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News Release

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Presque Isle Historical Society and NMCC partner to offer Certificate in Non-Profit Management Program; offering made possible through Maine Community Foundation Grant

Aroostook County – Area residents interested in and involved with non-profit organizations now have the opportunity to take courses and even earn a certificate in non-profit management through an initiative led by the Presque Isle Historical Society in partnership with Northern Maine Community College.

The pilot project, the first of its kind in northern Maine, is made possible through a grant from the Aroostook County Fund of the Maine Community Foundation. The certificate program will introduce a series of eight courses covering a wide variety of topics of interest to non-profit organizations.

Coordinated by the NMCC Continuing Education Division, workshops will run for four hours once monthly on Friday mornings, beginning on September 16, with different sessions held through the final course offering on April 20, 2012. According to Kimberly Smith, secretary/treasurer of the Presque Isle Historical Society and project grant writer and coordinator, the timing could not be better to introduce such a program in northern Maine.

“Our organization (Presque Isle Historical Society) recognizes the need for such training for our own board and volunteers as well as that of the other 485 Aroostook County non-profit organizations if we are to be successful in achieving our missions in this economy,” said Smith. “It is imperative that non-profit executives as well as key staff and volunteers have the skills and resources necessary to meet the challenges facing them.”

Among the goals of the initial program offering, made possible through the Maine Community Foundation grant, is to demonstrate the need for and potential success of such a program moving forward in the region. More and more institutions of higher learning across the country are recognizing the need for training specific to the non-profit arena.

Research conducted by Smith shows 129 colleges and universities offer at least one course for undergraduate credit and 157 have at least one such course offering at the graduate level. While 34 percent of the programs are offered in the northeast, there is currently only one university certificate program in the State of Maine offered by the University of Maine Hutchinson Center in Belfast.

“This program provides a valuable opportunity for professional development that might ordinarily be both too costly and time consuming for many local nonprofit agencies. It integrates NMCC’s commitment to academic excellence with the practical knowledge of the instructors and the realistic work experience of the participants,” said Beth Hummel, business and industry coordinator in the NMCC continuing education division.

The workshops, offered on the NMCC campus, will cover the following topics: Marketing for Non-Profits (September 16), Grant-Writing 101 (October 21), Coaching Staff for Improved Performance (November 18), Fundraising for the Non-Profit (December 16), Strategic Planning for Non-Profits (January 20), Leadership Development for Non-Profits (February 17), Effective Use of Volunteers (March 16), and Financial Management for Non-Profits (April 20).

Individuals may enroll in as many or as few workshops in the program as desired. Those who complete any six of the eight sessions will be issued a “Certificate in Non-Profit Management” from the continuing education division of NMCC.

“We established this program to provide necessary resources and skills to strengthen non-profit leadership as they deal with today’s challenges. The program workshops are designed to offer strategies to improve the effectiveness of executive directors, staff, board members, and key volunteers responsible for the day-to-day operations of non-profit organizations,” said Smith. “We want the sessions to be as informative and helpful as possible, so we encourage participants to interact and provide real-life experiences.”

The cost for each course is \$49 for the first ten enrollees and \$79 per person for the class for participants who register after the first ten participants are confirmed. Any organization that pays for three attendees in one session may send a fourth at no cost. As a further incentive, any one that enrolls in all 8 classes pays only \$350 for the entire certificate program.

For more information on the Certificate in Non-Profit Management program or to enroll in any or all of the sessions, please contact the NMCC Continuing Education Division at (207) 768-2849 or bhummel@nmcc.edu.

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Keri Wells-Puckett (left), a member of the Aroostook County Committee of the Maine Community Foundation, presents a check to Kimberly Smith (center) of the Presque Isle Historical Society and Beth Hummel, business and industry coordinator in the NMCC continuing education division, to fund a project to develop a certificate in non-profit management pilot program in Aroostook County. The program will be offered through the continuing education division at Northern Maine Community College.