

Asheville, North Carolina: Poised for Future Aerospace Growth

Asheville, North Carolina has a rich legacy of precision tooling dating back to the 1940s when Oerlikon Tool from Switzerland established operations in the community to manufacture tools and arms following World War II. During the ensuing decades, internationally recognized firms such as Northrop, TI Group, Smiths Aerospace and today, Unison Engine Components (purchased in 2007 by GE Aviation) have manufactured and supplied the most sophisticated, high-precision jet engine components to the global marketplace.

Unison Engine Components- Asheville (GE Aviation)

Over the past 35 years, Unison has supplied high-tolerance precision-machined jet engine components to virtually every engine manufacturer throughout the world and continues to excel because it embraces advanced technologies and maintains a highly-skilled workforce. Western North Carolina is known for its workforce ethic that companies such as Unison Engine Components - Asheville can depend on to meet the growing demands of its customers. As world leaders in gas turbine engine component production, all 366 employees must meet the most stringent demands in order to maintain the company's competitive edge. "We rely heavily on Asheville-Buncombe Technical College and our participation in state training programs," explained Dale Collins, General Manager of the Asheville facility. "The school supplies a quality labor force trained to meet the strict standards required to work in this field and our in-house training department assures employee success." In 2007, Unison Engine Components - Asheville announced a \$20 million expansion in Asheville and installed additional state of the art equipment strengthening the firm's competitive edge.

Kearfott Guidance and Navigation Corp.

Another aerospace supplier that has been in operation in Buncombe County since the 1950s is Kearfott Guidance & Navigation Corporation. Kearfott designs, develops and manufactures

products that are used in the aerospace industry across the globe, including, but not limited to:

- Aircraft Navigation and Control Systems (manned and unmanned)
- Stabilized Platform and Pointing Systems
- Rotary Motion Control and Sensing Components

Kearfott and its team of approximately 300 dedicated employees have earned a strong reputation as leaders in the production of cost-effective solutions for high precision motion control applications.

Smoky Mountain Machining, Inc.

Smoky Mountain Machining, Inc. began its operation in the late 1970s as a small contract machine shop, primarily to service the aerospace industry. Some of its distinguished aerospace customers have included Boeing, Grumman and Lockheed. Currently employing 70+ people and operating three shifts, expansion plans are currently in place to accommodate the increasing demand for world-class machining.

Palmer Wahl Instrumentation Group

Palmer Wahl, with over 170 years of continuous product innovation, started as America's first instrumentation company in Cincinnati, OH in 1836. Located in Asheville since 1987, it supplies the aerospace industry as well as the military with precision components for F-16 fighter jets, Airbus A-380, satellites and other onboard calibration equipment.

Stony Point Group

The Stony Point Group, Inc. is an operationally focused private equity and management firm headquartered in Asheville that acquires and manages middle market manufacturing firms. Stony Point currently has two portfolio companies, TECT Power and TECT Aerospace, which it has assembled over the past twelve years through five acquisitions. TECT Power and TECT Aerospace manufacture and assemble flight critical turbine engine and airframe components for virtually all of the world's aerospace original equipment manufacturers: General Electric, Boeing,

Rolls Royce, Pratt & Whitney, Cessna, and others.

Asheville Regional Airport Authority

The Asheville Regional Airport (AVL) encompasses more than 1,000 acres of land and the airport authority invites growing corporations to explore opportunities in Western North Carolina. The airport has land to lease for hangars, aircraft maintenance facilities and other industrial/commercial aviation uses, including taxiway access. Property in close proximity to the airport is also available, providing additional opportunities for commercial development.

- 8001 foot long, 150 foot wide runway
- Category I Instrument Landing System

Federal Presence

Asheville is home to NOAA's National Climatic Data Center (NCDC) and to the U.S. Air Force 14th Weather Squadron. NCDC houses the world's largest collection of weather data and provides the historical overview and analysis of weather for regions offering data-based information about climate change and its effect on many areas, including transportation and in particular aviation. NCDC archives weather data obtained by the National Weather Service, Military Services and Federal Aviation Administration. The 14th Weather Squadron uses historical weather data to develop and produce special weather-impact information used in planning and executing worldwide military operations of the Department of Defense and allied nations and in engineering weapon system design.

Recently rated as "The Happiest Place in America" and one of the "Best Places for Business and Career" by Forbes, come find out for yourself why Asheville is consistently top-ranked for economy and jobs, cost of living and overall quality of life. North Carolina, Buncombe County and the City of Asheville have progressive economic development incentives policies for aerospace and other advanced manufacturing firms. Please visit www.ashevillechamber.org/economicdevelopment or call 828-258-6128 for more information. 🏡