

Savannah River Nuclear Solutions

'Building the nuclear workforce of the future'



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SRNS interns gain valued experience working at SRS nuclear facilities.

Savannah River Nuclear Solutions (SRNS) has served as the Savannah River Site (SRS) management and operating contractor since 2008, advancing key Department of Energy (DOE) goals and missions including environmental cleanup, nuclear materials disposition, defense and non-proliferation activities, and technology development and deployment. SRNS makes the world safer by:

- Transforming nuclear materials into assets and stable waste forms
- Supplying tritium for our country's nuclear weapons deterrent
- Securing nuclear materials to prevent proliferation
- Developing innovative approaches to nuclear materials management challenges

Today, SRNS employs a workforce of 5,500 individuals. Approximately 50 percent of the workforce becomes fully eligible to retire over the next five years, and SRNS expects to hire about 400 workers annually to address this attrition.

SRNS performs a number of workforce planning activities to understand the current

and forecasted composition of our workforce and to develop action plans that address gaps and retain critical skills such as scientists, engineers, radiological control inspectors, maintenance mechanics and production operators. To put this knowledge of the workforce needs in action, SRNS employs a variety of approaches, starting with generating interest in the sciences in elementary school, continuing into two- and four-year higher education programs, recruiting and hiring, and finally ending with retention of experienced site personnel.

Preparing the pipeline

Since SRNS became the Management and Operations contractor in 2008, more than 175,000 students and teachers throughout the eight counties near the Savannah River Site have benefitted from dedicated efforts to help local students and assist area educators, with a wide range of involvement, expertise and support, including philanthropic giving. Many of the programs offered

annually by SRNS are based on learning through competition. They include the CSRA Science Fair, DOE Savannah River Regional Science Bowl and the Future City Competition. SRNS also annually offers a "mini grant" program to provide financial assistance to area teachers through corporate funding. This competitive program provides grants to CSRA public and private elementary and middle school teachers for innovative ideas. To date, more than \$500,000 has been contributed to support educators throughout the region.

The primary goal of the SRNS Education Outreach Program is to stress the importance of science, technology, engineering and math, which will be needed at SRS for many years ahead.

Target the talent

As the nuclear industry experiences major growth in the South Carolina region, SRNS also works with a number of

colleges, universities and local organizations to prepare for the future.

The curriculum for a new certificate program at Aiken Technical College (ATC), which began this year, was developed in collaboration with SRNS. Students who graduate from the program could qualify for a career in nuclear operations at SRS or one of the other major nuclear facilities in the region. SRNS supported this year's ATC program with a donation of \$10,000 to help offset the cost to those enrolled in the nuclear fundamentals program. The graduates of this ATC program will have met all SRNS fundamental training needs, providing much needed job candidates who are ready to go to work in SRNS nuclear facilities almost immediately.

SRNS has entered partnerships with eight local universities and technical colleges, including a donation of \$550,000 to endow a professorship for USC Aiken's new industrial



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Newly hired SRNS operations personnel in training

process engineering Bachelor of Science degree program.

SRNS has provided \$4.8 million in funding to higher education institutions since 2008.

Additionally, SRNS offers educational and research opportunities to undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate students, in a variety of assignments. Using the site's unique resources and state-of-the-art equipment and facilities, interns and participants support research and development activities, engineering, operations, and other site services while gaining knowledge and experience in their field of study. This summer, 147 interns participated, up 35 percent from 2014. SRNS has hired approximately 28 percent of graduating interns since 2014.

Keep them here

SRNS has made significant progress in providing competitive employment offers and salaries to attract and retain highly-skilled employees and make SRNS a compelling place to work. Since 2012, 83 percent of all new employees were hired locally. Knowing that SRNS employees are the organization's number one as-

set and with an eye on keeping them here, employees are offered numerous opportunities to learn, grow and excel, not only in their chosen field or departments, but also through participation on teams formed to improve operations and programs across the company.

Rewarding employees for workplace excellence, coupled with a competitive benefits package, are aimed at strengthening employee hiring and retention. SRNS has also implemented salary increases and retention pay programs for critical skills and market equity adjustments for early-to mid-career engineers and scientists.

See the results

With newly established programs to build and keep our workforce and more than 1,700 new full service employees hired since FY14, the average age of the SRNS workforce has dropped from 54 to 49 and there has been a 15 percent decrease in attrition of employees seeking other employment, validating that SRNS not only has a sustainable workforce, but is well prepared to serve the nation for decades ahead.



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SRNS engineers visit an area school during the 2017 Teach-Ins Program.