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News Release

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NMCC to host “conversation and coffee” event with DECD Commissioner; event to serve as official re-opening of College welding lab

Aroostook County - As part of the LePage administration’s efforts to ensure Mainers have educational and training opportunities to meet the needs of Maine employers, his commissioner of economic and community development will visit northern Maine to meet with area business leaders and take part in the re-opening of a key training facility on the campus of Northern Maine Community College.

George Gervais of the Department of Economic and Community Development will be the featured guest at “Conversation and Coffee with the Commissioner” on Friday, December 2, at 9:30 a.m. in the newly renovated welding lab in the Mailman Trades Building at NMCC. Business and community leaders have been invited to visit with Gervais to share their thoughts about moving the economy of the region forward and listen to the commissioner as he delivers the keynote address at the event, which will also serve as the official re-opening for the facility.

The welding lab at NMCC, which is utilized by students in several of the trade and technical occupation programs at the College that incorporate welding into the curriculum, has undergone a \$300,000 transformation over the past five months. The space was redesigned with a new layout to better address the student and instructor training needs in the area.

The scope of the project included design and renovation of the electrical and mechanical systems to improve indoor air quality and to increase energy efficiency. In addition, several new welders and new welding booths have been installed in the facility to ensure students are trained to best meet the needs of employers across the state.

“More than just an investment in the educational opportunities for students here at NMCC, this upgrade represents an investment in the workforce of our region and state,” said NMCC President Timothy Crowley. “We are pleased that Commissioner Gervais and business and community leaders from throughout the region will join us as we officially re-open this new facility. It is this kind of initiative that best demonstrates how the higher education community is working to ensure Mainers are well-trained and qualified to meet the needs of the state’s employers and to help move Maine’s economy forward.”

Work on the project commenced in July and was completed by local contractor A&L Construction of Presque Isle. It was funded in part through a bond issue supported by Maine voters.

Along with the “Conversation and Coffee with the Commissioner” event and official re-opening of the welding lab, Commissioner Gervais will spend the better part of the day at NMCC touring campus facilities and the Northern Maine Center for Excellence in Alternative Energy Training and Education.

In his capacity leading the Department of Economic and Community Development, Gervais is charged with developing economic sectors, promoting new businesses, growing existing businesses, and creating economic opportunity for Maine citizens. The department works closely with the Governor, the Legislature, and the private sector to accomplish this mission.

Gervais, of Hampden, has family in Aroostook County. He has served as assistant commissioner, development program manager and business development specialist within DECD since 2008. Gervais has served as commissioner since April.

Prior to joining DECD, Gervais served as senior loan officer at Carteret Mortgage Corp. and Dedicated Mortgage Associates, LLC. He also founded Grill Concepts, Inc., and EVO, Inc.

Gervais holds a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from the University of Maine Orono.

For more information on the “Conversation and Coffee with the Commissioner” event or to confirm attendance, contact the NMCC development and college relations office at 768-2810.

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Maine DECD Commissioner George Gervais