

2013 First Quarter: Newsletter

BOEING DONATES AIRCRAFT SECTIONS



Older airplanes are helping to educate new workers.

The before and after pictures of this Trans World Airline (TWA) 767 tell the story of how older airplanes are being used to help educate new workers. This 767-231, line number 70, had its first flight on September 22, 1983 and was delivered to TWA on November 23, 1983. It was retired in 2010 after 25 years of service. Cut away sections of this workhorse were salvaged for training. Our partners at Boeing donated these aircraft sections to the Washington Aerospace Training and Research Center (WATR).

The aircraft sections will be used to help students see first-hand how their training is utilized in the development of aircraft. "The lower 41 cockpit and fuselage sections will be invaluable to helping students learn process-to-product orientation. Students will have the ability to inspect the intricate wiring bundles, head heights, fasteners, and parts locations in both the Assembly and Quality Assurance programs," said Alex McEwen, facilitator. "Students will gain a broader perspective by being able to apply first-hand the skills learned online and from their workbench to the actual aircraft."

We are excited to have this new addition at WATR.



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2013 BELLWETHER AWARD

WATR selected as 2013 Bellwether Award Finalist

The Bellwether Award recognizes trend-setting institutions which develop outstanding programs and practices to successfully lead community colleges into the future. The Washington Aerospace Training and Research Center (WATR) has been selected as a 2013 award finalist for its exemplary workforce development program.



For the second time since opening in June of 2010, WATR is being honored as a Bellwether recipient. In 2011 WATR was recognized as a top ten finalist for "Workforce Development: Public and/or private strategic alliances and partnerships promoting community and economic development."

The National Bellwether Awards are conferred by the Community College Futures Assembly, which is sponsored by the University of Florida Institute of Higher Education. The Assembly convenes annually as an independent national policy forum for key opinion leaders to work as a "think tank" in identifying critical issues facing the future of community colleges.

The award focuses on the extent community colleges are prepared to address the needs of the future workforce, identify potential gaps, and develop recommendations for policymakers. The awards were very competitive this year with nearly 250 nominations. Only ten colleges were selected as finalist in each of the three categories.

WATR is managed and operated by Edmonds Community College in partnership with the Aerospace Futures Alliance. This year, WATR was selected as a finalist based on its unique, customer-driven education model which is responding to the aerospace industry's need for a trained workforce. Edmonds Community College President Dr. Jean Hernandez and Executive Director Larry Cluphf presented at the Community College Futures Assembly in Orlando, Florida.

"We are excited and honored that WATR continues to receive local and national recognition for our industry-driven innovative programs," said Cluphf.



AEROSPACE INDUSTRY SEEKING VETERANS



Veterans who attend the Washington Aerospace Training and Research Center (WATR) programs are finding success obtaining jobs in aerospace. A number of aerospace companies are seeking veterans for their soft skills, trustworthiness, and adaptable learning styles. WATR programs are helping veterans transition usable skills into aerospace.

Last year, Edmonds Community College's Veteran Resource Center and WATR representatives jointly attended a number of recruiting events to reach military personnel who are considering transitioning from active duty. In addition, Edmonds CC streamlined its internal processes to make it easier for veterans to access their education benefits.

The military offers a unique work environment which fits well in aerospace. Veterans are some of the most sought after people in the aerospace industry because of their unique qualities and transferrable technical skills.

Employers highly value soft skills (teamwork, loyalty, and ethics) which builds a culture of reliability. Veterans have a proven attribute of being extremely reliable in the workplace. The military culture is dependent on each soldier's reliability to perform assignments to the best of their ability while providing support to fellow soldiers.

Working in aerospace also requires rigorous background screening. Veterans as a group are vetted. Some have already proven their trustworthiness by going through the clearance process. This too is a cost savings for employers.

Veterans have proven adaptability in learning and education. They have diverse skills which are required to meet specific job assignments. These specialized skills are transferable to aerospace.

All of these unique qualities may appear as simple day-to-day job performance and go unnoticed by veterans, but these assets are highly valued by employers. WATR certifications are helping veterans hone their skills for transition into aerospace.

WATR: A YEAR IN REVIEW



The Washington Aerospace Training and Research Center (WATR) had another successful year in 2012. In just over two years, WATR reached a new milestone with over 700 graduates obtaining employment at 45 aerospace companies. We are proud that WATR graduates are qualifying for livable wage jobs in aerospace. Below are some additional highlights for 2012:

In The News: This year WATR was featured on a national level by Nation Public Radio as a model for community college programs who are successfully supporting industry. (washingтонаerospace.com/npr)

Social Media: In February of 2012, WATR launched its Facebook account (www.facebook.com/WATR.EDCC). Over 450 people are following the Center's progress as students are providing updates and testimonials on their success.

WATR Expansion: Over 9,000 square feet were added to the center to address industry demand for new classes and programs. The expansion also provides additional space for customized training for companies. The expansion was marked with two celebratory events: a Job Fair and the official Ribbon cutting which was attended by local and state officials, including Governor Christine Gregoire.

New Certification Programs: WATR is proud to offer two new industry driven Certificate of Completion programs in Aerospace Manufacturing: Quality Assurance and Tooling. These certifications help address the skills and training identified by aerospace suppliers needed for entry level employees and their incumbent workers.

Outreach to Veterans: All WATR programs have become GI Bill approved. By enrolling, veterans can receive training which compliments their transferable skills. We are proud to support our returning veterans and have formed partnerships with the National Guard J9 and JBLM Family Services.

Partnership with Sno-Isle Tech Skills Center: Five high school seniors graduated with the WATR Aerospace Manufacturing Core Certificate while attending Sno-Isle. Following high school graduation, they completed their specialization certificates. WATR looks forward to continuing this partnership with future classes.

New Executive Director: WATR Director Larry Cluphf was named the new Interim Executive Director for the Business Training Center.