



News Release

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Longest-serving College faculty member and Student of the Year to address graduates at NMCC's 46th commencement May 16

Aroostook County - Members of the Northern Maine Community College graduating class of 2009 will hear pearls of wisdom from one individual who has guided their way and another who has traveled the journey with them during commencement exercises on Saturday, May 16, at 10:00 a.m. in the College gymnasium.

Instructor Daniel Hotham, who first began his employment with then Northern Maine Vocational Technical Institute – a forerunner of NMCC – 35 years ago, will address graduates, their family members and others gathered for commencement exercises at Maine's northernmost community college. Also speaking will be NMCC's "Student of the Year" Charles Zappone of Woodland, who will be awarded an associate's degree in nursing during the ceremony.

Hotham, who first joined the campus community as coordinator of residential life in 1974, has served the better part of his more than three decades at NMCC teaching communication classes and instructing in, and later directing, the first-year seminar and first year experience program. He also served as the golf coach at the college for more than two decades.

"Dan Hotham's contribution to our campus community is unmatched by any individual who has worked for or attended NMCC in the 45 years since we opened our doors," said NMCC President Timothy Crowley. "This is true not based on longevity but on his approach to students, employees and the institution. His passion for the College and his vision for what we can do for our students are extraordinary, and he has had a tremendous impact on the lives of students who have come through our doors. I am pleased that he has agreed to be our featured commencement speaker so that he can share his passion and vision not only with the graduates one last time, but also with the hundreds of family members and friends who will gather to share in the celebration of commencement."

Hotham holds a master of education degree from Antioch New England Graduate School of Keene, New Hampshire, and a bachelor of science in education from the University of Maine at Machias. The life-long learner has earned an additional 27 hours of undergraduate credits beyond his bachelor of science degree through the University of Southern Maine, Northern Maine Community College and the University of Maine at Presque Isle.

He belongs to a number of professional organizations, including the National Council of Teachers of English and the Maine Council of Teachers of English, as well as volunteers his time to a number of community and civic organizations – most notably the Presque Isle Country Club. Hotham is the recipient numerous professional awards and was three times named to *Who's Who Among American Teachers*.

Following Hotham at the podium will be Zappone, who was recently honored at a ceremony held in Augusta as NMCC's "Student of the Year," alongside the award recipients from the other six Maine Community College System campuses. The honorees are selected at each campus by faculty and staff at the respective institution and each of the individuals awarded is presented a \$1,000 John H. Lapoint, Jr. Leadership Award.

In addition to being selected as "Student of the Year," Zappone was one of two NMCC students named to the 2009 All-Maine Academic Team. Having earned the highest Maine score on the All-USA Academic Team application, he was also named Maine's New Century Scholar and was named one of 50 Coca-Cola National Bronze Scholars. The combined honors earned him an additional \$3,500 in scholarship awards.

The 38-year-old nursing student and father of two enrolled at NMCC in the spring of 2007. He serves as the president of Phi Theta Kappa honor society, as a member of the Student Nurses Association and has volunteered to assist with several projects on the College campus.

In the community, Zappone serves as a volunteer trainer with the County Patriots Young Marines and is a Maine Hunter Safety Course first-aid instructor. The U.S. Military Veteran joined the armed services in 1994 and served two tours in Bosnia in 1996 and 1999 as an armament supervisor. He also worked as a military recruiter in Laconia, New Hampshire.

Zappone has been hired by Cary Medical Center in Caribou to work as a registered nurse in the acute care unit at the hospital. In the near future, he hopes to continue his education to earn a bachelor of science degree in nursing.

The addresses by Hotham and Zappone will be followed by the conferring of associate degrees and certificates to 212 graduates. In addition, Crowley will present the annual President's Award, which is given annually to an individual who has made an outstanding contribution to the college, meeting the needs of students, employees and the general public, as well as assisting in moving the College toward fulfilling its mission, vision and goals.

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Daniel Hotham



Charles Zappone