



News Release

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Northern Maine Community College Student to study in Ireland on George Mitchell Scholarship

Aroostook County – Northern Maine Community College student Lucas Ireland of Mapleton will be traveling to County Cork, Ireland to attend the *Cork Institute of Technology* for one semester. Ireland, 19, who recently completed his first year in NMCC’s residential construction program, is one of two Maine Community College students selected as a recipient of this year’s George Mitchell Peace Scholarship.

The Scholarship fund was created in 1998 to honor former U.S. Senator and Maine native George Mitchell for his work and dedication in helping to establish peace between Northern and Southern Ireland. The selection process is very competitive and many students from community colleges in Maine applied but only two were selected for the scholarship.

“I actually didn’t expect to be chosen,” Ireland explained. “This is really exciting.” Students were evaluated based on their academic abilities, leadership qualities, and commitment to community service.

“Students who apply for this scholarship have to write an essay explaining why they would like to travel to Ireland and they must supply references and be interviewed several times. It is a pretty rigorous screening and I am ecstatic that another student from NMCC has been chosen to represent Maine and our community colleges,” said William Egeler, NMCC dean of students. “They return with this tremendous perspective on the world, and they learn to be more self-reliant. This is an extremely valuable experience.”

Kent Corey, a graduate of NMCC’s business program received the scholarship in 2003. Egeler introduced Corey to Ireland at a Student Senate Volleyball tournament earlier this spring. Corey offered advice and shared some of his experiences in Ireland. Corey is now the residential director at Eastern Maine Community College.

Ireland will leave Maine sometime during the college’s winter break to spend the spring semester studying construction and construction management at the Cork Institute. Although this will set him back one year in terms of graduating, he feels that this is an

extraordinary opportunity. He plans to return to complete his degree at NMCC and afterwards pursue employment in the construction industry. He believes that his time in Ireland will help him gain a better understanding of international relations and a greater perspective in life.

“It is very exciting, not just for me, but my whole family. We have always been interested in our Irish ancestry, and I will be able to learn about my family’s history and discover new things — really expand my horizons,” said Ireland. “I am excited and a little nervous, this is a chance of a lifetime and I am thrilled and honored to represent Northern Maine Community College and the state of Maine.”

Ireland is an avid soccer player and plans to spend his free time playing soccer and learning about Ireland’s rich cultural history. He also intends to take a Gaelic language class while he is in the country.

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Northern Maine Community College student Lucas Ireland (left) is congratulated by NMCC Dean of Students William Egeler on his selection as a Mitchell Peace Scholar. Ireland will travel to Ireland for a semester of study next academic year.