

## EDB REPRESENTS AT SELECTUSA INVESTMENT SUMMIT

At press time, the **EDB** and other **Pierce County** delegates were navigating the **53rd International Paris Air Show**. We'll have more to report on that in an upcoming issue of *Teamwork*. Closer to home, representatives from economic development organizations in Washington State are just back from making pitches to foreign companies looking to do business in the United States.

The **SelectUSA Investment Summit**, held June 10-12 in Washington D.C., is a high-profile event dedicated to promoting the U.S. as the world's premier investment destination. The summit connects qualified firms from around the world with U.S. economic development groups to facilitate business investment and job creation.

Sarah Bonds, EDB vice president for business recruitment, represented the EDB and Pierce County as part of the **Washington State Department of Commerce** delegation. It was the first time the EDB participated in the event.

### Swipe right: Creating and building relationships

Integral to the summit was SelectUSA's matchmaking tool, which helped facilitate interactions and connections between investors and economic developers. The digital platform enabled summit goers to arrange meetings ahead of time, allowing attendees to make the most of their time and accomplish months' worth of networking in a few days.

With a focus on aerospace, advanced manufacturing, tech and health care, Bonds plugged in specific criteria and set up 21 meetings ahead of the summit. Over the three-day event, she met with companies from Japan, Scotland, Indonesia, Greece, Canada, Germany, Morocco, the Netherlands, India, Israel, Sweden and France. Think speed dating, with 100 tables set up in a large room and sessions limited to 25 minutes. Given the opportunity to research the companies ahead of time, Bonds was able to zero in on what they were interested in during the meetings as they pursue U.S. opportunities, such as Pierce County workforce demographics, educational systems, incentives and more. Over the coming weeks, Bonds will follow up on several warm leads.

"As the marketplace becomes more and more competitive, it's important to be proactive and get ourselves in front of people who might not be aware of Pierce County and all its investment opportunities," Bonds said. "Having the ability to come to the table with the right companies that are already interested in what Pierce County and Washington State have to offer was a great way to get the ball rolling."

Find out more about the SelectUSA Investment Summit at [selectusa.gov/2019-investment-summit](http://selectusa.gov/2019-investment-summit).

### A good time to toot our horn

The timing of the SelectUSA Summit and the International Paris Air Show couldn't have been better for touting the benefits of doing business in Pierce County and Washington State. In May, **U.S. News and World Report** named Washington the best state in the country, citing cleaner energy and a booming tech sector. And a new study from **WalletHub** said Washington State has the best economy in the United States (No. 1 in economic activity, No. 4 in economic health and No. 2 in innovation potential).

WalletHub compared the 50 states and the District of Columbia across 28 key indicators of economic performance and strength, including GDP growth, startup activity and the share of jobs in high-tech industries. Each metric was graded on a 100-point scale, with a score of 100 representing the highest economic performance. Washington State's total score was 77.60.

You can read more at [bit.ly/WalletHub-best-economies](http://bit.ly/WalletHub-best-economies).

# \$5.4 MILLION IN GRANTS AVAILABLE FOR EMPLOYEE TRAINING

If your company has employee-training needs, there's more than \$5 million on the table to help offset the cost.

Washington State's **Job Skills Program** (JSP) provides funds for training new or current employees on-site or in a local classroom. Since 2008, JSP has given almost \$24 million in grants and trained nearly 29,500 workers in Washington State.

For Pierce County employers, **Invista Performance Solutions**—a collaboration of **Clover Park Technical College, Pierce College Fort Steilacoom, Pierce College Puyallup** and **Tacoma Community College**—makes it easy to tap into grants to help fund programs to meet your specific training needs. Invista will arrange the training programs and facilitate funding applications. The deadline to apply for the next grant is August 30, 2019, for projects starting as early as October 1.

“The mantra across America is to do more with less, and that often means cutting employee training and development budgets,” said Don Sosnowski, Invista Performance Solutions executive director. “We provide a way to help organizations stretch their limited training budgets and still fund valuable employee training. Our colleges make the process easy, from the initial grant application through training rollout, to final reporting.”

**edb**

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Several Pierce County companies and organizations have reaped the benefits of the JSP grant awards. **Bite Me, Inc.**, a Tacoma-based manufacturer of high-quality natural, organic cookies, used a \$69,607 grant for LEAN, English as Second Language (ESL), computer software and food-safety certification training. **Tacoma Community House**, a provider of services to immigrants, refugees and other South Sound residents, offered employee training around change management, team building, interpersonal communication and more, thanks to a \$42,658 JSP grant.

To be eligible for funding, companies or organizations must be a private corporation, institution, firm, person, group or association concerned with commerce, trade, manufacturing or the provision of services within Washington State, or a public or nonprofit hospital licensed by the **Department of Social Services** (DSHS). Other nonprofit organizations meeting the criteria are also eligible. Government and municipal agencies, including tribal governments, are not eligible. Companies and organizations that receive a grant are required to match the Washington State funding by paying trainee wages and benefits during the training program.

For more information, visit the Invista Performance Solutions website at [invistaperforms.org](http://invistaperforms.org), or contact the company at [info@invistaperforms.org](mailto:info@invistaperforms.org) or 253.583.8865.

*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.*

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