



# News Release

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**February 2, 2007**  
NR07009

## **NMCC's "Freezin' Falcons" participate in seventh "polar dip" for good cause**

**Aroostook County** - A team of Northern Maine Community College students and employees traveled to Pleasant Point on the coast of Downeast Maine on Friday, February 2, to take a "polar dip" into the frigid Atlantic Ocean. This annual event, featuring around 100 dippers from colleges and universities in both Maine and New Brunswick, supports Maine's Ronald McDonald House charity.

The NMCC group, the "Freezin' Falcons", consisted of six members who went into the water and five 'towellers', who watched out for the dippers during and after the swim. The County contingent participating in the seventh annual event was led by William Egeler, dean of students and a veteran of past polar dips.

"The services provided by the Ronald McDonald House to the people of Maine, and especially to the people of Aroostook County, are vital. I am pleased to participate in an activity, alongside students and employees from NMCC, that will benefit so many individuals in such a profound way," said Egeler. "Community service activities such as this not only benefit the intended recipients of the service, all who participate benefit."

Accompanying Egeler as his toweler was Tyler Rose of Caribou, who has experienced first hand the benefits of the Ronald McDonald House. He lived at the Ronald McDonald House in Bangor last year from the end of May until December while his daughter, Ashlynn, was undergoing treatment for infant leukemia.

"If it weren't for Ronald McDonald House, I don't know what I would have done. I gave up my job when my daughter was diagnosed. Being unemployed, it meant so much that I had a roof over my head...a place I could stay when I could get away from the hospital, a place to be able to make a home cooked meal. The staff were there when I needed someone to talk to. They can really relate, whether it's because they have gone through it themselves or from working so much with others who have gone through it," said Rose.

"It's really exciting for me to be able to help them now," he added. Rose plans to continue his involvement, perhaps even taking the dip himself next year.

Among those taking the icy plunge this year was Lori Keith, a 2006 NMCC graduate, who is now employed in the College Bookstore. This was Keith's fourth consecutive year participating in the polar dip. In 2004, she joined the team as a toweler. The past two years she has taken the plunge herself, and this year will participate for the first time as an employee.

"I know everyone thinks we're crazy, but it really isn't as bad as it sounds. For the dippers, our adrenaline is pumping at maximum capacity and usually the water temperature is warmer than the air temperature, so it actually feels balmy when we run in. The towelers, on the other hand, have to stand and wait for us to run in and come back out so it is very cold for them. I have been on both sides of the coin and have to admit that I would much rather be the dipper," said Keith. "I honestly do enjoy this event. We have a lot of fun doing it and it is a wonderful opportunity to raise money for the Ronald McDonald House in Bangor and show what caring, giving people we have here at NMCC."

The annual event, sponsored by the Washington County Community College student senate, has raised more than \$100,000 in the past six years. This year's goal is \$25,000, and the NMCC team hopes to raise at least \$3,000 toward that amount.

To support the efforts of the NMCC "polar dip" team and contribute to the Ronald McDonald House of Maine, individuals are asked to forward donations to the NMCC student affairs office, 33 Edgemont Drive, Presque Isle, ME 04769.



A group of NMCC students and employees traveled to Washington County to take part in the annual 'Polar Dip' on February 2. The 'dippers', who actually took the plunge into the Atlantic Ocean, are, front from left: Kaitlyn Bossie of Caribou, a nursing student; Nicole Hopkins of Limestone, a liberal studies student; Lori Keith of Presque Isle, who works in the NM bookstore; Sylvia Garey of Perham, a nursing student; Cecilia Wiggins of Presque Isle, an auto body repair student; and Bill Egeler of Presque Isle, NM dean of students. Those who accompanied them to serve as 'towelers' are, back from left: Michael Black of Presque Isle, a liberal studies student; Kim Ferguson of Caribou, who works in the NM library; Tammy Deschesne of Presque Isle, a paraeducation student; John Preston of Canterbury, CT, an auto body repair student; and Tyler Rose of Caribou, a residential construction student.