



News Release

Contact:
Jason Parent
Development and
College Relations Office
33 Edgemont Drive
Presque Isle, ME 04769
Phone: (207) 768-2808
Fax: (207) 760-1101
jparent@nmcc.edu

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McKenney to be inducted in Aroostook County Health Care Professionals Wall of Distinction

Aroostook County - A local leader in the health care profession, Jim McKenney, vice president of ancillary services at The Aroostook Medical Center, will be honored as the first non-nurse inductee to the Aroostook County Health Care Professionals Wall of Distinction at a ceremony at Northern Maine Community College on May 11.

The wall of honor, the concept for which was developed by faculty in the nursing and allied health department at NMCC, was originally unveiled to the public in May, 2008.

McKenney's service to TAMC began in 1988, when he was hired by the central Aroostook healthcare facility to start-up and provide ongoing management of Crown Ambulance. He has been involved with Emergency Medical Service at the local and state levels as president of Region 5 Ambulance Directors Association, president of the Region 5 EMS Council, and an EMS board member for 14 years, having served as chair from 2000 to 2002.

He took his first EMS course (First Responder) in 1979. In 1983, he took Basic EMT at Northern Maine Technical College (a forerunner of NMCC) and in 1985 advanced to a Critical Care Technician. In 1988, he took the first Paramedic program offered in Aroostook County at NMTC.

The Fort Fairfield native graduated from the University of Maine with an associate's degree in agricultural business management in 1969 and a bachelor's degree in resource economics in 1972.

McKenney was a fireman for the Town of Fort Fairfield for several years before becoming fire chief in 1983, and he was actively involved with the startup of the Fort Fairfield Ambulance Service at the same time. He and his wife Carolyn reside in Presque Isle. They have two daughters, Linda and Kristena, and a granddaughter, Kayden.

"Jim McKenney has distinguished himself as an exceptional leader and visionary. He has served on the EMS board and has spent his entire career focused on increasing the quality of prehospital care through strong education and strong policy development," said NMCC EMS coordinator Daryl Boucher. "He has been a strong supporter of NMCC and the community college system for 25 years."

According to Boucher, McKenney, was instrumental in helping bring the first Advanced Life Support EMS courses to Aroostook County, sponsored by NMCC. He has supported critical care training at the College, has served as a member of the EMS Advisory Committee since the program's inception, and has been an executive committee member of Megan's Fund, a philanthropic group designed to contribute education and equipment to EMS organizations. Every semester, Crown Ambulance sponsors students who attend NMCC programs and eventually become employees.

Criteria for selection to the Health Care Professionals Wall of Distinction include demonstrated commitment to health care, commitment to health care education, and contribution to the larger community of health care.

“In consideration of the qualities and criteria for which we based our decision on the second annual nominee and recipient for the Health Care Professionals Wall of Distinction, it is crystal clear that our nominee for 2009 met all the criteria established in the inaugural year. Jim meets all components and was not only at the top of the list but received unanimous support from faculty in naming him the 2009 nominee,” stated Betty Kent-Conant, department chair of nursing and allied health. “Jim has been very supportive of the educational programs at NMCC, he is an alumnus of various programs from the college, is a leader in health care, and is a major contributor in the larger community of health care.”

A reception and induction ceremony will take place on Monday, May 11, at 4:00 p.m. The event will be held in the mezzanine area just above the lobby of the Christie Building, which serves as the entry to the nursing and allied health wing at the College, and is the location of the Health Care Professionals Wall of Distinction. It will mark the end of National Nurses Week, which officially begins each year on May 6 and ends on May 12, Florence Nightingale’s birthday, as well as the start of National Hospital Week, which runs May 10 through 16.

Family members and friends, College and community officials, and representatives of health care organizations throughout Aroostook County, many of whom serve on the advisory committees for NMCC nursing and allied health programs, have been invited to participate in the induction ceremony for the Aroostook County Health Care Professionals Wall of Distinction.

McKenney will be honored through tributes prepared and presented by NMCC nursing faculty. Afterwards, his official photo will be unveiled.

For more information on the Aroostook County Health Care Professionals Wall of Distinction or the upcoming reception and induction ceremony, contact Betty Kent-Conant, NMCC Nursing Department Chair, at 768-2749.

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Jim McKenney