

**Visioneering Unified Legislative Alliance  
National Center for Aviation Training (NCAT)  
LEGISLATIVE RESUBMITTAL PROPOSAL – November, 2010**

**Proposal:** It is requested that the Visioneering Unified Legislative Alliance include in its identified priorities for the 2011 legislative session the following:

*Continued support for technical education and training initiatives at the National Center for Aviation Training (NCAT) in Wichita, KS to serve the workforce needs of south central Kansas. Development of the training programs to be housed at the NCAT facility is being guided by the **Sedgwick County Technical Education and Training Authority** and implemented by Wichita Area Technical College. The collaborative and funding efforts of the local, state, federal and private sectors are required to ensure that the training programs and facility are developed to world class standards. While the state legislature supported this project during the 2008, 2009, and 2010 legislative sessions in the amount of \$5 million, \$2.5 million, and \$5 million respectively, it will be imperative to seek continued funding to ensure that the facility, programming, and infrastructure remain state-of-the-art. More specifically, funding is needed for the next three to five years to provide:*

**1. Equipment:**

- *Cutting-edge technology and equipment that is current in today's aviation and advanced manufacturing industries.*
- *Sophisticated software utilized in cutting-edge curricular areas to assure training needs are met.*

**2. Technology/Infrastructure:**

- *Expansion and development of technology to improve services and support with leading-edge infrastructure.*

**3. Program Development:**

- *New program development and curriculum updating as required by industry demand and need.*

**4. Upgrade & Expansion:**

- *Staffing support to ensure that industry education and training remains current and future demands are met. This includes expansion and development of new programs including incubational start-up costs, faculty development, and training.*

*This year's funding request will be in the amount of \$10 million for the above stated initiatives.*

**Background:**

In 2008, Wichita's aviation companies sought legislation to obtain funding to support and provide implementation funds for the National Center for Aviation Training (NCAT) in the amount of \$5 million for five years. During the 2008 legislative session, a total of \$5 million (\$2.5 million from general funds and \$2.5 million from EDIF) was approved to support the facility, programming, and infrastructure needs of the NCAT. During the 2009 legislative session \$2.5 million was approved from state appropriations and in 2010 \$5 million was approved.

## **Regional Impact:**

As revealed by the Wichita Visioneering initiatives, the Wichita metropolitan area is lagging behind in crucial economic growth indicators. The Wichita metro is last among its regional competing metros and is lagging the nation as a whole in job growth over the twenty years spanning 1981 - 2002. During the same time, Wichita's per capita income, as a percentage of that of the U.S., declined by 12.5%. Much of this can be attributed to a decline in higher wage manufacturing jobs which are being replaced by lower skill and lower wage service sector jobs.

The aviation and manufacturing industries are clearly an economic driver for Kansas and the Wichita community and thus an important commodity to preserve. Even with the downturn in business aviation, more than 30,000 Kansans work in aviation in the Wichita area alone. Add in the jobs that are created as a result of those aviation jobs (when aviation workers spend their paychecks and aviation businesses buy intermediate goods from local companies), and the total reaches nearly 119,000 jobs, with an annual payroll of more than \$5 billion. In 2008, aviation accounted for about 21 percent of the total Kansas economy. While the state's average wage remained around \$38,000 in 2009, the average wage for aviation manufacturing workers is in the \$67,000 range. Recent data from the Center for Economic Development and Business Research at Wichita State University indicates that:

- Payroll earnings for the manufacturing industry in the Wichita MSA totaled approximately \$3.4 billion in 2009, with average earnings per job of \$58,926, and
- The aviation manufacturing (transportation equipment) sector accounted for 60.8 percent of manufacturing jobs, with payroll for 2009 totaling more than \$2.37 billion and average earnings per job of \$67,440.

Even though aviation and manufacturing has taken a significant hit due to the nation's recent economic downturn, manufacturing employment in the Wichita MSA remains at over 53,000 workers. Industry analysts forecast growth in deliveries in the aviation market in 2012 indicating the need for expanded employment. (See attached letter to Governor Parkinson from local aviation companies.)

In addition, a large percentage of the aviation workforce will become retirement eligible in the next 5 years, exacerbating the demand for trained employees. One of the largest challenges facing the aviation cluster will be the availability of workers once the economy rebounds. In fact, some local aviation companies are currently positioning themselves for economic recovery and continue to support the training needs of future workers.

