



## NEWS RELEASE

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Students Continue to Flock to Maine's Community Colleges**

*Hard times push spring semester enrollment up 15 percent over last year  
as Maine people seek to upgrade job skills*

AUGUSTA, ME — Maine's community colleges continue to experience double digit enrollment growth. At the start of the spring 2010 semester, enrollment is up 15.4 percent across the System compared with the same time last year, an increase of nearly 2,000 students for a total spring enrollment of 14,936. All seven of the state's community colleges are reporting enrollment growth, with the largest gains at York County Community College (up 44 percent to 1,352 students this spring) and Southern Maine Community College and Northern Maine Community College (both up 15 percent to 5,583 at SMCC and 1,052 at NMCC).

System officials attribute the increases to the weak economy and high rates of unemployment. During past economic downturns, the state's community colleges have experienced an increase in enrollment as individuals have sought to upgrade their job skills or prepare for a new career.

MCCS President John Fitzsimmons noted that in spite of severe budget constraints, the colleges remain committed to providing as many students as possible with the education they need to gain a foothold in a difficult economy.

"As neighbors, friends, and family members struggle through these very tough times, the work of our colleges has never been more important," he said. "Maine's future is heavily dependent on our success and the success of our students."

More information about Maine's community college system is available at <http://www.mccs.me.edu/>.

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