

# OCC's robotics center 'in the right place'

By Kathy Parrish  
staff writer

Even the highest technology can't control the weather.

So there was a little anxiety mixed with the excitement Friday during the outdoor dedication of Oakland Community College's new High Technology Center.

"That's not thunder. It's just wind whistling in the microphone," assured keynote speaker Eric Mittelstadt, president of one of the fastest growing robotic companies in the world.

The threatened rain held off until everyone got inside the sprawling new Auburn Hills campus facility that will house OCC's high tech programs like computer aided design and robotics.

"This is the beginning of an entirely new era here," said Suzanne Reynolds, chairman of the school's board.

"I feel as if we are stepping right out of the pages of 'Megatrends'."

"Educational needs change, and schools like OCC must change with them."

OPENED IN September 1983, the two-story building contains robotics laboratories and demonstration areas where high-tech equipment can be tried out.

Featuring the most advanced technology in architectural design and solar energy, the building received the 1983 Michigan Society of Professional Engineers' outstanding engineering

achievement award in the educational division.

Fast-changing equipment called for OCC to take a new approach, said Marion Rice, provost of OCC's Auburn Hills campus. The answer was to let businesses use the demonstration centers in return for the school using industry's new equipment.

"With such rapid change, it's difficult for public institutions to maintain state-of-the-art equipment," Rice said.

"We call this our on-site shopping center. The college benefits, industry benefits, the budget benefits, and students benefit."

APPROPRIATELY, speaking at the dedication was the president of GMFamc Robotics Corp., a company

formed in 1982 in a joint venture agreement between General Motors and FANUC Ltd. of Japan.

The Troy-based firm designs, manufactures and sells robots and robotic systems worldwide.

GMFamc Robotics is growing so quickly that its leased space in Troy is inadequate. The company is looking at five or six southeastern Michigan spots to build. One of those locations is Oakland Technology Park, which OCC's Auburn Hills campus is taking part in.

Mittelstadt debunked the image of Michigan as a "smokey, sooty preserve of vehicle manufacturers."

The Detroit native applauded the state's wealth of talent and creativity.

"No place provides better growth of the engineering species than right

here," Mittelstadt said. The auto industry produces more computers and the most sophisticated robotic equipment of any industry, he said.

"Let no one doubt that this high-tech center is in the right place."

SPEAKING TO OCC students in the audience, Mittelstadt said opportunities for them to reach positions of leadership and responsibility are better today than ever — especially in his business.

"The world, my young friends, has come your way. In the future, it will be engineers, scientists, technicians guiding the way." The average age of top management of GMFamc Robotics is 40.

Concluding his talk, Mittelstadt applauded the cooperation between OCC and industry through the High Technology Center.

"Our greatest force for good is industrial and educational systems coming together."

## GM to add 2nd shift at Orion

The GM Assembly Division plant in Orion Township later this month will begin hiring employees for second shift scheduled to start in early July, Plant Manager Leslie D. Richards said.

July 9 has been set as the target for the start of two-shift production, Richards announced. "It is the date we have been waiting for ever since the official start of production last Dec. 1.

"Public demand in the marketplace for the totally new, front-wheel-drive Cadillac DeVille and Oldsmobile 98 models we are building has been truly outstanding," Richards said.

"We simply cannot assemble enough of them to meet dealer and customer demand. This assures us that our second shift operations will be successful."

Due to circumstances beyond our control the Tent Sale scheduled for May 12 thru May 20 and all special events and promotions regarding this event as advertised in today's Home & Garden section have been cancelled.

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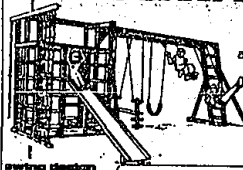
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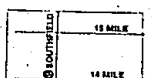
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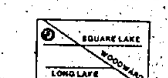
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