



News Release

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NMCC Honors “Well Elders”

Aroostook County - Aroostook County senior citizens who volunteered for a nursing program initiative at Northern Maine Community College were the honored guests at a celebratory tea held recently on the NMCC campus.

The Well Elder program, coordinated annually by the NMCC nursing and allied health department, pairs members of the first-year nursing class with healthy senior citizens who volunteer to allow students into their homes throughout the semester to practice their assessment techniques. The unique program has been a part of the nursing curriculum at NMCC for more than a decade. The culmination of the project has involved bringing all of the students and well elders together for a celebration.

“The program provides a wonderful opportunity for students to observe and experience ‘normal’ aging in the individual’s own environment,” said Mary Cornelio, NMCC nursing instructor and coordinator of first-year nursing students. “It allows the students to reflect and gain a broad perspective of the aging process. The well elders play an important role in helping to mold the future generation of nurses and we are so appreciative of their allowing the students into their homes.”

At the event, students introduced their well elder and shared the most valuable lesson they learned that will help them throughout their nursing career. The attendees also heard about current issues related to elder health and educational opportunities from keynote speakers Nancy Roe and Judy Burleigh who both serve on the Board of Directors of Seniors Achieving Greater Education (SAGE).

When visiting their well elders, NMCC student nurses take vital signs, review medications, and assess home safety and general health lifestyles. Students also gain valuable experience practicing their interview and listening skills. This project allows the student not only to understand the importance of assessment, communication or history gathering, it allows them to gain a new appreciation of all the accomplishments and contributions made by the older generation.

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(photo below)



Photo Caption: Northern Maine Community College nursing students and the “well elders” they visited this fall gathered for the annual Well Elder Tea at NMCC in Presque Isle. Participating in the event were front row, from left: Lassana Dorleh, Kristen Long, Kaprice Tompkins and Hannah Eaton. Second row, seated from left: Marie Hewitt, Nancy Roe, Peggy Woodman, Carolyn Hallett, Joan Butler, Joyce Davis, Suzi James, Helen McConnell and Shirley Giberson. Third row, seated from left: Jack Parker, Stephanie Dane, Eleonora Toussaint, Okwuchi Uchendu, Shaena Pelletier, Anne Roy and Sharon Roix. Fourth row, standing from left: Pam Willett, Crystal Pipes, Brian Wing, Linda Wing, Bob Leland, Stephanie Plourde, Lois Shaw, Sarah Carver, Steve Davis, Ron Kofstad, Ashley Martin, Adam Murchison, Dave Maxy, Marti-Rae Bell, Reed Gagnon, Lossene Dorleh and Olga Lambruschini.