

## **Media Advisory – Nov. 25, 2009**

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### **State awards county aerospace training center \$250,000**

Snohomish County's Aerospace Innovation Partnership Zone (IPZ) will receive a \$250,000 capital improvement grant for its Washington Aerospace Training and Research Center.

The state Department of Commerce announced late Tuesday that Snohomish County was one of four recipients of \$1.5 million in IPZ grant funding. The Washington Aerospace Training and Research Center, located at Snohomish County's Paine Field Airport, will serve as a hub in support of Washington state's aerospace industry, which contributes \$36 billion annually to the state economy and represents nearly 1/6<sup>th</sup> of Washington's Gross Domestic Product.

"Continuing to train the next generation of aerospace workers in Washington will ensure the expansion of our state's aerospace industry, which already provides tens of thousands of jobs," said Snohomish County Executive Aaron Reardon, who announced the creation of the training and research center in July. "We are poised to continue growing the number of aerospace suppliers that this state already boasts, and these efforts add to that."

The funding comes alongside another \$600,000 announced last month by Gov. Chris Gregoire to fund equipment and curriculum building at the Paine Field center and its counterpart in Spokane.

"This facility will provide training for the more than 650 companies that make up our state's aerospace industry," said Linda Lanham, executive director of the Aerospace Futures Alliance (AFA), a key partner in the success of the training and research center. "I'm thankful to the state Department of Commerce for this grant. It's a great start."

The Washington Aerospace Training and Research Center's programs will be built around industry needs for advanced skills and technical training. It will be driven by workforce supply and demand and will serve facilities in both Everett and in Spokane. The industry-driven curriculum will be nimble enough to meet rapidly changing business needs and industry demands and will offer classes to support employees from different work shifts.

Edmonds Community College, which will operate the center through the AFA, is expected to begin offering classes in February once renovation of a 33,000-square-foot building owned by Snohomish County is completed. The county has leased the building to the AFA.

“This capital funding comes at a pivotal time for aerospace in Snohomish County,” said Mary Jane Brell Vujovic, director of strategic initiatives for Workforce Development Council Snohomish County. “It is critical that Snohomish County become the new business development and incubation hub that is needed so desperately by our local aerospace suppliers.”

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