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Airport Jobs

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Information Center

The Seattle Times

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Lost while job-hunting at Sea-Tac? Not anymore

By Alex Goff

Special to The Seattle Times

Finding a job in a place as large as Seattle-Tacoma International Airport used to be a job in itself.

Until recently, you had to go to each individual airline, caterer or cargo company to learn about job vacancies and fill out applications. But now there's a single stop: the new Airport Employment Information Center (AEIC).

It not only lists job openings at the airport, but offers help with resumes, interview skills, the notoriously difficult background-check form required by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and even day care during the job hunt.

"We have a lot of jobs people don't really know about," said Terri-Ann Mohon, Port of Seattle publications and communications coordinator.

"Not only Port of Seattle jobs, but dozens of airlines, support companies, restaurant and hospitality organizations are hiring," she said. "You go to one office, and you can search the listings on hard copy or on computer to find the right jobs for you."

The AEIC office is on Sea-Tac's mezzanine level. It offers advice about interviewing, training and even finding transportation and day care.

The center was modeled after a program in San Francisco and was designed in part to help cities near the airport boost employment.

"We went down there and talked to employers and community organizations," said Susan Crane with PORTJOBS, the organization that oversees the AEIC. "We also did a series of interviews and focus groups here to see if there was demand and good jobs to be had."

They found that opportunities abound. "What was most interesting," Crane said, "is that in most of the companies, they told us again and again, 'When I started here I was a baggage handler, or a fueler, or I cleaned cabins, and now I am a supervisor.' Alaska Airlines' president started as a baggage handler.

"The key is to get a job in the airport first, and then you can move up. This program helps you with that."



LAUREN MCFALLS / THE SEATTLE TIMES

Patrick VanPool loads luggage onto a conveyor belt at Seattle-Tacoma International Airport. The Airport Employment Information Center offers one-stop information on jobs at the airport.

A graduate of the International Air Academy in Vancouver, Wash., Best had found little help at the school's placement center.

"They didn't have a lot of jobs listed, and a lot were out of state," he said. "So I went down to the office and they really helped me a lot. I was there for three hours and they helped me with my resume, with the FAA information, everything."

Each day the office prints out a listing of hot jobs that have just opened up, plus hundreds of others that are available. Many listings are for entry-level jobs that pay \$7 to \$11 an hour, but there are a range of others, including management jobs that pay \$5,000 to \$7,000 a month.

Best was able to find three or four opportunities he liked, including one with airline catering company Dobbs.

"I wanted a stable company, and Dobbs is owned by Swissair," he said. "They helped me put together a cover letter, I faxed in my information, got an interview the next day and walked away with a job."

