

Media Advisory – July 9, 2009

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Snohomish County leads aerospace training efforts *Joint effort allows for statewide workforce development*

Looking to address the state's aerospace workforce concerns, Snohomish County announced Tuesday that it has joined the Aerospace Futures Alliance and a consortium of community colleges and educational facilities to create a new, statewide aerospace institute offering training, research and development.

Joined in attendance by representatives of the federal and state delegations, the partners said they will work to create new curriculum for cutting-edge technologies as well as offer opportunities to aerospace providers such as the Boeing Co. and Aviation Technical Services (ATS) for advanced employee training. The institute will coordinate training among a statewide consortium of schools and programs that provide aerospace workforce education and training.

Specifically, the Aerospace Futures Alliance (AFA) will lease from Snohomish County a 30,000-square-foot facility at Paine Field Airport to be operated as a centralized training center. A similar center will be located at the Spokane International Airport, bringing the east and west together to create a statewide aerospace training program.

“This creates new and needed opportunities for our aerospace workers to keep their skill sets well ahead of our competition,” Snohomish County Executive Aaron Reardon said. “This also helps our leading businesses such as Boeing stay competitive by maintaining a strong core of skilled workers well into the future.”

“This is a way of keeping up with the needs of the aerospace industry,” said Linda Lanham, AFA's executive director. “We have to start now because we're already competing with five other states that have such training facilities. We're losing our edge for skilled aerospace workers.”

The educational consortium allows for the rapid development of training programs that don't currently exist in Washington state but are needed to remain competitive in today's aerospace industry. Training will be offered throughout the state at different colleges to suit the needs and locations of individual aerospace companies. A strong focus will be on “training the trainers,” officials said.

For instance, ATS has identified the need for more sheet metal structures training and support, as well as the future need for composites training. The consortium will have the chance to collaborate on a curriculum that addresses those needs, then offer that back to ATS, community colleges and other educational facilities teaching aerospace classes.

“We share the concerns of the future of aerospace manufacturing in the state of Washington,” said Jack Oharah, Edmonds Community College president. “We look forward to working with the Aerospace Futures Alliance and our education partners in addressing the training needs of the aerospace industry from a statewide perspective.”

Said Mike Mires, Spokane Community College’s dean of instruction for technical education: “With our position clearly defined as the national leader in jobs within the aerospace industry, Washington state needs to also be a leader in readying the next generation of aerospace employees. A statewide initiative with facilities on the west side and east side will ensure that we reach the highest number of interested and qualified prospects, and provide a well-trained and skilled workforce for years to come.”

Improvements to the Snohomish County building will be made during the summer and at no cost to the county. Federal funding may also be available to cover necessary training equipment. Classes and curriculum development will be available this fall and will be paid for by the companies requesting training assistance.

“As a vehicle to promote the improvement of business growth and visibility within the aerospace industry in Washington state, the Aerospace Futures Alliance looks forward to this collaboration with the county, our partners in private industry and the academic sector,” said Michael Zubovic, vice president of finance and administration at ATS and chairman of the Aerospace Futures Alliance. “We intend to work hard to ensure the vision of the county can become a reality and serve as a model within the state.”

“It is clear that Washington State is in a competition with other states such as South Carolina for the second line of the 787 and perhaps the future of commercial aerospace.” Reardon said. “We owe it to the thousands of aerospace employees in our state to do everything we can to remain competitive and keep future jobs in Washington.”

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July 9, 2009

Linda Lanham, Executive Director
Aerospace Futures Alliance of Washington
14407 SE 266th
Kent, WA 98042

Dear Linda:

Snohomish County and the Aerospace Futures Alliance agree that aerospace is critically important to the economic vitality of Snohomish County, our region and the entire State of Washington. Approximately 650 aerospace companies in Washington account for \$36 billion – 15% of the State's gross domestic product. These companies directly or indirectly employ more than 209,000 people. Of these, Boeing employs more than 75,000. We also know that more than two jobs are created for each aerospace job. Snohomish County is home to approximately 35,000 aerospace jobs—jobs that are living, family wage jobs.

Boeing will soon decide where to locate the second 787 production line. Boeing will later decide where to locate the production line for the successor to their best-selling 737.

We must do everything we can to keep these jobs in Washington, and Snohomish County will do everything it can to support aerospace jobs.

To that end, and on behalf of Snohomish County, I am pleased to offer the Aerospace Futures Alliance a home for the new institute that will improve our state's aerospace training, education, research and development programs. This institute will coordinate, provide and develop curriculum for a statewide consortium of schools and programs that provide aerospace workforce education and training.

Snohomish County will make available to the Aerospace Futures Alliance an approximately 30,000 sq. foot facility on 2.75 acres at Paine Field in which to base the new institute. This facility has approximately 3,700 square feet of space for offices and classrooms, power, clear heights of 14 to 18 feet, and was previously used for aerospace manufacturing. Representatives of the AFA visited the building and believe it fits their needs. Our respective staffs are working to make this building ready for the new institute to start its critical work as soon as possible.

Snohomish County is committed to assisting the Aerospace Futures Alliance to support our vital aerospace manufacturing base and looks forward to partnering with the Alliance on this and future projects.

Sincerely,

Aaron Reardon
County Executive

Linda Lanham
AFA Executive Director