



# News Release

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## **Business Technology Center funded by MMG to officially open at NMCC November 7**

**Aroostook County** - Northern Maine Community College will host a public open house and grand opening for its new Business Technology Center on the second floor of the Christie building on Friday, November 7, at 2:00 p.m.

College and NMCC Foundation officials will join with representatives from MMG Insurance for a ceremony and reception to open the new center designed to provide students, especially those enrolled in business technology programs, with a work environment that models one of the County's most successful businesses.

Through a \$50,000 gift made last year by Presque Isle headquartered MMG Insurance to NMCC's *Campaign for the County's College*, 1,300 square feet of classroom space on the second floor of the A.K. Christie Building has been transformed into the Business Technology Center.

"The renovation project provides an active learning environment for classroom instruction. The modernization of this space includes wireless access and the implementation of notebook computers to engage students in applied learning of the course content," said Dwight Clayton, chair of the NMCC business technology department.

The classroom design is based on a business training facility at MMG Insurance. The project also included the renovation of an adjacent storage room which has been repurposed to simulate a business conference room. That space is used for instruction of smaller classes and for student work teams to simulate conference meetings within the business environment.

Business technology department students, who have been utilizing the space since the start of the academic year, will speak about the benefits of the center as a conducive learning space during the opening ceremony. Also speaking will be Clayton, MMG Insurance President and CEO Larry Shaw and Maine Department of Economic and Community Development Commissioner John Richardson, who will represent Governor John Baldacci.

The MMG classroom is not only the latest enhancement to the teaching and learning environment at NMCC, but also bolsters an already strong and beneficial relationship between the insurance company and College.

“NMCC has been very important to MMG. Not only are graduates from its various programs represented in many areas of the company, we have also partnered with the College for specific skill set training for our employees. Our involvement in the capital campaign at the \$50,000 level was in support of the resource that NMCC provides to MMG as well as the similar impact it has on other area employers and the County economy as a whole,” said Shaw.

Preliminary work on the renovation project began last fall when business technology faculty, along with personnel in the information technology and facilities department, visited the newly constructed addition and large-scale renovation at MMG. The purpose of the building tour was to see what aspects of the work environment at the new facility could be replicated in the classroom environment.

“Following the visit we came together again as a group to discuss the needs of the faculty and how we could incorporate those needs with some of the design and space allocation features we saw at MMG,” said Barry Ingraham, NMCC’s director of facilities and information technology. “We essentially were looking to create a more modern work environment.”

To achieve this, NMCC entered into a contract with Mark Carter of North Peak Architecture – the same Presque Isle architect and firm used by MMG Insurance for their construction and renovation project.

Work gutting the space began in late March, and construction was completed in early August. With the exception of the mechanicals, flooring and ceiling – which were contracted out, all demolition and renovation work was completed in-house by NMCC facilities and information technology staff.

“Our decision to contribute to the construction of a classroom that resembles a modern office was based upon the need to prepare future graduates of NMCC for this evolving environment. We are in hopes that the Business Technology Center will assist in the development of skills in areas from team collaboration to working with multi-media. MMG has been pleased to partner with NMCC in this manner and we look forward to the benefits it will provide to the County’s workforce,” said Shaw.

“What the generosity of MMG Insurance provides for will have a profound impact on our students, the way they learn, the way our faculty teach, and, of course, ultimately on the numerous Aroostook County businesses that rely on our institution to provide the most technologically proficient, well educated and capable workforce,” said NMCC President Timothy Crowley. “We are so excited to see the results of the major gifts campaign having such a positive impact on the College community.”

Aside from renovation work, a new heating and ventilation system was installed in the room and insulation was added as part of the construction. Funds for these aspects of the project were paid for through part of NMCC's share of the higher education bond passed by Maine voters last November.

The public is invited and encouraged to attend the NMCC Business Technology Center opening celebration. For more information, contact the NMCC college relations office at 768-2809.

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*NMCC business technology department instructor Paula York teaches a business law course in the new Business Technology Center classroom.*