

GE Aviation and Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College

GE Aviation is a global leader in jet engine and aircraft system production. GE has a large presence in North Carolina with more than 1,650 employees and four sites, including Asheville, West Jefferson, Durham, and Wilmington. GE Aviation has the largest and fastest growing install-base of jet engines in commercial aviation and a global services network to support those engines.

In 2013, GE Aviation Asheville announced an expansion that included the addition of a new technology – ceramic matrix composites (CMC). CMCs are made of silicon carbide ceramic fibers and ceramic resin, manufactured through a highly sophisticated process and then further enhanced with proprietary coatings. The CMC component manufactured in Asheville is a high-pressure turbine shroud for the world’s best-selling LEAP jet engine, being developed by CFM International. GE Aviation Asheville is also building CMC engine parts for the GE9X, which will power the Boeing 777X when it goes into service in 2019.

The GE Aviation expansion in Asheville included a \$125 million capital investment and an additional 75 employees. A Customized Training project was developed by **Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College (A-B Tech)** to support these goals. Within a month of GE Aviation opening its new facility, A-B Tech opened the Composites Training Center of Excellence, the only composites training facility of its kind in the Southeast.

That first training project ran very successfully for three years, ending in February of 2017. In both pre- and post-hire training, A-B Tech trained 370 people. Because both the metals machining and the CMC operations are thriving and planning on adding more skilled jobs (such as CMC Technicians, Machinists, Quality Assurance Technicians, and Engineers), as well as investing in new equipment, a second Customized Training project has been developed that will assist the company’s growth efforts through 2020.

Through the Customized Training Program, the state of North Carolina delivered the resources and training that GE Aviation needed to be successful. A-B Tech delivered – and continues to deliver – quality training to ensure GE Aviation’s success. Their testimonies tell us that new employees are extremely well-trained and prepared after they have gone through A-B Tech training which is critical to quality, production efficiency and safety. Well-paying, high-skilled jobs have been and continue to be created in western North Carolina.