



News Release

Contact:
Sue Bernard
Development and
College Relations Office
33 Edgemont Drive
Presque Isle, ME 04769
Phone: (207) 768-2808
Fax: (207) 760-1101
sbernard@nmcc.edu

January 28, 2014

Northern Maine Community College Named Among Top 150 in U.S.

Aroostook—Northern Maine Community College has been cited by the Aspen Institute College Excellence program as one of the nation's top 150 community colleges for its commitment to student success and community college excellence. The designation means NMCC is eligible to compete for the Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence and \$1 million in prize funds.

The Aspen Prize, awarded every two years, is the nation's signature recognition of high achievement and performance from among more than 1,000 community colleges in the country. The program recognizes institutions for exceptional student outcomes in four areas: student learning, certificate and degree completion, employment and earnings, and high levels of access and success for minority and low-income students.

The Aspen Institute identified the top 150 community colleges through an assessment of institutional performance, improvement, and equity on student retention and completion measures. A selection committee of former community college presidents and faculty, along with respected researchers and policy experts, will select ten finalists.

"We are extremely proud to be selected and counted among this elite group of community colleges which brings well-deserved attention to our exceptional faculty," NMCC President Timothy Crowley reacted. "We are grateful that the Aspen program honors community colleges for the important role we have in society. Nearly half of America's college students, some seven million, attend community college across the country. NMCC is anxious to compete to be among the ten Aspen finalists."

NMCC will complete a written application containing detailed data on degree/certificate completion, labor market outcomes (employment and earnings), and student learning outcomes. Ten finalists will be named in the fall of this year. A distinguished Prize Jury will select a grand prizewinner and a few finalists with distinction in early 2015.

"Community colleges have tremendous power to change lives, and their success will increasingly define our nation's economic strength," said Josh Wyner, executive director of the Aspen Institute College Excellence Program. "This competition is designed to

spotlight the excellent work being done in the most effective community colleges, those that best help students obtain meaningful, high-quality education and training for competitive-wage jobs after college. We hope it will raise the bar and provide a roadmap for community colleges nationwide.”

Profiles of the winners’ practices will be publicized to increase public understanding of the work being done at outstanding community colleges. The Aspen Prize works to stimulate efforts that result in improved student success and to advance colleges’ and policy-makers’ understanding of what is needed to teach and graduate post-secondary students, especially the growing population of low-income and minority students on American campuses.

The Aspen Prize is funded by the Bank of America Charitable Foundation, Joyce Foundation, W.K. Kellogg Foundation, and Lumina Foundation.

###