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In partnership with:

GRCC
GRAND RAPIDS COMMUNITY COLLEGE

HermanMiller

Mission Statement:
We provide and enrich educational opportunities for students, schools, and communities.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 19, 2016

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CAREERLINE TECH CENTER, GRCC, HERMAN MILLER PARTNER TO LAUNCH UNIQUE EARLY COLLEGE PROGRAM

Holland, MI –Officials from Ottawa Area intermediate School District, Herman Miller and Grand Rapids Community College today announced the launch of a new and unique Early College program for area high school students.

Unlike other early college programs, sometimes referred to as middle college, the Careerline Tech Center's Early College program integrates a corporate partner so students can participate in internships and earn a professional industry certification.

"For years, Herman Miller has worked in partnership with OAISD and local schools to build a bridge between educational programming and preparing students for the workforce," said Abe Carrillo, director of inclusiveness and diversity for Herman Miller. "Employers in the region have a great need for skilled trades, and our hope is to build on this model and engage more students and manufacturers in these types of partnerships."

In addition to internship and certification opportunities, 11th graders who are enrolled in one of five Careerline Tech Center (CTC) skilled trades programs may earn up to 30 free transferable college credits through GRCC while they earn a high school diploma. Students remain in the program for a 13th year to graduate.

"We are honored to partner with local leaders, Herman Miller and GRCC to offer this 'outside the box' new program that combines high-level career and technical skills training through Tech Center instruction with opportunities for industry work experience and free college credits for high school students," OAISD Superintendent Peter Haines said. "Early College programs remove financial and other barriers for students to attend college, and this one in particular provides them with a competitive advantage to further their career opportunities after graduation."

The nine high school juniors who have been accepted into the program will begin work experiences at Herman Miller this spring and continue that work for two summers. During fall of their senior year, students will start college coursework at GRCC's Lakeshore Campus located at the Thompson M-TEC facility in Holland.

"This is a win-win partnership," GRCC President Dr. Steven C. Ender said. "It provides access to 21st century work force skills and college credits for students at no cost while also giving them exposure to the workplace. Students are able to earn while they learn, and fulfill West Michigan's need for skilled workers."

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In their 13th year, students will continue their work at Herman Miller for up to 20 hours per week and attend GRCC classes for up to 12 hours per week.

Upon successful completion of their 13th year, students will graduate from the Early College program with a high school diploma, an Industrial Maintenance Certificate from GRCC, and an official transcript with up to 30 free transferrable college credits.

Support systems are in place for all students to ensure success in the rigorous program. Students will meet weekly with a Success Coach who will provide support in the areas of academics and work while evaluating students' progress, needs and overall well-being. GRCC peer tutors will help students with college coursework.

According to Careerline Tech Center Director Dave Searles, the addition of an early college program is an ideal complement to the high-level career and technical training that has been provided to area high school students for nearly 40 years.

"For almost four decades, Careerline Tech Center programs have evolved along with employment needs of business and industry so that students are competitively positioned to gain employment when they graduate high school," Searles said. "Some students are eager to begin a career working full-time right away, while others hope to land a high paying part-time job as they pay their way through college. Our new early college program creates additional opportunities for students as they try on for size both work and college simultaneously."

The CTC Early College program is offered to eligible high school juniors enrolled in the following Careerline Tech Center programs: Electrical/Alternative Energy, Engineering Design and Machine Technologies, Mechatronics/Robotics, and Welding. Students must apply and interview to be accepted into the program.

Herman Miller will host a student/parent orientation on Tuesday, May 31 at 6:00 PM at 855 East Main Ave. in Zeeland.

For more information on Careerline Tech Center Early College, contact Dave Searles at 616-738-8950 or dsearles@oaisd.org

ABOUT CAREERLINE TECH CENTER:
Operated by Ottawa Area Intermediate School District, Careerline Tech Center prepares high school juniors and seniors for tomorrow's workforce by providing career and technical education in more than20 career areas. CTC serves students from public and private high schools, as well as those who are homeschooled, within the following local school districts: Allendale, Coopersville, Grand Haven, Hamilton, Holland, Hudsonville, Jenison, Saugatuck, Spring Lake, West Ottawa, and Zeeland. www.CareerlineTech.org

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ABOUT GRAND RAPIDS COMMUNITY COLLEGE:

Grand Rapids Community College has been offering educational opportunities in West Michigan for 100 years. Established in 1914, the college offers degree courses, certification and training programs, and workshops and personal enrichment classes. Offerings are held on GRCC's downtown Grand Rapids campus, and at several locations throughout Kent and Ottawa counties, as well as through distance learning. www.grcc.edu

ABOUT HERMAN MILLER, INC.:

Herman Miller is a globally recognized provider of furnishings and related technologies and services. Headquartered in West Michigan, the global company has relied on innovative design for over 100 years to solve problems for people wherever they work, live, learn, and heal. Herman Miller's designs are part of museum collections worldwide, and the company is a past recipient of the Smithsonian Institution's Cooper Hewitt National Design Award. Known and respected for its leadership in corporate social responsibility, Herman Miller has been included in the Dow Jones Sustainability World Index for the past 12 years, and has earned the Human Rights Campaign Foundation's top rating in its Corporate Equality Index for the past nine years. In fiscal 2015, the company generated $2.14 billion in revenue and employed over 7,000 people worldwide. Herman Miller trades on the NASDAQ Global Select Market under the symbol MLHR. www.hermanmiller.com

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