

2018 MAJOR EMPLOYERS KEEP GROWING JOBS

We're building on a trend we've seen since 2014. Pierce County job numbers are holding strong across industry sectors, with regional companies adding thousands of full-time employees to their payrolls.

The EDB's **2018 Major Employers List**, spotlighting companies with more than 100 full-time-equivalent (FTE) employees, identified 259 qualified employers compared to 248 in 2017. Employers listed this year represent 163,205 jobs.

Topping the list are familiar faces: **Joint Base Lewis-McChord (JBLM)**, the **State of Washington**, **MultiCare Health System** and **CHI Franciscan Health**. The quartet has led the pack since 2012. **Puyallup Tribe/Emerald Queen Casino** is back in the Top 10 this year.

The EDB welcomes other new additions to this year's Major Employers' List: **Infoblox**, **Insulation Northwest**, **Light Dental Studio**, **PM Testing**, **Tactical Tailor**, **Trident Seafoods** and **Wayne's Roofing**.

Job growth across sectors

Twenty-two Pierce County companies that provided data this year and in 2017 reported at least 5 percent expansion of their workforces, with 15 posting double-digit increases over last year. **James Hardie Building Products** and **Absher Construction** top the list, a solid indicator construction and the demand for building materials are on the rise.

Health care still strong

With more than 21,900 FTEs, health care and senior services continue to top the list of private employers in Pierce County, representing around 13 percent of FTEs reported by companies participating in this year's survey. The jobs keep growing at MultiCare Health System and CHI Franciscan Health, the list's top-two placeholders. The organizations collectively employ nearly 14,500 FTEs.

Washington Gastroenterology also saw a substantial jump in FTEs this year following a merger in January that made it the largest gastroenterology practice in Washington State.

Investment in manufacturing, food processing paying off

The EDB facilitated the **Strategic Reserve Fund (SRF)** applications of **Wilcox Family Farms** and James Hardie Building Products. Washington State Governor Jay Inslee's SRF grants will help the companies expand employment counts. SRF awardees **AIM Aerospace** and **Bradken** plan to complete capital projects and ramp up hiring in 2019.

The **Economic Development Corporation of Pierce County**, staffed by the EDB, makes tax-exempt bond financing available to employment-generating manufacturing facilities. **Tool Gauge** and **SeaTac Packaging** took advantage of the **Industrial Development Revenue Bond (IDRB)** financing program, a trend we expect to increase along with interest rates. Both companies plan to announce hiring rounds in 2019.

