

Snohomish County Executive **AARON REARDON**



Priorities in Action



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Friday, June 4, 2010

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Reardon, legislators open new aerospace training center

Snohomish County Executive Aaron Reardon, County Council members and other local, state and federal Congressional delegates opened the new Washington Aerospace Training and Research Center on Thursday at Paine Field.

Reardon led efforts last summer to establish a consortium of community colleges and educational facilities to create a new, statewide aerospace institute offering training, research and development.

At that time, the county offered the Aerospace Futures Alliance (AFA) a 30,000-square-foot facility at Paine Field Airport to be operated as a centralized training center. Since then, more than \$6 million in federal, state, local and private funds and donations has been dedicated toward improvements here and at a similar facility in Spokane.

More than 15,000 square feet at the Paine Field site has been renovated and installed with computer labs, training equipment and classroom space, including \$2.5 million in tools, materials and equipment from the Boeing Company.

“This new training center will allow us to remain successful in the highly competitive field of aerospace,” Reardon said. “We must continue to lead the change that ensures high-paying jobs and top-rate airplanes stay in Snohomish County and Washington state.”

The training center, with key oversight provided by Edmonds Community College, has the opportunity to provide short, hands-on, job-specific training to employees at the state’s 650 aerospace companies, which employ more than 120,000 workers. Classes begin next week.

“We needed a coordinated statewide training center to address the

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aerospace industry's changing technical requirements and workforce needs. The Aerospace Futures Alliance, Aaron Reardon and leadership in Snohomish County made this center a priority," said Larry Cluphf, the center's director of operations. "Strong partnerships with county, state and at the national level, have made this industry driven center a reality."

The Aerospace Futures Alliance will help connect the center's activities to industry and advocate for additional resources as needed to aid in its success.

"We cannot stop here," said Linda Lanham, executive director of the Aerospace Futures Alliance. "We must continue to fund training opportunities for our aerospace workforce and the companies they represent."

Such an educational consortium allows for the rapid development of training programs that don't currently exist in Washington state but are needed to remain competitive in today's aerospace industry. Training also can be offered throughout the state at different colleges to suit the needs and locations of individual aerospace companies. A strong focus will be on "training the trainers," officials have said.

"With strong competition for future aerospace work, we owe it to the thousands of aerospace employees in our state to do everything we can to remain at the top of the field to keep future jobs in Washington," Reardon said.



Executive Aaron Reardon delivers remarks on Thursday at the opening of the Washington Aerospace Training and Research Center in Everett.

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Sincerely,



Aaron Reardon



Reardon names Haakenson deputy executive

Three-time Edmonds Mayor and proven business leader to be Reardon's second in command

Snohomish County Executive Aaron Reardon has selected Edmonds Mayor Gary Haakenson as his new deputy executive.

Haakenson, a Northwest native, has served as Edmonds mayor for the past 11 years. Reardon called Haakenson a proven administrator who brings a mix of successful business and government experience to the position.

"Gary understands the difficult economic climate facing local governments and knows the needs of our community," Reardon said. "Gary has been successful in both business and government because he knows the importance of teamwork and he focuses on the needs of the customer."

Haakenson, 62, began his business career as a manager at J.C. Penney before later co-founding Everett-based Zumiez, a national retail clothing chain with nearly 400 stores.

In 2000, he began his first term as mayor of Edmonds, with a population more than 40,000, before being re-elected to terms beginning in 2004 and 2008. As mayor of Edmonds, Haakenson is responsible for a \$75 million annual budget and oversees 266 employees.

Prior to his election as mayor, Haakenson served on the Edmonds City Council for four years from 1996 through 1999.

"The switch from city to county government is a welcome challenge, but one that I feel confident in making," Haakenson said. "I am grateful to Executive Reardon for the new opportunity and look forward to serving the residents of Snohomish County."

Under Reardon, Haakenson will help oversee Executive Office departments, including Parks & Recreation, Human Services, Public Works and Planning & Development Services. He also will work directly with the Snohomish County Council and other individually elected officials.

"This administration looks forward to solving the challenges ahead as we continue to position ourselves for new job growth and an improved economy," Reardon said. "Gary will be a valued asset to this administration."

Haakenson earned his degree in business administration in 1971 from Seattle University and is a graduate of Blanchet High School. He is married to Dolly Haakenson, and together, they have two married sons.

Haakenson replaces Mark Soine, who was deputy executive for five years, and will earn about \$147,000 annually. He will begin July 5 but will be involved in policy decisions at the county level during his transition.

 **Human Resources wins national excellence award**

Snohomish County's Human Resources Department, led by Director Bridget Clawson, has won a prestigious Alfred P. Sloan Award for Business Excellence in Workplace Flexibility.

Clawson and members of the department will be honored during the 2010 Recipient Recognition Luncheon on June 30.

This top accolade from the When Work Works Initiative recognizes organizations that have set the standard for flexible work practices. Human Resources' workplace flexibility programs help to maximize productivity with limited resources while supporting employees.

"Snohomish County must continue to do more with less, and Bridget Clawson's team is making sure that happens," said County Executive Aaron Reardon. "Bridget and the Human Resources Department continue to find better ways departments can serve our residents while assisting employees with their needs."

The result has been a consistent delivery of innovative and expanded programs during a time of staff reductions due to budget cuts. Human Resources' flexibility programs have been recognized at both the local and national level.

"Especially during these difficult times, employees need more flexibility with work and family," Clawson said. "Our goal is to create greater job satisfaction with continually improving customer service." The Puget Sound area was selected as one of 30 regions nationwide to participate in the fourth annual Sloan Awards as part of the When Work Works initiative. When Work Works is a national initiative bringing research on workplace effectiveness and flexibility into community and business practice.

When Work Works is a project of the Families and Work Institute in partnership with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce's Institute for a

Competitive Workforce and the Twiga Foundation, with funding from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation.

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