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AJAC Celebrates Tri-Cities Machining Apprenticeship Graduates for Earning Nationally Recognized Journey-Level Certificate

AJAC Hosts Apprenticeship Graduation Ceremony in Pasco, WA for New Generation of Machinists in the Aerospace and Advanced Manufacturing Industries



AJAC Machinist (Aircraft Oriented) apprentice graduate, Dustin Tomjack (left) with instructor, Tim Jones (right)



AJAC apprentice graduates at Columbia Basin College



AJAC apprentice graduate, Chris Hock

SEATTLE, WA-April 1, 2015 – The [Aerospace Joint Apprenticeship Committee \(AJAC\)](http://www.ajactraining.org) will host a graduation ceremony Friday, May 15, 2015, at Columbia Basin College in Pasco, WA to celebrate AJAC’s graduating Machinist (Aircraft Oriented) Apprentices from the Tri-Cities. The graduates will be awarded a nationally recognized journey-level certificate for completing AJAC’s four-year apprenticeship program. These new journey-level professionals are employed across four aerospace and advanced manufacturing companies in the Tri-Cities, including Areva NP, Bogert Group, Sandvik Special Metals, LLC and TK Machine Co., who participate in AJAC’s apprenticeship program as registered Training Agents. “This is such an exciting time for not only these graduating apprentices, but for aerospace and advanced manufacturing in the Tri-Cities. These graduates represent a new generation of manufacturing professionals who will carry on the invaluable knowledge and skills of their mentors and those retiring in the next five, ten years,” said [Demetria “Lynn” Strickland, AJAC Executive Director](#). “AJAC’s graduates are walking out of the program as multi-skilled machinists with the competence and confidence to work on a variety of equipment, across multiple divisions within an organization. They have earned their journey-level certificate - a sign of their hard work, perseverance and leadership skills. “

These apprentices successfully performed 8,000 hours of supervised on-the-job training (OJT) at their employer’s job site and completed college-level classes at Columbia Basin College to learn the theory and practical application behind their training. The graduates earned 60 college credits, which they can apply towards a two-year degree that may articulate into a four-year degree, opening doors to careers in technical education instruction, engineering and management. AJAC’s apprenticeship program provided each company a method to capture and pass on the knowledge and skills of their most experienced machinists.

“With AJAC’s invaluable help, this apprenticeship program is giving us the ability to maintain a structured, on-the-job training program...,” stated Kerry Prewett, TK Machine Co., President. “The structure offers our company the opportunity to train our apprentices, utilizing our people’s extensive knowledge and experience, which cannot be offered at the school level. As a result, I believe, we will end up with very good, loyal, journeyman-level employees...”

During AJAC's Machinist (Aircraft Oriented) apprenticeship program, graduates performed their OJT on a scheduled rotation, which trained them on a variety of equipment and processes, providing their company with a flexible and highly-skilled workforce. The equipment and processes included all aspects of Manual and CNC Machining, CNC Programming, Computer Aided Design (CAD) & Computer Aided Manufacturing (CAM), Inspection, Metallurgy, Cutting Tool Technology, and Advanced Machining Technologies, such as Waterjet and Electrical Discharge Machining (EDM).

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The [Aerospace Joint Apprenticeship Committee \(AJAC\)](#) is a statewide, state-funded, nonprofit organization that develops and implements [Washington State registered aerospace and advanced manufacturing apprenticeship programs](#) for Machining (Aircraft Oriented), Precision Metal Fabrication, Aircraft Mechanic Airframe, Tool & Die Maker and Industrial Maintenance Mechanic. [Apprenticeship](#) combines supervised on-the-job training (OJT) experience (93% of the time) with college-level classroom instruction (7% of the time). The programs are industry-driven and offer aerospace and advanced manufacturing employers the opportunity to build a well-qualified and experienced workforce.