



March 26, 2013

# News Release

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## Creative Writers Reading Series offered at NMCC; Wood to Hold Book Signing

**Aroostook County** - The public is encouraged to join Northern Maine Community College in the celebration of both Community College Month and National Poetry Month. NMCC is hosting its annual Creative Writers Reading Series to be held in the Edmunds 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 10, 17, and 24. Each session begins at noon and lasts for about an hour. Students who are in the Creative Writing class at the college will participate by briefly reading from 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.

“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 10, with Jen Blood, author of the bestselling Erin Solomon mystery series. She has been awarded the Awesome Indies Seal of Quality for her first novel, *All the Blue-Eyed Angels* and received Honorable Mention at the New England Festival of Books for the second novel in the Erin Solomon Series, *Sins of the Father*, which takes place in northern Maine. The third novel in the series, *Southern Cross*, was released in March. Blood earned a master’s of fine arts (MFA) in creative writing/popular fiction from the University of Southern Maine, and leads seminars on writing, social media, and online marketing for authors. She lives in midcoast Maine.

The April 17 reading will feature Maine poet Anne Britting Oleson. Her work has been published widely on three continents--North America, Europe, and Asia. Oleson earned her MFA at the Stonecoast program of the University of Southern Maine. She has published two chapbooks, *The Church of St. Materiana* (2007) and *The Beauty of It* (2010), and submits work for publication every day. For twenty-five years she has taught public school, and she lives in central Maine with her family.

The Creative Writers Reading Series concludes on April 24 with author Monica Wood. Wood is the author of *When We Were the Kennedys: A Memoir from Mexico, Maine*, a New England indie bestseller; #1 indie bestseller in Maine; a national Indie Next pick; and an Oprah's 2012 Summer Reading pick. Wood is also the author of four works of fiction, most recently *Any Bitter Thing*, which spent twenty-one weeks on the American Booksellers Association extended bestseller list and was named a Book Sense Top Ten pick. Her other fiction includes *Ernie's Ark*, *Secret Language*, and *My Only Story*, a finalist for the Kate Chopin Award.

As part of the activities on April 24, Wood will also lead a discussion on her book *When We Were the Kennedys* in the NMCC library from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. as part of the college's spring semester Common Read activity. One or two books are selected each semester for interested students, employees and community members to read and then meet in a group format to discuss. Following the discussion will be a book signing by Wood. Wood's participation in the Common Read effort as well as the Creative Writers Reading Series is made possible in part through a grant from the Maine Humanities Council.

After each of the noon-time sessions, the featured guest writer will be speaking to students in Grieco's creative writing class. The writers will critique the students' work, share with them the process to becoming a professional writer, and discuss where they receive their inspiration, as well as answer any other questions the students may have.

This marks the sixth year that the Creative Writers Reading Series is taking place at NMCC. While both the featured and the student writers have changed, the intent remains the same, according to Grieco.

"This is such a terrific opportunity for my students to have their voices heard," she said. "It's also a wonderful opportunity for other students at the College and members of the public who love literature to hear original work by both experienced, published writers and talented beginners. It is an exciting combination."

Members of the campus and community members are welcome to attend the series, which begins Wednesday, April 10, at noon in the NMCC library. All sessions are free and open to the public.

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