

AEROSPACE AND ADVANCED MANUFACTURING

SEPTEMBER 2024



“The Washington state aerospace industry employed 77,400 workers (annual average) in 2023, and paid \$11.3 billion in worker wages, generating \$57.2 billion in gross business revenues in 2023.”

Seattle Metro Chamber Aerospace Impacts Report, July 2024

Making aerospace soar



Described as the “most competitive business environment for the manufacture of major aerospace structures and for the final assembly of aircraft,”¹ aerospace is a Washington state economic powerhouse generating jobs that fuels our economy. Washington’s community and technical colleges produce the world-class employees needed to keep it that way.

All 34 of Washington’s community and technical colleges offer the aerospace, aerospace-related and advanced manufacturing training demanded by the state’s industry. This training moves well-trained workers into well-paying jobs. The number of programs offered, in fact, has grown over the last few years in order to meet industry demand for specialized employees, especially as the current workforce ages and retires each year.

Training the aerospace pipeline

The aerospace industry is more than just building airplanes. Its scope encompasses areas like avionics — which refers to aviation and electronics — mechatronics, electronics and composites. The aerospace industry now includes uncrewed systems, sustainable fuels, and space. In this rapidly changing world, firms need their employees to be up-to-date on the latest trends and technology so they can stay competitive.

Career-connected learning

The Aerospace Joint Apprenticeship Committee (AJAC) Advanced Manufacturing Apprenticeship designs, develops and implements career-connected learning apprenticeship programs for aerospace and manufacturing occupations. AJAC — comprised of industry employers and employees — delivers training specific to area occupational needs, hiring instructors from industry to ensure training reflects current practices.

Apprentices take related supplemental instruction one night a week at a community or technical college and complete on-the-job training during the day at a company’s job site. Seven community and technical colleges² participate in AJAC apprenticeship programs.

