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## **MICHAELS® INTRODUCES AN INSPIRING NEW WAY TO SHOP WITH ITS HILLSIDE STORE**

*World's largest arts & crafts retailer redefines category with innovative new store design*

(Hillside, Ill.) Michaels, the world's largest arts and crafts specialty retailer, is breaking ground in its category with a unique new store design in the new Hillside store that focuses on providing creative inspiration and fresh new products.

The new Hillside store, located at 180 S. Mannheim Road in Hillside Town Center, opens April 5 with several in-store festivities to celebrate the occasion.

"Our new store breaks the mold of what customers expect from a crafts store," said Store Manager Linda Dragisic. "We've heard from our community for several months now and know they're eager for the new store to open."

The difference is dramatically apparent from the moment a customer steps into the store. The store is an open, modern design with wider aisles, warm colors, brighter lighting, 'inspiration kiosks' for project ideas and work spaces for customers to lay out an idea or design before purchasing.

Items are also organized to make shopping easier and to reflect shoppers' habits. Key departments, like jewelry, scrapbooking and kids are greatly expanded to become a store-within-a-store.

- **The scrapbooking department** is at the center of the store with a new variety of loose paper pads, thousands of stickers and embellishments organized by theme and a vast assortment of punches, tools, organizers, adhesives, albums and other necessities. Work space within the department allows customers room to layout their page ideas before buying.
- In the new **jewelry department**, customers can choose from more than 5,600 different styles of open stock, pre-strung, and packaged beads for everyone from beginner to expert beaders. Jewelry department staff can help guide customers, who can use the section's design trays as they choose beads, pendants, charms, cords and findings to make unique combinations.
- The new **kids department** provides parents a total solution to inspire their children's imagination and creativity. The department features an expanded assortment of kids art supplies for school projects. Increased selection in kids activity kits, foam, and value priced products under \$5 are a few of the many new exciting products featured in the section. **The Knack<sup>SM</sup>, Michaels' program for children**, showcases eight project idea displays that offer shopping convenience for busy parents. Arranged by age group, each display features a finished sample project, a free project sheet with step-by-step instructions, and the products needed to complete the project—all in one location.

- The **art supply** area has been redefined and includes enhanced products as well as educational signs that help any artist buy with confidence. The assortment of products has been improved to meet the needs of artists at any level: from student to advanced. Highlights of the new department are of an expanded artist canvas selection, including more shapes and larger sizes; an enhanced brush assortment featuring more than 230 new brushes and a broader selection of paints with more than 150 new items.
- **Custom framing** comes out from behind the counter to create a customer centric area that encourages a hands-on design experience with a dedicated custom framing design staff. Frames are color coded by price range to easily select the design that is right for you. Customers work hand in hand with their personal framer to lay out their artwork combining mats and mouldings on an open style design workstation for a truly "custom" experience.

Doors open Sunday at 10 a.m. and events begin at 1pm. Events include a prize wheel, free face painting and a free Crayola® craft for kids. *Grand opening week continues from Monday, April 6, through Saturday, April 11, with special savings on select products and more free make-it take-its on Saturday.* Through Saturday, customers can enter to win one of six prizes, valued at over \$1,000.

### **About Michaels**

Michaels Stores, Inc. is the world's largest specialty retailer of arts, crafts, framing, floral, wall décor, and seasonal merchandise for the hobbyist and do-it-yourself home decorator. The company currently owns and operates over 1000 Michaels stores in 49 states and Canada and 161 Aaron Brothers stores. (END)