AEROSPACE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER

The Aerospace Professional Development Center (APDC) works closely with the aerospace and defense industry and government, higher education institutions around Ohio, and STEM initiatives in the Dayton region, to offer career coaching, match employees with job openings, identify skills gaps in the workforce and assist students in finding internships.
APDC maps pathways for current and future aerospace and defense employees to advance their careers and offers programs and courses for current students in higher education. Through numerous employer contacts, APDC continuously assesses the skills of Ohio’s current available workforce, and from that data collection, works with employers to ensure that higher education subject matter is designed to match the skills employers seek in new hires.

Wright State opened its much-anticipated Aerospace Development Center in 2012, endeavoring to improve Ohio’s contributions to the aerospace and defense sectors.

Ohio is the top global supplier to S.A.S., Airbus, Boeing, and Northrop Grumman, the world’s most productive aviation and aerospace corporations. At the same time, Dayton, Ohio, is home to the Air Force’s largest U.S. base, Wright Patterson Air Force Base (WPAFB). With Dayton serving as the aerospace and defense hub of Ohio, the state has turned to the region to improve its aerospace and defense workforce. Through its collaboration with Wright State Research Institute (WSRI), Wright State University has responded.

Aerospace and defense needs of today call for parts manufacturing and supply, research in composites, propulsion and fuel, the development and manufacturing of unmanned aircraft, evaluation and testing, materials and coating, and machining. All this allows a buttoned-up APDC to build a successful pipeline of matching graduates to jobs that need to be filled in the aerospace and defense sectors now and in the years ahead.

On both sides of the fence that separates Wright Patterson AFB and Wright State, collaborative research and discovery is taking place between the Air Force Research Laboratory (AFRL) and Wright State Research Institute. Here is statistical data that drives their collaborations:

- For aerospace and defense, there are 100,133 Ohioans employed at more than 1,200 companies.
- The annual wage of these workers is $76,000 – 65 percent higher than the average Ohio manufacturing wage.
- $9 billion is invested annually in R&D and testing in Ohio.
- Ohio is the leader in aircraft engine manufacturing and development with 17% of the total U.S. aerospace/defense industry employed in Ohio.
- Ohio is the Birthplace of Aviation (Orville and Wilbur Wright are from Dayton), and 24 astronauts hail from Ohio, including John Glenn, Neil Armstrong and Jim Lovell.
- Ohio is home to the NASA Glenn Research Center and the country’s largest air force base, WPAFB.

Recently, Ohio invested $11.4 million in workforce development for aerospace and defense to conduct research statewide that revealed skill gaps between Ohio’s aerospace professional workforce and employers’ needs. Wright State University, through its APDC group, is taking the lead to close the gaps.

About the Wright State Research Institute
Wright State Research Institute (WSRI), a department of Wright State University, is at the forefront of where science and technology combine to develop innovative customer-focused solutions. With an emphasis on use-inspired and applied research, new product development, and program management in the human and health sciences, the Institute applies emerging technologies to difficult problems facing industry and government partners. As one of the region’s leading research institutions, WSRI pursues a mission that facilitates technology development, job creation, and the economic revitalization of the Dayton region and the State of Ohio.

About Wright State
Wright State University is a comprehensive public university with strong doctoral, research and undergraduate programs and is rated among the 260 Best National Universities listed in the annual “America’s Best Colleges” rankings by U.S. News and World Report. Wright State is located in Fairborn, Ohio, a suburb of Dayton. The university has a branch campus on the north shore of Grand Lake St. Marys, near Celina, Ohio. Wright State’s current enrollment is a combined 17,595 students on both campuses, of which 15,665 are undergraduate students. Wright State became an accredited independent university in 1967. It is named after Dayton’s famed native sons, Wilbur and Orville Wright, the pioneers of aviation.

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