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NEWS RELEASE
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2024 ATHENA on the Lakeshore Award Recipients Named

Spring Lake, MI – Shelby Bytwerk, Director of Operations at Mainsite for MillerKnoll, was honored as the 2024 ATHENA on the Lakeshore Award Recipient. The announcement was made on October 8 at the annual luncheon celebration at the Trillium Catering and Event Center. The ATHENA awards are presented annually to recognize outstanding lakeshore women who have demonstrated excellence in their business or profession, have provided valuable service by devoting time and energy to improve the quality of life for others in their community, assist women in reaching their full potential, and exhibit the spirit of regional collaboration.

Shelby Bytwerk is recognized for her leadership in both the corporate and non-profit sectors. She has held several leadership roles at MillerKnoll. She is a critical figure in advancing women's careers in manufacturing through her work with the Women's Equity Group and Inforum's ManufacturingNEXT steering committee. Through her leadership, she has mentored over 80 women across 20 manufacturing companies in West Michigan. Shelby is also dedicated to community service, serving as a board member for the Chamber of Commerce Grand Haven, Spring Lake, Ferrysburg and balancing her career and contributions with family life as a mother of three.

The ATHENA on the Lakeshore program also recognizes a Young Professional Recipient each year. Dr. Jessica Lambert, dentist at Great Lakes Dental Excellence, was recognized as the 2024 ATHENA on the Lakeshore Young Professional Award Recipient. Dr. Lambert is a leader in oral health advocacy, reinstating the Muskegon County Oral Health Coalition and providing extensive community outreach, including free dental care through Volunteer for Dental. Her efforts to improve oral health and her advocacy for women's rights highlight her commitment to community and professional service.

This year's keynote speaker was Dr. Elaine Melotti Schmidt, co-founder of The Bennett Prize for Women Figurative Realists and co-curator of The Bennett Collection. In her speech, Dr. Schmidt spoke about three women painters from the Bennett Collection who through their work as artists have demonstrated the importance of being a woman leader whom others look up to, even when they themselves may not have realized it. Dr. Schmidt's work and philanthropy have significantly impacted the art world. She and

her husband, Steven Alan Bennett, are major donors to the Muskegon Museum of Art, which will open its new wing, the Bennett Schmidt Pavilion, in 2025.

The recipients are chosen by a committee of representatives from the participating Chambers and community business leaders. Six finalists and eight young professional finalists were recognized at the luncheon, which 300 regional community and business leaders attended.

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About ATHENA International

ATHENA International is a catalyst for developing diverse, transformative leaders worldwide through experiential programs that ignite, amplify, and celebrate girls, women, and allies—from young scholars to seasoned professionals. At the heart of everything we do are the Eight Principles of Enlightened Leadership™ (ATHENA Leadership Model®): Live Authentically, Learn Constantly, Build Relationships, Foster Collaboration, Act Courageously, Advocate Fiercely, Give Back and Celebrate. ATHENA is driven to bring empathy based, compassionate, and inclusive leadership culture to the workplace, educational institutions, and individuals.

In our pursuit of creating positive change, we empower women entrepreneurs to achieve new heights of success through ATHENAPowerLink®, an innovative mentorship program connecting selected entrepreneurs with a tailored advisory board to support the growth of their businesses. For over four decades, we have recognized exceptional women and pioneering leaders with ATHENA Leadership Awards on global, national, and community levels. Our impact extends to nearly 8,000 award recipients who stand as change-makers and trailblazers, opening doors.

About the Chamber of Commerce Grand Haven, Spring Lake, Ferrysburg - The Chamber of Commerce Grand Haven, Spring Lake, Ferrysburg has been serving businesses for 125 years since 1899. Through their vision of empowering businesses and building communities, the Chamber provides hyper local support, connections, and solutions for economic and business growth within Northwest Ottawa County.