FARNBOROUGH 2024 HIGHLIGHTS WICHITA REGION'S DOMINANCE IN AEROSPACE, DEFENSE

By Emily Barnwell

Kansas continues to shine as a global leader in the aerospace and defense industry. It's a fact underscored by the recent success at the 2024 Farnborough International Airshow.

Steve Patrick, Vice President of Bombardier Defense, highlighted this achievement, noting, "This was our first time back to the show since 2018, and it proved to be extremely productive for Bombardier. Our meeting rooms were booked with back-to-back meetings. Trying to keep up with the interest was incredible."

The Bombardier Group U.S. headquarters is located in Wichita. The aerospace manufacturer was among nearly 20 Kansas companies and organizations, including the Partnership, that showcased their strengths at the prestigious show.

"The state's airshow presence shared the message of the wide range of capabilities that exist in Wichita and south-central Kansas," Patrick explained.

The July event attracted a diverse audience of government and industry leaders including approximately 1,300 exhibitors from 44 countries and nearly 75,000 visitors from 102 countries.

It provided a unique opportunity for businesses to engage with current and potential clients simultaneously.

Like Bombardier, the Partnership saw remarkable success at the airshow. The team led the largest delegation to date and hosted nearly 100 meetings. As the only economic development organization with a chalet, it offered a distinct setting for business and industry leaders to connect with the entire Air Capital delegation.

"The airshow provided an invaluable opportunity to connect with clients, bolster relationships with new businesses and engage with industry leaders from around the globe," said Andrew Nave, Partnership Executive Vice President of Economic Development. "The chalet provided an intimate atmosphere to showcase the region's talented workforce, world-class suppliers and educational pathways."

The Partnership's annual Air Capital of the World reception further highlighted the region's robust talent pipeline and dynamic aviation and defense ecosystem. U.S. Senator Jerry Moran served as the honorary guest, with more than 460 industry leaders, government officials and exclusive partners in attendance.

Patrick, who oversees the delivery of multiple specialized aircraft programs and has teams in Wichita and Montreal, Canada, emphasized the significance of the reception.

"The Partnership-hosted event was one of the premier events at Farnborough. The size of the crowd and the level of dignitaries in attendance highlights the impact of Kansas on the global aerospace and defense market," he said.

In addition to the reception and meetings, the airshow featured numerous signed deals, major announcements, impactful conferences and speaking events. Patrick noted that, despite its name, the airshow is primarily a platform for business-to-business and business-to-customer interactions, which are crucial for the region's companies and their ongoing economic success.

"The show allows us to highlight our aircraft's capabilities, built on a history of proven performance," he said.

Click here to read more about the Partnership's success at the Farnborough International Airshow.