Pierce County Lands at the Farnborough Airshow with Governor Inslee

The Pierce County Economic Development Department recently joined Governor Inslee as part of the Washington State delegation attending the 49th Farnborough International Airshow. With aerospace growing rapidly on a global basis, attendance at the show was important in order to show the world that Pierce County is part of the larger aerospace shop floor in Puget Sound.

“We had the opportunity to meet one on one with companies from all over the world,” said Kevin Clegg, Special Assistant to the Executive for Business Services. Kevin partnered with Susan Suess, Senior Vice President with the Economic Development Board for Tacoma-Pierce County to meet those firms. The County’s attendance was for two primary reasons: to let aerospace companies know they are welcome in Pierce County and to market Pierce County’s robust supply chain to firms that are looking for new suppliers.

“The days were long, 12-14 hours spent walking to meetings, having a presence at events, and visiting companies, but worth it as I believe we planted some great seeds. We also have additional follow up with some of our contacts,” added Clegg.

The delegation also toured the National Composites Centre located in Bristol. The Centre showcases collaboration in

Aerospace Summit Highlights Local Successes, Challenges in Global Market

With Boeing forecasting huge demand for new airplanes over the next two decades, Pierce County aerospace industry stakeholders spent Wednesday, July 23, discussing how to make sure this region maintains and grows its role in the global market.

"We have a built-in advantage. Our aerospace heritage goes back generations. But we know that's not enough - not in today's hyper competitive business climate," County Executive Pat McCarthy told 160 people attending the third annual Pierce County Aerospace Summit, which she co-hosted with the Economic Development Board for Tacoma-Pierce County.
composites research and development in a format that mixes business and academia to develop practical applications for composites technology.

The Farnborough Airshow, held from July 14–20, is one of the largest air shows in the world with more than 1,500 exhibiting aerospace firms from around the globe.

Aerospace Summit Highlights Local Successes, Challenges in Global Market

Aerospace Summit participants agreed that competition for that manufacturing growth is intensifying.

"We're not competing just with Airbus, but with the states and countries that want to take some of what we have here and get those investments in their markets as well," Kendall said.

McCarthy, Kendall, state schools Superintendent Randy Dorn and industry leaders emphasized three concerns to address:

- Persuading the Washington Legislature to pay for the long overdue completion of Highway 167 from Puyallup to the Port of Tacoma, a need the County Executive described as "arguably the most important economic development project in the state."
- Encouraging collaboration among government, private business and educational institutions to improve school performance so that youth are prepared to enter a changing job market.
- Urging Congress to reauthorize the Export Import Bank, which assists with many of Boeing's business deals.

Alex Pietsch, director of Gov. Jay Inslee's Office of Aerospace, said aerospace represents 11 percent of the wages in Washington state, with 1,350 firms employing 132,500 people. He noted that Boeing is experiencing unprecedented production increases. And last week's announcement that Mitsubishi Aircraft is bringing its new regional jet to Moses Lake for testing demonstrates the value of the state's expertise.

"Thanks to the 777X decision, we will enjoy the vast majority of commercial market share for the next two decades at least," Pietsch said.
Doing Business in Pierce County - Classic Reflections Coachworks

Pierce County is home to businesses large and small and all are appreciated for their contribution to the County’s economic well-being. The Pierce County Economic Development Department and its partners work together to encourage and assist small, entrepreneurial firms to thrive and grow.

**Classic Reflections Coachworks** (CRC) demonstrates that entrepreneurial spirit and perseverance. Using materials and production techniques most often seen in the County’s aerospace sector, CRC produces a truly unique product, a Retro-Vette. It’s the customer’s chance to go back to the future in style.

CRC has been in business since 2001. The concept of putting an old look onto a new, state of the art sports car, however, was created in 1993 by owner and designer Doug Graf in classic entrepreneurial fashion, turning a backyard garage hobby into an all-consuming business. The company moved into the Lakewood location in 2005 and employs 21 people.

The material that allows Doug and his skilled team to successfully transform today’s Corvettes into relics of days gone by is carbon fiber, the same material used on modern aircraft to create new interiors and fuselages. Rolls of CBS Carbon Fiber are shipped to CRC frozen from Gurit (www.gurit.com) in the United Kingdom. There are many panels for each different model of Corvette which are cut and placed into molds. Each panel is vacuum bagged and cured at controlled temperature cycles in a large oven at the Lakewood shop. Several employees gained their carbon fiber experience in the region’s aerospace sector before joining CRC.

Each car is then placed on its own cart and moved into the fitting room where all exterior panels are aligned and attached. Chrome trim and bumpers are fit to each car before it is painted to ensure proper fitment after the final clear coat of paint.

Built on a C5 (98-04) or C6 (05-13) Corvette convertible, the owners drive an early model Corvette with the modern convenience of today’s technology. Models built as recently as 2013 are being retrofitted.

In the past, the company retrofitted two basic versions of the legendary Corvette, the 1958 and 1962 models. It has added a third model, the 1967 Stingray, after investing almost 18 months in engineering efforts to “get it right.” All models are convertibles and are slightly wider and longer than the original vehicles to accommodate the modern conveniences to which drivers have become accustomed.

“Several employees gained their carbon fiber experience in the region’s aerospace sector before joining CRC.”

The company continues to innovate with new processes and ideas. It is adding a “layup room” which will enable it to better control the climate and temperature surrounding the carbon fiber panels, a necessity for producing the high quality bodies.

CRC has received national recognition for its work and is expanding its marketing efforts. This fall it will sponsor 13 episodes of the popular TV show, *Corvette Nation*, as well as continuing to have a presence at trade shows across the country.

To learn more about this Pierce County company, visit its website [http://www.crcoachworks.com/](http://www.crcoachworks.com/).

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**Did You Know?**

- There is an incentive program for eligible businesses providing on-the-job training when hiring military veterans? Contact Linda Helenberg, Business Services, WorkForce Central at Lhelenberg@workforce-central.org.

- **Pierce County offers business loans?** Contact Sheree Clark at sheree.clark@co.pierce.wa.us or 253-798-6916.

- The Pierce County Library System provides free access to data useful for businesses, and classes to help you learn how to get the data? Visit [www.piercecountylibrary.org](http://www.piercecountylibrary.org).

- As of July 21, U.S. Open tickets for 2015 were approximately 80% sold out? For information on ticket options, including the Junior and Military Ticket Policies, visit [www.usga.org/tickets](http://www.usga.org/tickets).
Join us on October 3 for our annual Purchasing Forum:

- Meet one-on-one with purchasing agents
- Learn how to access agency portals
- Learn about upcoming opportunities
- Meet and interact with other Pierce County business owners and managers
- Light breakfast snack provided
- Free parking

**2014 GREATER PIERCE COUNTY PURCHASING FORUM**
**October 3, 2014**
**8:30 AM - 12:00 PM**

**Registration @ 8:00 AM**

**Location:**
Environmental Services Building (ESB)
9850 64th St W
University Place, WA 98467

For complimentary registration, visit piercecountywa.org/edd or contact Hans Kueck:

hkueck@co.pierce.wa.us
253.798.2335