If we are to maintain our quality of life, Kansas must continue to attract and retain high skill manufacturing jobs and increasingly attract and retain higher wage service sector jobs. The clear means to that end is to increase our knowledge and skill base and ensure we can continuously retrain that resource going forward. Additionally, with a declining workforce brought about by boomer retirements, we must be efficient and effective in meeting that objective. States such as North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia have invested heavily in their technical training systems, much to their competitive advantage. Each day we delay in building and supporting a quality technical education and training infrastructure we risk losing more new business prospects to other forward thinking communities. More importantly we risk losing the high wage businesses which have called south central Kansas their home for many years.

## **Relationship to Job Growth and Education:**

The recovery from the current economic downturn will be directly related to our ability to provide highly technical education to our citizens and companies. The demand for retraining current and laid off employees during this economic downturn is at an all-time high. Therefore, it is imperative that we provide the educational opportunities necessary for us to upgrade current employee talent in order for our businesses to remain as competitive and productive as possible. Additionally, we must invest in the training for separated employees to ensure that our businesses have the pipeline of future workers as economic opportunities expand.

The National Center for Aviation Training system and facility envisioned by Sedgwick County, and managed by Wichita Area Technical College, will create a clear, viable and exciting means for our young adults and all of our citizens to pursue technical careers. As WATC launches programs and oversees the operation of the NCAT collaboration among high schools, community and technical colleges, and universities will be pursued that will provide for smooth and efficient articulation among training and education providers. Our aim is to create a technical education and training environment which will attract students of all types and ages including some of the brightest talent from our area and across the country.

As the 9<sup>th</sup> largest public two-year college and **the** largest technical college in the state, the college serves the largest aviation supplier base in the world via its aviation and manufacturing programs. As the opening of the NCAT became reality in August 2010, WATC accelerated the development of new programs, upgraded current programs, and increased its enrollment. Some of the college's highlights over the past two years include:

- The move of WATC's administrative offices, manufacturing and aviation programs to the new National Center for Aviation Training. Classes began August 16, 2010.
- New programs developed and deployed over the last 2 years; Airframe and Powerplant Mechanic (A&P), Avionics, Composite Fabrication and Repair, Aviation Manufacturing, Non-Destructive Testing, Mechanical/Architectural Design, Machining and Welding.
- 4 new programs scheduled to be developed and deployed over the next 12-18 months; Advance Coating and Painting, Electrical/Mechanical Systems, Robotics and Torque Certification.
- 17,970 credit hours in aviation and manufacturing related programs which is the largest enrollment in these programs areas in the history of the college.
- 3,752 FTE for academic year 2009/10 with a student headcount of over 3,900 for credit students and 1,818 non-credit students, which marks the largest enrollment in the history of WATC.
- 12<sup>th</sup> fastest growing two-year college, that serves 2,500 students or less, in the United States according to Community College Weekly.
- 64<sup>th</sup> in the nation in the delivery of one-year certificates for colleges that serve 2,500 students or less according to Community College Weekly.
- 100<sup>th</sup> in the nation in serving minority students, for colleges that serve 2,500 students or less, according to Community College Weekly.
- 83.3% graduate placement rates.

To preserve the investment made by Sedgwick County and local aviation industries, it is imperative that the NCAT receive continued state resources to assure successful implementation and delivery of high demand and high wage programs that result in skilled workers for the aviation and manufacturing industries.

**Original Proposal and Resubmission Differences:**

The original proposal sought a total of \$50 million which also included contributions from multiple stakeholders. This proposal is for continued funding at a level of \$10 million that specifically targets the legislative funding request. We will urge the legislature to give utmost priority to this proposal and to appropriate legislation and related State support which can help realize its intent.

**Organizational Support for This Proposal**

- Kansas Technical Training Initiative, Inc.
- Wichita Area Chamber of Commerce
- Sedgwick County Technical Education and Training Authority
- Boeing Company, Wichita
- Bombardier Learjet, Wichita
- Cessna Aircraft Company
- Hawker Beechcraft
- Spirit Aerosystems, Inc.
- Many other Kansas aviation suppliers

**Draft of Legislative Ask:**

Not Applicable.