

Textron Aviation, WSU Tech and IAMAW launch aerospace tooling apprenticeship



New program will build critical aircraft production talent pool

WICHITA, Kan. (March 10, 2020) – Textron Aviation Inc., a Textron Inc. (NYSE:TXT) company, WSU Tech and the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAMAW) today announced a new collaborative apprenticeship program to address long-term production and tooling requirements for the company’s aircraft programs and help further Wichita’s status as one of the world’s major aerospace clusters.

The two-year program, the first of its kind in the region, will provide students both factory and classroom training in a wide range of skills needed to help design, build and maintain production tooling, which covers everything from specialized hand-held tools to large jig assemblies supporting aircraft parts and assemblies. As Textron Aviation employees, program participants will not only earn a full-time salary and benefits, but the company will also cover related tuition and fees at WSU Tech.

“Textron Aviation has long been committed to building educational and community partnerships that benefit both the company and the region, particularly in developing a well-paid, skilled workforce that maintains our advantage in a very competitive, global market,” said Maggie Topping, senior vice president of HR and Communications at Textron Aviation. “Through the new apprenticeship program with WSU Tech, our students will get the benefit of an advanced curriculum designed specifically for this program, as well as learn on the job from our highly skilled tradespeople.”

“WSU Tech is nationally known for aerospace education programs that offer hands-on training in our own campus facilities and through partnerships like we have with Textron Aviation,” said Dr. Sheree Utash, president, WSU Tech. “We are so proud of our role as the premier training partner for the Wichita aerospace cluster, still an aviation export leader for the U.S.”

“This program is another example of the innovation and disciplined business practices of the people of Kansas that have made us a global aerospace leader,” said Kansas Governor Laura Kelly. “This kind of partnership is exactly the formula that helps attract talented people to work and live in Kansas.”

In a typical week under the program, the first class of 15 apprentices will attend training at WSU Tech for two days and spend three days with assigned mentors at Textron Aviation production facilities in South Central Kansas. Company mentors will be selected from the various divisions within the Tooling department and will acquaint the apprentice with Textron Aviation’s company, culture and job requirements, and will share their knowledge and expertise.

Apprentices will rotate through the various divisions and spend time with each mentor to develop a well-rounded knowledge of the department and company. Upon successful completion of the program, participants will earn a Tooling Associates of Applied Studies (AAS) degree from WSU Tech and move to full-time positions at Textron Aviation.

The specialized curriculum consists of technical studies and general education courses, including mechanical design, aviation manufacturing, welding, machining and electronics. If they choose, apprentices can take advantage of the company's tuition reimbursement benefit and continue their education following the program to earn a bachelor's degree.

Images:

Press Conference

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