



News Release

Contact:
Jason Parent
Development and
College Relations Office
33 Edgemont Drive
Presque Isle, ME 04769
Phone: (207) 768-2808
Fax: (207) 760-1101
jparent@nmcc.edu

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County Community to celebrate official end of “*Campaign for the County’s College*” February 29

Aroostook County - Exactly a year and a day after business, community and college leaders came together to launch a \$2 million major gifts campaign for Northern Maine Community College, a larger group of supporters will gather to celebrate the successful and official end of the *Campaign for the County’s College*.

An Aroostook County-themed reception, organizers are billing as a “leap” into a new era is planned for Friday, February 29, in the Christie lobby at Northern Maine Community College between 4:00 and 7:00 p.m. As part of the festivities, community volunteers will be acknowledged for their work on the fundraising drive, and a donor recognition wall designed locally and constructed by NMCC students and faculty will be unveiled.

“This is an event to celebrate our collective success in raising over \$2 million to support excellence in the teaching and learning that happens on our campus each and every day. More importantly, the celebration will provide an opportunity for us to say thank you to the individuals who were instrumental in our effort and to recognize the hundreds of donors who so strongly supported the County’s College in our first-ever major gifts campaign,” said NMCC President Timothy Crowley. “Our overwhelming success is a direct result of their efforts and generosity.”

Crowley will be joined by NMCC Foundation Board Chair Raynold Gauvin and *Campaign for the County’s College* Tri-Chairs Brian Hamel, Robert Clark and Kris Doody in acknowledging volunteer leaders and donors alike.

“Undertaking a major gifts campaign has long been a goal of the NMCC Foundation,” said Gauvin. “As a result of the efforts of so many individuals and organizations throughout The County and beyond, future generations of students will be assured access to higher education in this region. Moreover this investment provides additional resources to raise the high margin excellence in post-secondary education for which NMCC has become known both within our region and across the state.”

Gauvin was among two dozen community members and an additional 30 members of the NMCC faculty and staff who were instrumental in the successful fundraising effort.

The *Campaign for the County's College*, 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, was designed to support the outstanding tradition of teaching and learning for which NMCC is known.

To underscore the close ties between the College and County community, campaign materials and events were designed to incorporate the culture and heritage of the region. For example, donor giving level designations featured names including “beautiful river,” which is the English translation of Aroostook, field and forest, basket and barrel, mighty pine, among others.

At the official public kick-off event last February, the room was decked out in County memorabilia and featured photos from different communities in the region. Cuisine served included baked potatoes, ployes and Houlton Farms Dairy Ice Cream.

The closing reception will include many of the same visual and culinary touches. The event will also serve as the premiere for a music video taped last November by local videographer Dan Stairs, on behalf of NMCC, featuring the popular Maine musical group Schooner Fare. College officials had earlier requested the folk band perform their popular tune entitled “The County,” which became the unofficial theme song for the campaign, to be videotaped for viewing at the closing event.

Following a brief ceremony during which commemorative awards will be presented to campaign volunteer community leaders, a donor wall designed by Heidi Carter of Heidesign, the Fort Kent based marketing firm contracted by NMCC, will be unveiled.

The original piece, which will remain under wraps until the February 29 event, also reflects the “County” theme. It was created on campus by Guy Jackson, NMCC residential construction instructor, and one of his seniors, David Riopelle of Mars Hill, as well as, Dean Duplessis, NMCC precision metal manufacturing instructor, and Justin McBreairty of Caribou and Robert Underwood of Presque Isle, both seniors in Duplessis’ program. The two instructors and two students will be the ones to unveil their unique artwork.

According to campus officials, the involvement of the faculty and students in completing the donor wall, which will serve as a visible, daily reminder of the *Campaign for the County's College*, is especially fitting given the very reasons the fundraising drive was undertaken.

“We set out to raise dollars to support student scholarship, to enhance instructional technology, and to assist the College in our efforts to launch new curricula to respond to evolving community needs,” said Crowley. “Time and again as I visited with people in the community and in business and industry throughout Aroostook County to discuss the campaign, people shared with me how impressed they are with our campus community and the work of our faculty and staff who provide the top quality instruction and training. They see the positive results of what happens on our campus each day in their workforce and in their communities.”

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