



**Banknorth**

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## *Press Release*

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### **TD Banknorth announces \$100,000 contribution to NMCC's *Campaign for the County's College*; funds designated to expand Community College allied health programs in St. John Valley**

**Aroostook County** - A \$100,000 gift from TD Banknorth made through the TD Banknorth Charitable Foundation to Northern Maine Community College will provide for increased access to healthcare education for residents of northernmost Maine.

The announcement of the gift to NMCC's *Campaign for the County's College* was made today by Larry Wold, president of TD Banknorth in Maine, at a luncheon on the Presque Isle College campus. The donation is part of a \$200,000 TD Banknorth gift announced last week to support rural initiatives being undertaken by the Maine Community College System.

Wold joined NMCC President Timothy Crowley in announcing the funds will be used to expand NMCC allied health offerings, most immediately the associate degree in nursing program, to the St. John Valley.

"Through this initiative, Northern Maine Community College is working to fill two vital needs in northern Aroostook County - access to both healthcare and health education opportunities for people in the region," said Wold. "We are very pleased to be able to assist with this effort, which will make a real difference in the lives of countless people."

The funding will bring NMCC's nursing program to the St. John Valley with related courses being offered as early as the coming semester beginning January 14. The announcement follows a ten month long concentrated effort by the College, St. John Valley Adult and Community Education Collaborative, and representatives of both the allied health and education communities in the Valley to meet a need expressed by the stakeholders.

“Our efforts to provide access to higher education and to meet a critical workforce development need that will allow for area residents to fill local jobs has received a tremendous boost today. The impact of this generous gift will be felt for years to come,” said Crowley. “The TD Banknorth gift will allow NMCC to expand the work it is doing to respond to the critical need for nurses in Aroostook County. The collaboration amongst the healthcare community, business and education will provide for access to education that will lead to rewarding careers.”

Results of a survey conducted in the summer of 2007 by the St. John Valley Adult and Community Education Collaborative amongst healthcare organizations in the Valley showed a high need for associate degree level nursing and other allied health program offerings in the northern region.

The survey responses were confirmed, on a larger scale, during a statewide listening tour of rural Maine conducted by Maine Community College System President John Fitzsimmons between July and November of 2007. The findings of the listening tour and a related \$6.2 million investment in programs and services to rural Maine by the Community College System were announced in Augusta on December 19.

TD Banknorth is among the first organizations supporting the MCCS Rural Initiative which will fund efforts to increase access to higher education in rural parts of the state. The expansion of allied health education program offerings in the St. John Valley by NMCC is the first project to be funded through the bank's donation.

TD Banknorth Inc. is a leading banking and financial services company headquartered in Portland, Maine, and a wholly-owned subsidiary of TD Bank Financial Group headquartered in Toronto, Canada. Aroostook County TD Banknorth banking centers are located in Fort Kent, Caribou, Presque Isle and Houlton.

The TD Banknorth Charitable Foundation is the charitable giving arm of TD Banknorth Inc. The Foundation's mission is to serve the individuals, families and businesses in all the communities where TD Banknorth operates, having made over \$22 million in charitable donations since its inception in 2002. The efforts of the Foundation are focused on the areas of economic empowerment, youth development and community support.

In appreciation and recognition of the private contribution, it was announced by Crowley that the Maine Community College System would provide an additional \$5,000 in scholarship money for the first cohort of students enrolling in the NMCC associate degree nursing program offered at a distance in the St. John Valley.

A well attended information session for prospective students interested in enrolling in the first class of the associate degree nursing program was held in Frenchville in November.

“As the demand for healthcare workers – and registered nurses in particular – continues to grow both here in the Valley and nationwide, it is imperative that we capitalize on this opportunity to educate and train this important part of our workforce locally,” said Peter Caron, on behalf of the St. John Valley Adult and Community Education Collaborative. “What seemed like a remote possibility in April, 2007 is now a distinct reality, thanks to the generosity of TD Banknorth, and to the efforts of NMCC and the Valley allied health stakeholder group to expand allied health educational opportunities in the Valley.”

The delivery method of the NMCC associate degree nursing program in the St. John Valley will be similar to how the College currently offers its program in southern Aroostook at the Houlton Higher Education Center. Participants will take classes through a combination of distance education technology and local course and clinical offerings.

As is the case in southern Aroostook, NMCC will partner to deliver the program with local healthcare facilities in the Valley, most of which have been represented in the group working to bring the offering to the region.

“By working collaboratively with the education and healthcare communities we have arrived at a delivery method to serve this region,” said Crowley.

The announcement of the TD Banknorth contribution is not only a milestone in terms of allied health education delivery in northern Maine, but also marks a significant accomplishment in the year-long major gifts campaign launched by NMCC at the end of February 2007.

The gift, through the TD Banknorth Charitable Foundation, is among the three single largest received by the *Campaign for the County’s College*. It matches a \$100,000 gift from the Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield Foundation announced in October and is second only to the \$1 million donation made in late August by Floyd Harding, a Presque Isle attorney, local civic leader and former Maine Senate majority leader.

The TD Banknorth donation brings the total funds raised through the *Campaign for the County’s College* to \$1.94 million – well within striking distance of the fund raising drive’s goal of \$2 million. The first-ever major gifts campaign undertaken by NMCC was developed to both support student scholarships and instructional technology, as well as to assist the College in new and ongoing efforts to respond promptly to community needs.

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Officials with TD Banknorth announced a \$100,000 gift to Northern Maine Community College's *Campaign for the County's College*, which will support expansion of NMCC's allied health programs in the St. John Valley. Participating in the presentation from the bank are, from left: from the Presque Isle branch, Michael Kelley, Jr., vice president, and Michael Kelley, Sr., executive vice president; as well as Larry Wold, president of TD Banknorth in Maine. On hand to accept the gift are, from left: Timothy Crowley, NMCC president; Brian Hamel and Kris Doody, campaign tri-chairs; and Raynold Gauvin, chair of the NMCC Foundation.