



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

February 10, 2014

BREAKING THE MOLD NMCC RECOGNIZES STUDENTS IN NON-TRADITIONAL PROGRAMS

Aroostook— Meet Gabby Gorence, a student in the welding and metal fabrication program at NMCC. Although Gabby graduated from Caribou High School last year, she has an extensive background in welding. Gabby’s initial interest was heavily influenced by her grandfather who was a welder. As an 8th grade student, Gabby had the opportunity to participate in Totally Trades, a yearly conference held at NMCC that exposes young females to careers in the trades and technology. This experience intensified Gabby’s interest in the trades. She participated in the conference for five years, and during her junior and senior years of high school, she joined a panel discussion at the conference. “I really enjoy talking to younger girls about the trades. I like the idea of females in non-traditional fields. I feel more women are needed.” Gabby was also a student in the welding and metal fabrication program at the Caribou Technology Center during her junior year of high school.

There are several aspects of the welding and metal fabrication program that Gabby enjoys. She likes the “hands-on” nature of her classes, stating that learning is most effective for her when she is actively engaging in activities and projects. Because most of the work is done in class and during lab, Gabby is able to manage both school

and a part-time job. “Instructors are flexible. They help you out and work with you. They are very understanding and realize that you have to work in addition to going to school.” Gabby is also ready to start her career. “Because it is a 1-year program, I can go to work as soon as possible.” Gabby chose NMCC because it is close to home, allowing her to commute to school.



Photo: Gabby in the welding lab at NMCC

Gabby likes the different components of the program, such as blueprint reading and OSHA. Gabby feels she will gain a wealth of knowledge and skills that will increase her employment prospects when she graduates. “I feel I will use what I am learning and I’m not wasting my time.” Gabby also likes the variety that a career in welding and metal fabrication brings, including working on different projects and having opportunities to travel to various places. “I would like to apply to places locally first, until I get more experience. I might move away. I’m not afraid of change or trying new things.”

Gabby would like to pursue a career in metal fabrication or welding when she graduates. Gabby states that her instructors are knowledgeable about potential employers in the community and will assist her with job placement when she begins her job search.

Gabby also talks about the classroom environment. “Everyone in the class is very helpful. The teachers are supportive. Being one of the only females in the class can be

overwhelming at first, but you get used to it. The guys think it's cool that there are females in the class. They see that you're there to work, like they are." A challenge for Gabby is her size. "Sometimes it's difficult to operate the large machines. Physical strength is needed. There is a lot of lifting heavy metal." Gabby recommends exercise for anyone pursuing this field.

Gabby offers advice for females considering a career in welding and metal fabrication. "I definitely encourage females to consider a career in this field. People are interested in females in this trade." And how does Gabby succeed in class? "If you go to class and put time and effort into your work, it's hard to fail. If you take your work seriously, then you can do well."



Photo: Gabby in the sheet metal lab at NMCC

For more information about non-traditional programs available at NMCC, please contact Lori Smith, Student Support Career Specialist at 768-2793 or nlosmith@nmcc.edu

#####