



News Release

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NMCC students travel to Cary Medical Center to learn more about their chosen profession

Aroostook County - Eighteen students in the medical office administration program at Northern Maine Community College traveled to Cary Medical Center on Tuesday, March 11, to hear a panel of professionals speak about their chosen profession, as well as to tour the facility.

“This was an excellent opportunity for these students to gain some first hand perspectives from people already working in the field into which these students will be entering later this spring when they graduate,” said Ann Osgood, one of the lead instructors for the medical office administration program. “They get to see all aspects of office administration from the eyes of an employee actually doing the job.”

The panel of six medical office professionals from Cary shared details about their respective responsibilities, as well as both the most and least favorite aspects of their jobs. Among those sharing their insights with the NMCC students were: Erica Cavagnaro, secretary and CNA in the specialty clinics; Candace Johnson, executive assistant to the chief financial officer; Peg McAfee, executive assistant to the chief executive officer/chief operating officer; Doris St. Hilaire, administrative assistant to the chief nursing officer; Susan Skidgel, unit secretary and CNA in ICU; and Becky West, medical staff services manager.

The students then had the opportunity to see these panel members in a work environment when they had a tour of the facilities after the session.

“This was a great networking opportunity for them, helping them make connections that can sometimes lead to a job,” said Osgood. “This was also the first time some of the students had ever been to the Caribou facility, and having a chance to see the facilities and know something about the hospital can also be advantageous as they enter the job search process.”

“I was impressed,” said Denise Sock of Ashland, one of the students taking part in the trip. “They really seemed to know their jobs very well and seem to have a very good working relationship with each other. Cary seems to be family oriented and really care about family and employees.”

Holly Fulton of Presque Isle, another student taking part in the field trip, found this experience very helpful. “In listening to the panel members, I like how they don’t have just one specific thing that they do, but instead have a variety of tasks associated with their area that they perform. This visit helped me better understand the role I can play some day working in a hospital environment.” Fulton, who graduates in May and has already applied for a position at Cary Medical Center, hopes that day may be soon.

In addition to Sock and Fulton, other students visiting the Caribou hospital were: Ashley Corriveau, Lisa Dickinson, Starr Flewelling, Helen Fox, Michele Gauvin, Jamie-Lyn Pelkey and Brandy Willette of Presque Isle; Jessica Chambers and Claire Dow of Fort Fairfield; Jenny Blackstone of Easton; Whitney Dick of Mapleton; Katie Sargent of Bridgewater; Christina Merrill of Cary Plantation; Lisa Hardy of Houlton; Nicole Bechard of St. David; and Lindsey Parker of Odell, New Brunswick.

Paula York, who shares teaching duties with Osgood in the medical office administration program at the College, gave accolades to both the students and the hospital.

“Over the years, we have consistently had feedback from the individuals we work with during visits such as these about how knowledgeable our students are,” said York. “Panel members have told us how impressed they are with the questions our students ask...questions which are both intelligent and show a good understanding of medical terminology.”

York describes the hospital as welcoming, warm and inviting. “The entire facility is customer friendly. The panel of professionals who speak to our students is always very welcoming, informative and encouraging...and that really means a lot,” she said.

Osgood and York have taken field trips to both Cary Medical Center and The Aroostook Medical Center annually for a number of years. The group will travel to TAMC on March 27.

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Northern Maine Community College students who traveled to Cary Medical Center to learn more about the medical office profession were: seated, from left Lisa Hardy, Lisa Dickinson, Holly Fulton, Jenny Blackstone, Michele Gauvin, and Christina Merrill; and standing from left, Denise Sock, Jamie-Lyn Pelkey, Ashley Corriveau, Jessica Chambers, Helen Fox, Starr Flewelling, Claire Dow, Brandy Willette, Nicole Bechard, Katie Sargent, Lindsey Parker, and Whitney Dick. Joining them are NMCC instructor Paula York; Betty Walker, coordinator of volunteer services, patient representative and Seniority at Cary Medical Center and an NMCC alum, who helped to coordinate the visit on behalf of the hospital; and NMCC instructor Ann Osgood.