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Washington State Approves Governor Inslee's Youth Apprenticeship Program
Youth Apprentices 'Earn While They Learn' Without College Debt

Seattle, WA: The Washington State Apprenticeship Training Council approved the state's first Youth Apprenticeship program for the local aerospace and advanced manufacturing industries. This program will provide high school students with an opportunity to earn tuition-free college credit, high school credit for graduation completion, 2,000 hours of paid on-the-job training and mentorship from industry professionals.

Youth Apprenticeship Washington is a collaborative effort between the Aerospace Joint Apprenticeship Committee (AJAC), Washington State Department of Labor and Industries, Governor Jay Inslee, Bates Technical College and the Tacoma Public Schools. Youth Apprenticeship Washington is "a direct bridge from high school into industry and it provides a diverse pipeline of applicants. Youth apprenticeship in Washington holds the promise of employing thousands of high school students across numerous high demand industries over the next several years." said Lynn Strickland, AJAC's Executive Director. With the nearly 3.5 million job openings in the next ten years for manufacturing, the industry is facing a shortfall of skilled labor, particularly from young adults.

"We're focusing on creating more opportunities to connect young people with great careers," said Governor Jay Inslee, during the 2016 Youth Apprenticeship Summit. He added, "We know that a four-year track is not the only way to succeed in our state. And for too long, we have been creating this implicit tacit message to our youth." Apprentices on average earn \$300,000 more in their lifetime compared to non-completers and in Washington, manufacturers earn over \$87,000 a year with zero college debt.

AJAC's Youth Apprenticeship program works directly with local-area employers who current partner with AJAC for adult apprenticeship. These employers have expressed that high school students, particularly those already in career and technical education programs make good candidates for entry-level employment when coupled with an apprenticeship model of post-secondary education.

KBTC's "Northwest Now" will feature a panel discussion on Youth Apprenticeship Washington on Friday, January 27th at 7:30 p.m. The panel will feature AJAC's Executive Director, Lynn Strickland, Labor and Industries Liz Smith, John Altman from the Governor's Office and Ron Langrel, President of Bates Technical College.

About AJAC: The Aerospace Joint Apprenticeship Committee (AJAC) launched in August 2008 with an investment from Washington State to skill-up the state's aerospace and advanced manufacturing workforce. AJAC develops and implements several high-growth, in-demand occupations through registered apprenticeship, youth apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs.

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