



News Release

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Smith & Wesson supports NMCC Precision Metals Manufacturing Program with \$45,000 contribution to *Campaign for the County's College*

Aroostook County - Smith & Wesson, a company with one of the world's most recognizable brands and a major employer in the region, is giving back to the "County's College" that, according to a local company official, "helps fulfill many of its needs."

A \$45,000 contribution to the *Campaign for the County's College* by the legendary firearms maker and global provider of products and services for the safety, security, protection and sports markets will establish the Smith & Wesson Advancement Fund directed specifically to support a program at Northern Maine Community College that the company has relied on to help meet its skilled workforce needs.

"We at Smith & Wesson are pleased to contribute to the Northern Maine Community College Foundation's *Campaign for the County's College*. This gift is to support the Precision Metals Manufacturing program, which was initiated in 2002 with assistance of US Senator Susan Collins who worked to secure federal funding. As the leading precision metals manufacturer in the area, Smith & Wesson understands the need for the program and wants to ensure its longevity. We have many needs that are being fulfilled by NMCC," said Terry Wade, Houlton plant manager for Smith & Wesson.

The contribution, made to NMCC in \$15,000 payments over three years, will provide additional funding for the administration and operation of the Precision Metals Manufacturing program. Among the newer offerings on the Aroostook County College campus, the high-tech program has garnered significant attention and accolades since it was brought on-line, including feature articles in national industry publications and attaining accreditation status last year through the highly respected National Institute for Metalworking Skills (NIMS), a designation granted to only 125 schools nationwide.

"We are so appreciative of this recognition of our work, specifically the efforts of the faculty, students and alumni in our Precision Metals Manufacturing program by Smith & Wesson in the form of this lead gift to the *Campaign for the County's College*," said NMCC President Timothy Crowley. "The collaborative nature of our relationship with Smith & Wesson and the resulting impact on workforce and economic development in this region is exactly what we, as an institution, strive to achieve."

In recent years Smith & Wesson has employed five alumni of the NMCC program upon graduation in various positions, including leading roles within the Houlton plant. According to instructor Dean Duplessis, the corporate contribution underscores their support of both the College and of Aroostook County.

“The donation by Smith & Wesson is incredibly significant. It demonstrates their commitment to the growth of manufacturing in the region and throughout the state. Smith & Wesson is sending a very crucial message about the importance of manufacturing and the need for our future workforce to receive the necessary skills and training at the Community College, in order to continue to compete on a global scale. We are most appreciative,” said Duplessis.

Smith & Wesson first opened its doors in 1852, and has focused on designing and manufacturing innovative solutions in the field of personal safety and protection. Almost every major law enforcement and military agency in the world has used Smith & Wesson products, and to this day, most police departments in the United States depend on the company’s firearms and accessories.

In recent years Smith & Wesson has invested over \$1 million in the Houlton plant and has increased employment. The Southern Aroostook facility has the distinction of being the largest handcuff producer in the world and also manufactures the Walther PPK hand gun (the James Bond gun).

The *Campaign for the County’s College* is the first-ever major gifts campaign conducted by NMCC and the NMCC Foundation. It was launched late last February with the goal of raising \$2 million in a year 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.

Earlier this month, NMCC officials announced that the campaign had reached goal with two months remaining.

Named to reflect both the impact of the campus in the region as well as how the College community mirrors the aspirations of Aroostook and its people, the campaign is designed to support the outstanding tradition of teaching and learning for which NMCC is known. It also provides an opportunity to invest in positioning the College to meet the community’s education and workforce demands for years to come.

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*Smith & Wesson Houlton Plant Manager Terry Wade (left) presents the first \$15,000 of a three-year \$45,000 pledge to Northern Maine Community College President Timothy Crowley. The gift made to the **Campaign for the County's College**, will be directed toward NMCC's Precision Metals Manufacturing program.*

Photo Courtesy of Houlton Pioneer Times