to pursue a career as review editor for The *Café Review*. His poems have been published in *Café Review*, *Animus*, *Rattle*, and other journals and anthologies. Macklin will be reading a passage from his first chapbook *Driftland*. He feels that he is a poet in order to feed his soul and a carpenter to feed his body.

A non-fiction writer will be featured in the last session on April 27. Due to unforeseen circumstances, Grieco is currently looking to finalize plans to replace the writer originally slated to speak. More details on the guest author will be available later this month. Questions can be directed to the college at 768-2809.

After each of the sessions, the featured guest writer will be speaking to students in Grieco’s Creative Writing class. They will critique her students’ work, share with them the process to becoming a professional writer, and discuss where they receive their inspiration from, as well as answer any other questions the students may have.

This is the fourth Creative Writers Reading Series that has taken place at the college. With each year the students and guest speakers have changed, but the intent remains the same each year.

“Each year the students get to showcase their talent to the public and professional writers,” said Grieco. “Most of the students who take this reading series seriously do go on to pursue professional writing careers. It makes me happy, since I enjoy writing so much, to see students from this college have careers in professional writing.”

Members of the campus and community members are welcome to attend the series, which begins Wednesday, April 13, at noon in the NMCC Library.

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