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Alliance adds 2,400 jobs in last year

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FORT WORTH -- The AllianceTexas development in far north Fort Worth added more than 2,400 jobs in the past 12 months, one of its largest increases since the recession, said the developer, Hillwood Properties.

Employment at the 17,000-acre development, which includes the huge logistics park, subdivisions, shopping centers and the Circle T Ranch, has hovered around 28,000 for a couple of years. Before then, slowing employment climbed by about 1,000 new jobs annually. This is the first time employment has topped 30,000, Hillwood said.

The past year has been "an extraordinary period of job growth," Hillwood President Mike Berry said. "What is most impressive about these numbers is that they run across nearly every industry sector in our portfolio. It's not tied to one thing."

Hillwood said the employment figures were provided by the 265 companies that operate at Alliance.

A chunk of the growth came at the Circle T Ranch in Westlake, where about 500 workers were recently hired to staff the soon-to-open Deloitte University, a \$300 million, 750,000-square-foot training center for the national accounting firm. Also, Fidelity Investments moved several hundred employees in the spring from leased space in the region to its 314-acre campus, which opened a decade ago.

Several companies also opened at Alliance in the past year, including Alliance Landscape Co., which hired about 30 employees, and Lubbock-based Llano Logistics/United Supermarkets, which hired about 60 employees to staff a 194,000-square-foot distribution center in Alliance Gateway Park.

Alliance Town Center has been another strong spot, with several shops and restaurants opening this past year. About 350 people work at the Kroger Marketplace that opened in January.

Healthcare jobs will provide "a huge lift" and help push the next wave of development at Alliance, Berry said. Texas Health Resources is scheduled to complete a 262,000-square-foot hospital in 2012, and HCA plans to open a 10,500-square-foot emergency care center this year.

"The direct jobs is significant, but the spinoffs they will create will be medical office buildings, senior housing and outpatient clinics," Berry said. "All of that is going to create a whole new sector of growth going forward."

Hillwood started buying land in far north Fort Worth in the mid-1980s, and Alliance Airport opened in 1989.

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