



News Release

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A dozen leaders from throughout Aroostook named to leadership team to assist NMCC in laying foundation for major gifts campaign

Aroostook County - Northern Maine Community College, working cooperatively with the NMCC Foundation, is turning to a dozen prominent community leaders from throughout Aroostook County to lead, advise and assist the College as it prepares to launch a major fundraising campaign in the new year.

Representing the three geographic regions of The County and a diversity of professional backgrounds and civic involvement, members of the leadership team will work collectively and as individuals with NMCC officials. Specifically, the group will work to lay the foundation for a successful gifts campaign to support student scholarship and other initiatives that will allow the College to continue to evolve as a leading resource for meeting the educational, training and workforce development needs of the region.

“None of these folks have to do this,” said Sonja Fongemie, NMCC major gifts campaign manager. “They have very busy lives; they’re doing important things elsewhere, and yet they are willing to commit countless days and nights to this effort. They do it because they believe in the college as an institution of change, opportunity, and economic development.”

Leading the efforts of the impressive group of community leaders working with the College is **Brian Hamel of Presque Isle**, founder of Hamel Enterprises, LLC, and former president and CEO of the Loring Development Authority. Hamel is no stranger to Northern Maine Community College and the Maine Community College System, having recently joined the NMCC Foundation Board and serving for a number of years on the MCCA Board of Trustees, including as board chair.

Other members of the leadership team include:

Paul Bouchard of Fort Kent is a veteran St. John Valley educator and current vice president of Maine Education Association - Retired. Bouchard served as principal of Wisdom High School in St. Agatha for 20 years and as the first vocational director for the St. John Valley Technology Center in Frenchville.

Scott Carlin of Mapleton is the owner of Star City, Mars Hill and Hillside IGA stores in Central Aroostook. Carlin is a 1980 graduate of Northern Maine Vocational Technical Institute, a forerunner of NMCC.

Robert Clark of Fort Fairfield is the executive director of the Northern Maine Development Commission. He was recently appointed by Governor John Baldacci to serve on the Maine Community College System Board of Trustees and has served on the NMCC Foundation Board. Clark is a 1975 graduate of NMVTI.

Gregg Collins of Caribou is an owner and general manager of the S.W. Collins Company in Presque Isle. He currently serves as a board member on the Aroostook County Fund of the Maine Community Foundation and for the United Way of Aroostook. Collins is the immediate past-president of the Presque Isle Rotary Club and recently joined the NMCC Foundation Board.

Kris Doody-Chabre of Caribou is CEO of Cary Medical Center in Caribou. She is a member of the Maine Community College System Board of Trustees and was appointed to serve as a member of the Governor's Community College Advisory Council, which recently completed a comprehensive study of what is needed to maintain and grow the seven Community Colleges in Maine to ensure the institutions meet the workforce needs of the state.

Carl Flora of Presque Isle is president and CEO of the Loring Development Authority. The former deputy commissioner of agriculture for the State of Maine co-chairs Grow DFAS, the group that led the efforts to expand the Defense Finance and Accounting Services Center in Limestone after the Department of Defense had recommended closing the center. Flora recently joined the NMCC Foundation Board.

Jon Prescott of Island Falls is President and CEO of Katahdin Trust Company. He serves as Maine state chairman for the American Bankers Association and is a past chairman of the Maine Bankers Association

Bruce Sandstrom of Presque Isle is senior vice president of finance at The Aroostook Medical Center. He has served on numerous civic organizations, including as a current director of the Leaders Encouraging Aroostook Development (LEAD) board. Bruce Sandstrom is a 1975 graduate of NMVTI and a member of the NMCC Foundation Board.

Connie Sandstrom of Presque Isle is executive director of the Aroostook County Action Program (ACAP). She is very active in community and public service and currently serves as chair of the Eastern Maine HomeCare Board. Connie Sandstrom is a member of the NMCC Foundation Board.

Hal Stewart of Presque Isle practices law as a sole practitioner in Presque Isle, focusing a large portion of his general practice in the areas of insurance defense, civil litigation, personal injury, real estate and mediation services. He was admitted to the Maine Bar in 1998, and has also been admitted to practice law before the United States District Court and the United States Court of Appeals – First Circuit.

Jane Towle of Presque Isle is the co-owner/broker of RE/MAX Central in Presque Isle and Caribou. She is actively involved in several community and civic organizations including the Presque Isle Rotary Club and Empowerment Council at the Northern Maine Development Commission.

The leadership team has been reviewing a recently conducted feasibility study completed by the Clements Group, a firm specializing in two-year college fund raising programs. The study, commissioned by NMCC and the NMCC Foundation elicited responses from more than 60 individuals representing college faculty and staff, members of the College general advisory council, foundation board of directors and a significant number of community leaders.

Results of the study showed a significant majority of the external interviewees responded favorably to the College conducting a major gifts campaign and that 98 percent of all respondents indicated they will or may contribute to such a campaign on behalf of the College.

In the coming weeks, the leadership team will assist College officials in raising awareness of the campaign among potential lead donors and encouraging participation and support as plans are made to publicly launch the campaign in the first quarter of 2007.

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