

# Fort Benning top employer in area

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By **CHUCK WILLIAMS**

Here's a look at major employers in the area:

## **Fort Benning**

When it comes to Columbus employers, the primary color is green — Army green.

Fort Benning, located to the south and east of Columbus, is “Home of the Infantry” and a major Army training post that is expanding with the Infantry Center and School merging with the Armor Center and School.

Far and away, Fort Benning is the area's largest employer, with more than 41,000 soldiers, Department of Defense civilian workers and non-appropriated fund staffers on the sprawling installation. The Armor School, being moved here from Fort Knox, Ky., by September 2011, along with other expansion of the post, will boost the population by about 28,000 — roughly 4,700 permanent troops, nearly 1,900 civilian workers and about 4,800 defense contractors, along with more than 16,000 family members.

Then you have the retirees, more than 19,000 estimated to be living within a 50-mile radius of Columbus.

The military pumps about \$4.3 billion into the local economy each year through payroll and contracts with businesses.

Telephone: 706-545-2011 (operator)

Online: [www.army.mil/info/organization/benning](http://www.army.mil/info/organization/benning)

## **Synovus and TSYS**

The Columbus employment picture is also about banking and electronic payment transactions. Synovus Financial Corp. and TSYS both have headquarters in Columbus. TSYS, a former subsidiary of Synovus, became a standalone Jan. 1, 2008.

Synovus is a diversified financial services holding company with about \$33 billion in assets. Columbus Bank & Trust Co. is the local Synovus-affiliated bank with a history dating back to the late 19th Century. Synovus employs about 6,400 companywide, roughly 1,500 in Columbus.

TSYS is one of the world's largest companies for outsourced payment services, handling accounts for major banks and retailers. TSYS, with a downtown riverfront campus, employs approximately 7,200 people worldwide, about 4,300 in Columbus.

Telephone: 706-649-2311 (Synovus) and 706-649-2310 (TSYS)

Online: [www.synovus.com](http://www.synovus.com) and [www.tsys.com](http://www.tsys.com)

# **Fort Benning top employer in area**

## **Muscogee County School District**

The Muscogee County School District has more than 6,000 employees at 64 schools in the district.

About 92 percent of all school-age children in the county attend public schools.

The district employs about 2,900 teachers and administrators, charged with educating more than 33,000 students.

Telephone: 706-748-2000

Online: [www.mcsdga.net](http://www.mcsdga.net)

## **Aflac**

Columbus' most famous worker is probably the Aflac duck. The insurance advertising icon has helped put Columbus and Aflac on the map.

The Columbus-based supplemental insurer employs about 4,400 in United States, most of those in Columbus. The company does 70 percent of its business in Japan where it has 3,800 employees. The company provides policy holders direct cash during life-interrupting medical events.

Aflac is the No. 1 provider of guaranteed-renewable insurance in the U.S. and the No. 1 insurance company in individual policies in Japan.

Telephone: 706-323-3431

Online: [www.aflac.com](http://www.aflac.com)

## **Columbus Consolidated Government**

The Columbus and Muscogee County governments merged in 1971, and the consolidated government employs more than 2,900. In functions from parks and recreation to law enforcement, the city works to meet residents' needs.

The largest employee concentration is in public safety, where the Columbus Police Department, the Sheriff's Office, the Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services, the Marshal's Office and the Muscogee County Prison employ a total of more than 1,200 people.

Telephone: 706-653-4712 (mayor), 706-653-4029 (city manager), 706-653-4029 (citizen services center)

Online: [www.columbusga.org](http://www.columbusga.org)

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## **Columbus Regional Healthcare System**

Established in 1986 as a not-for-profit health services organization, Columbus Regional's roots date to 1836 when the local hospital was a small wood building on the banks of the Chattahoochee River.

Columbus Regional operates The Medical Center, Doctors Hospital and Hughston Orthopedic Hospital, and employs about 3,400 on three campuses.

In 2008, the hospital authority acquired Doctors Hospital and Hughston Hospital.

Telephone: 706-571-1000 (The Medical Center)

Online: [www.columbusregional.com](http://www.columbusregional.com)

## **St. Francis Hospital**

St. Francis opened in 1951 as a 154-bed facility and has since grown to a 376-bed facility.

The hospital specializes in comprehensive cardiac care.

St. Francis Hospital is located at 2122 Manchester Expressway and has three outlying campuses in Columbus. The organization has about 1,800 employees and nearly 300 physicians.

Telephone: 706-596-4000

Online: [www.sfhga.com](http://www.sfhga.com)

## **Kia Motors**

In 2006, Kia Motors Corp. announced it would build a \$1 billion automobile assembly plant in West Point, Ga. — bringing in 2,500 new jobs with it.

The factory now employs more than 1,200 and is recruiting for a second shift, with the possibility of its work force burgeoning to 3,500 staffers if a second model is assembled there.

A number of suppliers, including Hyundai Mobis, GLOVIS and DongNam Tech, have landed in the area as well.

The plant, located near the Alabama-Georgia state line off Interstate 85, began mass production last fall.

Telephone: 706-902-7777

Online: [www.kmmgusa.com](http://www.kmmgusa.com)