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NEW PARTNERSHIP AIMS TO EXCITE STUDENTS
ABOUT TRANSITION FROM MIDDLE SCHOOL
TO STEM-RELATED CAREER ACADEMIES

(April 27, 2010) TAMPA – With a \$431,400 investment from Helios Education Foundation, the Hillsborough Education Foundation and Hillsborough County Public Schools will work to prepare students for success during the critical transition years from middle school to high school.

The Hillsborough Education Foundation will implement the *Transitional Success through STEM* (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) *Academies* project, helping students transition to college study or a career in a highly-technical, STEM-related field.

“What’s really exciting about the Transitional Success through STEM project is that it uses all of the successful elements of the career academy model and incorporates that into programs that will help students transition from middle school to high school,” said Helios Education Foundation President and CEO Paul Luna. “The Transition Years is a major area of focus for us, and the more we can get students engaged in STEM education and exposed to multiple pathways to postsecondary education, the more likely it is for those students to succeed.”

Implemented over 30 months, this project will focus on students ages 11-18 enrolled at Hillsborough County’s five selected middle school STEM Institutes (Buchanan, Greco, Marshall, Shields and Walker) which feed career academies at Strawberry Crest, Gaither, King, Lennard, and Sickles high schools. The program will ultimately benefit a total of 15,000 students.

A series of new curriculum will be developed and implemented to engage and challenge students as they transition from the STEM institutes in middle school to the career academies at the high school level. This process will include developing comprehensive curricula guides and providing professional development training to teachers.

“Thanks to Helios we can now create a clear ‘line of sight’ for middle and high school students in STEM,” says Bill Hoffman, President of the Hillsborough Education Foundation, “This will help prepare them for the critical technical jobs which our business partners tell us they need talent for.”

The grant funding will also support the implementation of the Hillsborough Education Foundation’s newest program, the SUCCESS Fund. This program assists students with the financial obstacles associated with enrollment in career academies, such as specialized tools,

regional competitions, and student professional groups. Approximately 47 percent of students enrolled in the academies have financial need, making it difficult for them to afford the additional expenses of their education.

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About Helios Education Foundation

Helios Education Foundation is dedicated to enriching the lives of individuals in Arizona and Florida by creating opportunities for success in postsecondary education. The Foundation's community investments are made across three impact areas: Early Childhood Education, the Transition Years (grades 5-12) and Postsecondary Education. Since inception in 2004, Helios Education Foundation has invested over \$76 million into education-related programs and initiatives in both states. For more information, visit the Foundation online at www.helios.org.

Information on Hillsborough Education Foundation, Inc

The Hillsborough Education Foundation is a 501(c) 3 charitable organization whose mission is to invest community resources to help students achieve academic success. Serving the students, teachers and schools in our community, the Foundation has invested more than \$71 million towards public education. The Foundation raises more than \$5 million annually and fulfills its mission through five core initiatives: Career & Technical Education, Excellence in Education, Scholarships, School Enrichment, and Teaching Tools for Hillsborough Schools.