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RUAG Unveils Apprenticeship Program in Brevard County

Company announcement brings jobs, capital investment and workforce training

Titusville, FL (December 16, 2016) – RUAG Group, headquartered in Switzerland, recently announced its selection of Brevard County as the future home of RUAG Space USA, Inc. To ensure the company is ready to meet the demand to manufacture its satellite components, the Swiss company will be introducing an aerospace apprenticeship program known as the German Apprenticeship Program (GAP™).

GAP™ is an apprenticeship model trademark of Kamm Consulting Group, founded on the highest apprenticeship standards practiced in Germany, Switzerland, and Austria. The program is new to Brevard County and is committed to delivering a highly trained technical workforce.

Franck Mouriaux, General Manager Structures for the new RUAG Space USA, Inc., manufacturing facility stated, "RUAG Space relies very heavily in Switzerland upon the Swiss apprenticeship training program to recruit and train its workforce in the highly technical disciplines in Aerospace Technologies. We want to build a workforce here in the US that is fully staffed with an American workforce with equally competitive skills as we are accustomed to in our Swiss and German based operations. We look forward to collaborating with the Space Coast community and local advanced manufacturing and aerospace companies to create a globally competitive workforce to supply the highly technical skills required in our industries".

Following the RUAG Space USA, Inc. announcement, RUAG convened a community stakeholders meeting to introduce the GAP™ model to the Space Coast. Leaders from Brevard including EDC President & CEO Lynda Weatherman, Eastern Florida State College, CareerSource Brevard, Florida Institute of Technology and Morf3D joined representatives from the U.S. Department of Labor and the Swiss Consulate to discuss the importance of skilled labor and how the success of this program will help set Brevard apart.

"Manufacturing apprenticeship and training programs designed to enhance the skills and knowledge of workers create true pathways towards success," stated Lynda Weatherman, president and CEO, EDC of Florida's Space Coast. "I am excited that students enrolled in programs such as the EDC's Certified Production Technician course, will become valuable assets for local manufacturers."

"Company driven apprenticeships leverage the existing workforce and add value to the organization," stated Marci Murphy, president, CareerSource Brevard. "Generating attention for apprenticeships and the positive impact they have, will further encourage dialogue of such programs and other non-traditional career paths that are essential to the support of the manufacturing industry in Brevard and the U.S."

Swiss Honorary Consul Luc Burkhardt noted, "Switzerland wants to especially encourage dialogue and promote awareness of the Swiss apprenticeship model to companies in Florida and the United States. In that regard, I'd like to bring special attention to the Joint Declaration of Workforce Development signed by the US and Swiss Governments in July 2015 for collaboration on apprenticeships. This very important declaration provides a framework for the two countries to cooperate in such areas as worked based training, curriculum development, credential recognition and the expansion of programs in new industry sectors."

Kamm Consulting Group specializes in implementing GAP™ turnkey solutions in communities across America. This industry led program assists US communities to align, map and implement the Germanic benchmark standards to the US educational infrastructure.

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About the Economic Development Commission of Florida's Space Coast

The Economic Development Commission of Florida's Space Coast (EDC) is dedicated to attracting new business and investment and expanding existing industry throughout the Space Coast, influencing change on government laws and regulations affecting economic development, promoting the Space Coast to encourage new investment, supporting efforts of Space Coast military installations, and relaying new programs and procedures to assist manufacturing and high tech companies. The EDC is a private, not-for-profit coalition whose stakeholders are business leaders committed to the economic growth and stability of Florida's Space Coast. Visit www.SpaceCoastEDC.org.

About RUAG Space USA Inc.

RUAG Space is Europe's leading supplier of space products to the industry. With 1,200 people employed at 10 locations in Switzerland, Sweden, Austria, Finland and the USA the RUAG Space Division achieved some total sales of 310 million Swiss Francs in 2015. RUAG develops and markets internationally sought-after technology applications in the fields of aerospace and defense for use on land, in the air and in space. 55% of RUAG's products and services are destined for the civil market and 45% for the military market. The Group is headquartered in Berne, Switzerland. It has production sites in Switzerland, Germany, Austria, France, Sweden, Finland, Hungary, Australia and the USA. Around 8,200 employees – of whom 410 are trainees – generate sales of some CHF 1.75 billion. Contact Hendrik Thielemann, Hendrik.thielemann@ruag.com