



Maine Community College System

NEWS RELEASE

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Maine Chapter of the National Association of Women in Construction donates \$54,000 to establish MCCS scholarship

AUGUSTA, ME — Dr. John Fitzsimmons, president of the Maine Community College System (MCCS), on Monday accepted a \$54,000 donation to the state's community colleges from the Maine Chapter of the National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC).

The gift will be used to fund an endowed scholarship for female students from Maine who are enrolled in construction related courses and programs. The first awards will be made in the fall of 2009 and will be used to provide emergency financial assistance and scholarships to qualifying students who demonstrate financial need.

“We greatly appreciate NAWIC’s generosity and support of female students who are seeking a career in the construction industry,” said Fitzsimmons. “In many cases, this type of financial assistance can make the difference in whether a student is able to finish her degree or is forced to drop out due to unforeseen events.”

The state’s community colleges offer construction related programs that include residential and commercial construction, masonry, welding and metal fabrication, electrical construction and maintenance, and numerous others. The NAWIC donation will initially fund about \$2,500 in annual financial assistance. That figure will grow as the endowment fund increases.

“Maine’s community colleges play a major role in helping to ensure a skilled workforce for the state’s construction industry. In Maine, the average wage for construction is \$18 an hour. By making this financial assistance possible, we hope to ensure that more Maine women are earning these livable wages,” said Joyce Newman, vice president of Maine Chapter 276 of the National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC).

A report prepared for the MCCS in 2006 found that Maine’s construction industry offers significant career opportunities for graduates of the community colleges. The report found that industry demand for skilled workers far outpaces the availability of those workers.

NAWIC was formed in 1955 with the core purpose of enhancing the success of women in the construction industry. The Maine Chapter was formed in 1979 and has, to date, provided over \$250,000 in scholarships to Maine students enrolled in construction related programs. For more information about the organization, go to <http://www.nawicmaine.org/>

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