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News Release

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NMCC's *Campaign for the County's College* officially ends with donations and pledges exceeding \$2.5 million

Aroostook County - The final tally is in and *Campaign for the County's College*, the first-ever major gifts campaign undertaken by Northern Maine Community College and the NMCC Foundation, has exceeded its \$2 million goal by over half a million dollars.

That announcement was made by College officials on February 29 at a celebration held in the Christie Lobby on the NMCC campus, exactly a year and a day after business, community and college leaders came together to launch the campaign.

"We accomplish very little by ourselves, but as a group we can do tremendous things," said NMCC President Timothy Crowley after it was announced that the campaign had garnered \$2,518,855 in gifts and pledges. "It really takes others to help – parents, friends, other people who care – that makes a difference, and that is really what this campaign is all about."

Crowley's remarks were made as part of the Aroostook County-themed reception that College and Foundation leaders cited as a "leap" into a new era, as the event was fittingly held on leap day. In his presentation, Crowley acknowledged the community volunteer leaders who carried the campaign over goal.

"When this campaign was started many months ago, we spoke with a gentlemen by the name of Floyd Harding. The first, and most important, thing Floyd said was that 'students must get the opportunity to go to College.' Floyd Harding was the honorary chair of this campaign, and he exemplifies the spirit that has been behind this activity since the beginning – that we help each other and that this community is helping the people that live here by supporting scholarships, instructional technology and ensuring the College is positioned to meet immediate community needs. I'm so proud of the way this campaign has come together," said Crowley.

The College president then acknowledged the impressive work of the campaign tri-chairs Brian Hamel, Kris Doody and Robert Clark, inviting each to address the one hundred volunteers, donors, college employees and students, and community leaders gathered for the celebration.

“This place means a lot to me. It means a lot to me and to this community. It is the County’s College,” said Hamel. “The work of this College and the results of this campaign are evident from Fort Kent to Houlton, and everywhere in between and beyond. People have come to the table to support this institution, and I think we should all be proud of this place and that makes such a huge impact on our community. Thank you everyone from the donors to the students who are making this possible, and I hope all donors that this will make a difference in your lives as well.”

For her part, Doody acknowledged the importance of NMCC to the County’s economic development and workforce.

“NMCC has educated more than 60 percent of our nursing staff at Cary Medical Center, so we knew the importance of this campaign,” said Doody. “As a member of the Maine Community College System Board of Trustees, I am very proud when I hear of the progress that has been made with this campaign, and that Aroostook County and NMCC has led the way.”

The importance of NMCC to the County was also underscored by Clark.

“The point that I want to make about this community college is not just that it is the E-Harmony of Aroostook, matching workers with businesses, but it is also directly helping businesses that are being created and helping young entrepreneurs to get ahead. I think this is the impact this campaign will have on our community, so I’m very proud of the faculty, the students, and the administration, and all the volunteers who have given up their time and resources to exceed the goals of the campaign, our first ever, so, congratulations to all of you,” said Clark.

The work of the tri-chairs and all of the community volunteers was also lauded by Ray Gauvin, outgoing chair of the NMCC Foundation, who poignantly stated the impact of the campaign for future generations of students attending NMCC.

“To be standing here knowing we have exceeded our goal is awesome,” said Gauvin. “This will have a great impact on students. It will help those who could otherwise not attend because they could not afford gas money or childcare by defraying some of the cost of their education. Hundreds and thousands of students will have access to higher education because the Aroostook County community once again has come together.”

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 included many of the same visual and culinary touches. The event also served 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.

The ceremony concluded with the presentation of commemorative apple awards featuring the NMCC logo that were given to nearly two-dozen campaign volunteer community leaders who worked on the campaign.

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