



# News Release

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## **Senator Susan Collins and student Joey Cyr to speak at 44<sup>th</sup> NMCC commencement May 19**

**Aroostook County** - U.S. Senator Susan Collins will address the 44<sup>th</sup> graduating class of Northern Maine Community College during commencement exercises on Saturday, May 19, at 10:00 a.m. in the College gymnasium. Collins, a native of Caribou, will speak before the 210 graduates, their guests, and NMCC faculty and staff.

The visit to the Presque Isle campus will be especially significant for Collins, as she joins the College community in celebrating the recent news that its precision metals manufacturing program has earned accreditation through the National Institute for Metalworking Skills. Maine's junior senator was instrumental in securing federal dollars to establish the high-tech program at NMCC in 2003.

"We are so pleased that Senator Collins will join us at commencement," said NMCC President Timothy Crowley. "She has been a strong supporter of the College and a great friend of higher education. Our institution and, more importantly, our students and faculty have benefited from her advocacy and efforts."

Collins, the 15<sup>th</sup> woman in history to be elected to the United States Senate, is serving her second term in Washington. She is currently the ranking member and a former chair of the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, which has jurisdiction over the Department of Homeland Security and is the Senate's chief oversight committee.

In addition, Collins serves on the Armed Services Committee and is a member of the Special Committee on Aging. She previously served for six years on the Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions.

In the area of education, Collins has championed legislation relating to both K through 12 and post-secondary. As one of the architects of landmark education reform legislation, she led the successful charge to triple funding for early reading initiatives.

She also authored the law providing a \$250 tax deduction for teachers who spend their own money on classroom supplies and recently successfully sought an extension of this law. Her goal of expanding access to higher education for all students led her to co-author the 1998 Higher Education Act and to support increases in Pell Grants and other student financial aid.

Also speaking during the commencement ceremony will be Joey Cyr of Van Buren, a graduating senior in the college's automotive technology program. Cyr was elected by his classmates to be this year's senior speaker.

The 22-year-old son of Charles and Judy Cyr is a 2002 graduate of Van Buren District Secondary School. Immediately after graduating from high school, Cyr enlisted in the U.S. Army earning the rank of corporal and serving overseas for two years in Korea and one year at Fort Bragg, North Carolina before being honorably discharged in 2005.

During his two-years at NMCC, Cyr earned the respect of both his fellow students and the College faculty. He was selected by automotive technology instructor Dan Boyd as a student intern for the program this academic year.

"I was very fortunate to be able to come back home after serving my Country and to have Northern Maine Community College as a resource to pursue my education and career dreams. All people in this region are fortunate to have this College in their backyard. I know the faculty, staff and students here have made a big difference in my life," said Cyr.

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**Editor's Note: Media Interviews with U.S. Senator Susan Collins and NMCC President Timothy Crowley will be accommodated at 9:30 a.m. in the NMCC College Library in the Edmunds Building.**



*Senator Susan Collins*



*Joey Cyr*