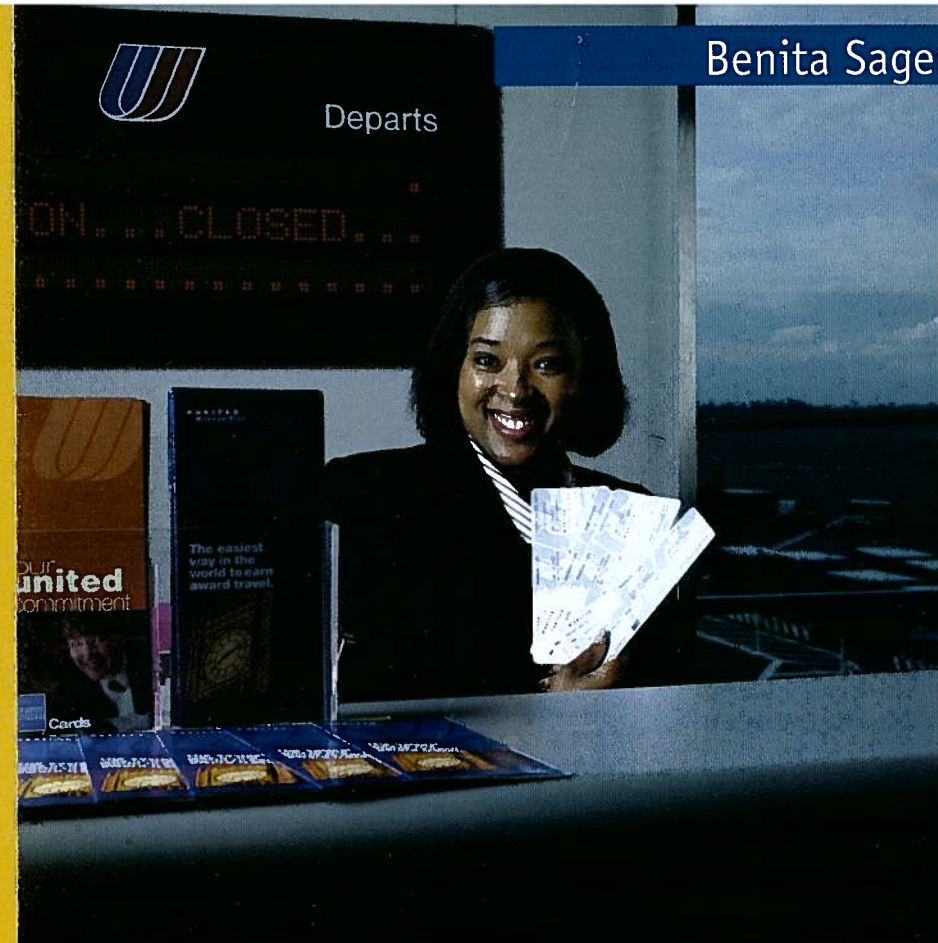
Best is happy with his post as a Dobbs dispatcher. He said the office's help was key in landing the job quickly.

The office's Web site, <http://www.airportjobs.org>, is in the infancy stage and will have more complete job listings in several weeks. Listings will be even more plentiful when employers add help to handle the busy summer travel season and Christmas holidays.

"It's a fabulous way to start a career at the airport," said office manager

Thought of working in tourism, travel, or trade?

Visit the Airport Jobs Employment Information Center to find the job you want. Airport Jobs maintains a list of job openings with businesses throughout the airport, including airlines, cargo companies, restaurants, and many others. In addition to weekly job lists, staff are available to help with resumes, interview skills, and training opportunities. If you are a WorkFirst participant, they can even help solve transportation and day care issues that you face in your job search.



Benita Sager

Just two weeks after her first visit to Airport Jobs, Benita Sager was working as a customer service agent for SkyWest Airlines. Her new job means more to her than a paycheck, it's helping her to reach her next career goal -- becoming a classroom teacher.

"I'm earning my teaching credentials now, so I need a job that works with my school schedule," Benita said. "Not only did my schedule work out, but I'm learning new skills that will make me a better teacher when the time comes."

She credits the staff at Airport Jobs with encouraging her to go back

Kristina Maroosek



Kristina Maroosek first learned about Airport Jobs from a flyer at her local WorkFirst office. Just three weeks after her first visit to Airport Jobs, she found a job as an accounting clerk at Host -- and it's a job she loves.

"Airport Jobs made looking for work so much easier," Kristina said. "There were so many jobs and I could apply for them all through one office. The staff was incredible, too. They were so supportive and really helped me find openings that matched my skills and needs."

When she visited Airport Jobs the first time, she knew she'd made

Gary Wakefield



After suffering a head injury two years ago, Gary Wakefield couldn't find a new job. Many prospective employers brushed him off when they learned of his injuries. Airport Jobs changed all that.

Staff at Airport Jobs worked with Gary to find job openings that met his needs and helped him complete the necessary applications. Through one of their referrals, he landed a job at Cargolux as a warehouse worker.

"Airport Jobs is really committed to helping people find jobs," Gary said. "Having all the information in a central place made a big