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KRESA Career Connect Campus Opens

The new career and technical education facility delivers unprecedented future-ready learning opportunities through a building crafted with sustainability and students' futures in mind.

(KALAMAZOO, Mich. – May 22, 2025) — Kalamazoo Regional Educational Service Agency opens its doors to the new Career Connect Campus, charting a new vision for education for the Greater Kalamazoo region. The new Career Connect Campus is a modern, dynamic learning environment designed to empower students for high-demand, well-paying careers. The building is a culmination of community, educator, and student investment over the last six years.

"We're proud to open the doors of the Career Connect Campus," said Eric Stewart, Kalamazoo RESA Assistant Superintendent for Career and Talent Development. "This milestone reflects our community's commitment to education and workforce development, and it will benefit students, families, and local businesses for years to come."

By integrating classroom learning with real-world experience, KRESA's Career Connect programs provide students with a powerful head start toward career success. Local businesses also benefit by tapping into a pipeline of skilled, job-ready graduates. Whether a student's dream involves building a prototype in a high-tech manufacturing lab or caring for patients in a simulated medical setting, the Career Connect Campus aims to nurture tomorrow's workforce and propel the local economy forward.

"Kalamazoo County is on the brink of a new era—this world-class facility will spur growth in the local economy, provide game-changing opportunities for students, and set the new precedent in CTE design nationwide," says DLR Group Principal and Architect, Matt Brehmer.

DLR Group and Wightman teamed to bring the vision for the new Career Connect Campus to life. The 162,000 SF future-ready facility reflects KRESA students and staff's vision for a sustainable building. For structural support, a hybrid of steel and mass timber introduces alternative materials that can reduce carbon footprint. Through design, the building's innerworkings are put on display. Mechanical systems are intentionally exposed to showcase the viability and workability of these integrated systems. Information technology labs feature exposed server racks viewable from the commons to help students grasp the tech guts of a building and to see how conduit connects technology from one side of the facility to the other.

"The Kalamazoo RESA Career Connect Center represents a transformative investment in our students and our community. By celebrating hands-on learning and expanding access to high-wage, high-demand careers, we're helping young people discover their strengths, pursue their

passions, and shape a future that reflects the full range of their potential," shares George Kacan, Wightman's Education Sector Leader.

The building supports career tracks in high-demand fields like agriculture, food, and natural resources, architecture and construction trades, culinary arts, design, health science, human services, IT, manufacturing, and transportation, distribution, and logistics. The Career Connect Campus is a learning building, designed to deliver education via immersion. Through hands-on and active courses, learners earn industry-recognized credentials and certificates to prepare them for their futures.

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About Kalamazoo RESA

The Kalamazoo Regional Educational Service Agency (KRESA) is a critical part of Michigan's education system serving the Greater Kalamazoo region and provides specialized services to schools and communities and optimizes resources by centralizing innovative programs and services. We partner with school districts and the broader community to offer essential programs including early childhood education, special education, career learning, and educator development, ensuring that learners of all ages receive the support they need.

About DLR Group

[DLR Group](#) is an integrated design firm delivering architecture, engineering, interiors, planning, and building optimization for new construction, renovation, and adaptive reuse. Our promise is to elevate the human experience through design. This promise inspires sustainable design for a diverse group of public and private sector clients; local communities; and our planet. DLR Group is 100% employee-owned and fully supports the initiatives and goals of the 2030 Challenge, and is an initial signatory to the China Accord and the AIA 2030 Commitment.

About Wightman

[Wightman](#) is a full-service consulting firm offering architecture, civil engineering, surveying, GIS, interior design and reality capture, that exists to serve people and the communities we live in. Our dynamic team of more than 200 professionals works to analyze, advise, design, and deliver successful projects in partnership with government, commercial, educational, and energy organizations throughout the Great Lakes region. Our unique approach is to offer comprehensive multi-disciplinary services, industry expertise, accurate scope of work, and a passion for listening.

Editor's Note: Three images are attached for your use, including:

- *The exterior of the KRESA Career Connect Campus CTE Building.*
- *The interior atrium of the KRESA Career Connect Campus set up for a private ribbon cutting.*
- *An interior wall at the KRESA Career Connect Campus.*