Other trends

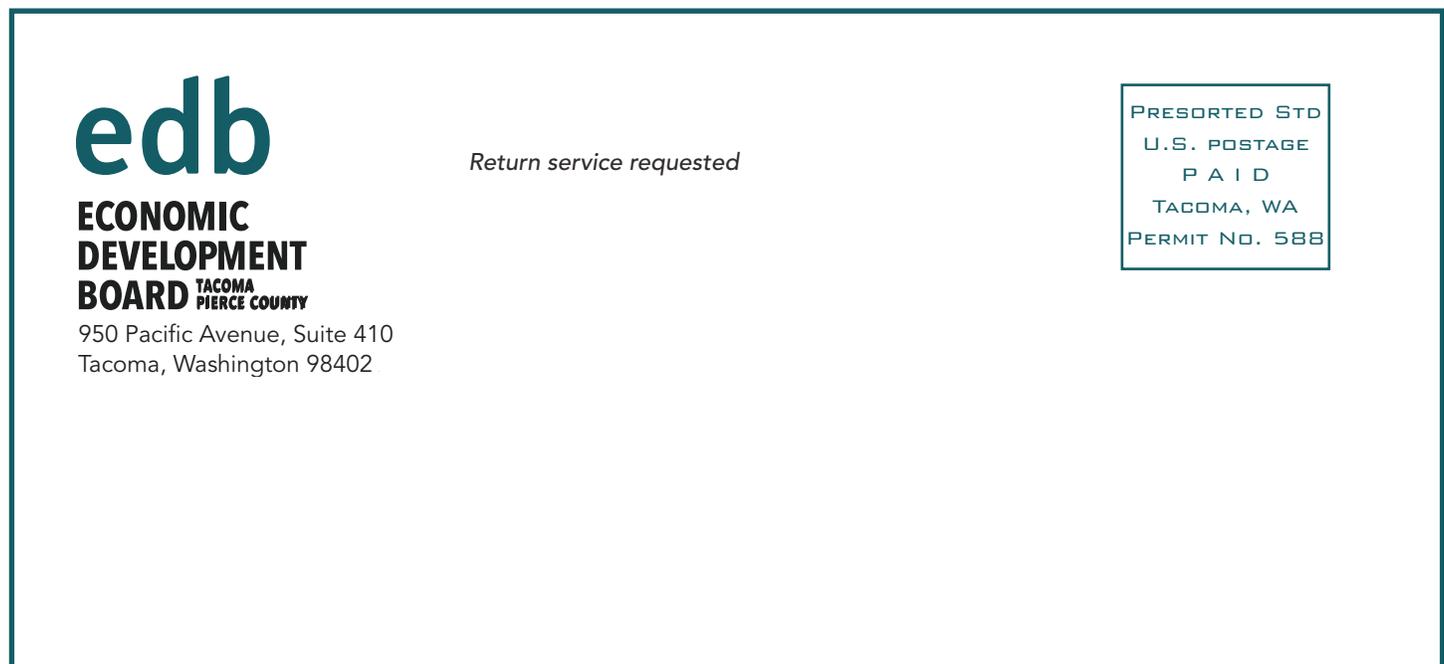
- **Transportation, trade and logistics keep moving.** New and recently completed projects in Lakewood, Sumner and Tacoma show there's additional capacity in Pierce County. **Amazon** continues to be the largest distribution employer in the county, with 1,200 FTEs at its DuPont and Sumner distribution centers.

- ▶ **We're playing, hiking and shopping like the Mountain is out.** People want to live in and visit Pierce County for its abundant recreational, dining and shopping opportunities—from Emerald Queen Casino gaming and entertainment, to fun and games through **Metro Parks Tacoma**, to soaking in the wonder via **Crystal Mountain, Rainier Guest Services** and **Mount Rainier National Park**.
- ▶ **Smaller companies big part of economy.** Last year the EDB began including mid-size companies on the Major Employers List. Sixty businesses with fewer than 100 full-time employees opted to provide data this year. These important players in our economy employ thousands of people across all industry sectors.

The full list is available on the EDB website at edbtacomapierce.org/majoremployers. Watch for coverage of the 2018 Major Employers List in upcoming editions of **South Sound Business** and **The News Tribune**.

TRUEBLUE IN THE NEWS

Kudos to Maggie Lower, chief marketing officer for EDB investor **TrueBlue**. Lower was included the **OUTstanding LGBT+ Executives 2018 list**, compiled by the organization **INvolve**. The list includes executives representing 21 countries recognized as role models for their work driving cultural change and creating positive work environments.



The **National Association of Corporate Directors (NACD)** also recently recognized TrueBlue for diversity in its senior staff members and entry-level hires.

Tacoma-based TrueBlue provides nationwide staffing services. For more information about the company, visit trueblue.com.

SECURE YOUR SPOT FOR THE 2019 EDB ANNUAL MEETING

Registration is open for the **2019 EDB Annual Meeting**, Thursday, March 7, 2019, 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m., at the **Greater Tacoma Convention & Trade Center**. Don't miss the **Golden Shovel Award, Excellent 10** and keynote speaker Rebecca Ryan. Contact the EDB for sponsorship details at 253.284.5890. Buy your table and reserve your spot at edbtacomapierce.org/annualmeeting. Advance registration and payment required.

New this year: Futures Lab Bootcamp on March 6. (Watch for details.)

Teamwork is a service of the EDB, a non-profit corporation focused on recruitment and retention of primary businesses in Tacoma and Pierce County, Washington, USA.

950 Pacific Avenue, Suite 410 / Tacoma, Washington 98402 / 253.383.4726