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| Press Release | |
| FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  April 11, 2014 | Julia Winer  Assistant Director of Communications  (860) 509-3666  jwiner@crec.org |
| **Special Academy at the CREC Two Rivers High School Gives Students Flight** | |
| **(Hartford, CT)** At the CREC Two Rivers Magnet High School, students interested in aviation have the unique opportunity to learn how to fly an airplane. From practical knowledge tests to state-of-the-art realistic flight simulators, students get hands-on experience that prepares them to earn their private pilot’s license. Under the direction of professional flight instructor, Dr. Robert Polselli, the after school flight academy program at CREC Two Rivers currently enrolls 40 students from the STEM (science, technology, engineering, math)-themed high school.  Dr. Polselli is certified by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to provide both advanced ground and flight instruction in fixed wing aircraft. Students can begin flying at any age, but Dr. Polselli says that sophomore or junior year in high school is an ideal time to start. “As an instructor, my most celebrated moment was signing my son, Bo, off on his private pilot practical check ride with the FAA on his 17th birthday,” said Dr. Polselli.  As part of the FAA focused curriculum, Dr. Polselli teaches students how a plane works, including aerodynamics, systems, and flight controls. Students also learn very detailed information about weather conditions and how to make good judgments regarding the safety of each flight. Additionally, students learn the FAA regulations and the rules a pilot must follow while in command of an aircraft.  The course offers students the opportunity to use three high-tech flight simulators, two fixed wing and one for helicopter training. Each of the fixed wing simulators is setup with four monitors to give the trainee an ultimate and realistic flight experience within the classroom. The helicopter simulator is powered by software known as X Plane 10 and is used to broaden students’ knowledge of a wider variety of aircraft.  Students also participate in a variety of field trips over the course of the program. Practical experience includes trips to the airport to visit the air traffic control tower and to work with the aircraft. Students learn to perform hands-on, preflight inspections on a variety of aircraft. The trips are geared toward providing students with real-life experience in the field that will prepare them if they decide to purchase their own airplane or pursue a career in aviation.  But, Dr. Polselli says that the Flight Academy is not just intended for students with an interest in careers in aviation. “The unique program offers a challenging experience that supports math, language arts, science, social studies, engineering, technology, physics, and meteorology,” says Polselli. “The collaborative, data-driven, hands-on learning environment is similar to other courses offered at CREC Two Rivers and is an impressive credential for college transcripts and resumes.”  In January, as an extension of the program, in partnership with G­Force flight school out of Brainard Airport in Hartford, four students had the opportunity to take the controls of an actual aircraft. They were awarded scholarships by G-Force by scoring an 80 or higher on the first FAA stage exam during the Two Rivers Fight Academy. Through a private contract, the students worked directly with G-Force for all flight activities. During the three hour flight, each student logged three quarters of an hour of flight time as they traveled to New York. Applying skills they developed on the flight simulators and during the knowledge portion of the after school Flight Academy program, these four students practiced level flight, turns, descents, and climbs.  For students, the Flight Academy program at CREC Two Rivers High School is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. “Taking part in Flight Academy was the most exciting thing I have ever done,” said Brian Sullivan, a sophomore at CREC Two Rivers. “It was easily the best experience I could have ever gotten. Fortunately for me, it was offered here at Two Rivers High School.” Comparative courses at Hartford­Brainard cost as much as $900 per student, but it was important to the CREC Two Rivers High School and to Dr. Polselli to offer all students the opportunity to participate free of charge.  More information about the Flight Academy at CREC’s Two River Magnet High School can be found in the student-created promotional video at <http://youtu.be/XOJ24LkXNLs>  ###  *The confluence of the Connecticut and Hockanum Rivers serves as an ever-changing laboratory for the* ***CREC Two Rivers Magnet School****. Students engage in traditional academics paired with a focus on environmental science and environmental engineering. With environmental sciences and technology as its unifying theme, the school prepares its graduates for higher education and careers in science, technology, engineering or mathematics. Two Rivers Magnet School is an interdistrict magnet school enrolling students in grades 6-12.*  *The* ***Capitol Region Education Council*** *was established in 1966. Working with and for its member districts, CREC has developed a wide array of cost-effective and high-quality programs and services to meet the educational needs of children and adults in the region. CREC regularly serves 36 towns in Greater Hartford, offering more than 120 programs to more than 150,000 students annually. CREC manages more than 35 facilities throughout the area, including 19 interdistrict magnet schools. More information about CREC or CREC’s award-winning magnet schools is available at* [*www.crec.org*](http://www.crec.org) | |
| ***Dr. Polselli's Flight Academy students flew to New York on January 30 through a private contract offered by the flight school, G-Force.*** | |