MARCH 2026

SAVANNAH RIVER NUCLEAR SOLUTIONS

SRNS Today

Mission accomplished

SRTE CY25 Outage success!

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our social media

This month

HFTOC construction approval • MTC addition expands training • Science Bowl • Site Medical

Jeff Griffin
SRNS President and CEO

On the cover

SRTE underwent a major equipment recapitalization—referred to as the CY25 Outage— to ensure the reliability of the nuclear stockpile well into the future.

Welcome

to the March 2026 edition of

SRNS Today

Every day matters in advancing our mission, and this month reflects meaningful progress made possible by the dedication and expertise of our workforce.

We successfully completed the Savannah River Tritium Enterprise CY25 Outage—a major milestone achieved after more than 560,000 work hours and years of planning. This effort ensured uninterrupted delivery to our national security partners while modernizing critical infrastructure that supports the nation's tritium supply.

We also took an important step forward, receiving NNSA approval to begin full construction of the High-Fidelity Training and Operations Center. This facility will play a central role in preparing our workforce for plutonium pit production, strengthening long-term mission readiness at the Savannah River Site.

Across our projects, we continue to adopt more efficient delivery approaches. By aligning select construction efforts with commercial standards, we are accelerating timelines while maintaining our commitment to safety, security and quality.

We remain focused on strengthening the workforce required to sustain this mission. Through initiatives such as the Savannah River Regional Science Bowl and our Fort Gordon career engagement event, we are building a highly capable, mission-ready talent pipeline. These efforts reflect an approach to workforce development—ensuring we attract, develop and retain the expertise necessary to meet evolving national security demands.

These accomplishments reflect SRNS employees' commitment to excellence and our shared focus on mission success. Thank you and enjoy this month's issue of SRNS Today.

Savannah River
NUCLEAR SOLUTIONS℠

Savannah River Nuclear Solutions, a Fluor and HII partnership company, is responsible for the management and operations of the Department of Energy's Savannah River Site, located near Aiken, South Carolina. The SRNS corporate and community offices are located in the renovated 1912 "Old Post Office" building in Aiken. The primary initiatives of SRNS are national security, clean energy and environmental stewardship. SRNS Today is published monthly by SRNS Corporate Communications to inform our employees and other stakeholders of the company's operational- and community-related activities. If you have questions or comments, please contact us at 803.952.6131 or visit our website.

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COMMON ACRONYMS

Savannah River Nuclear Solutions (SRNS) • Savannah River Site (SRS) • Department of Energy (DOE) • National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) • Nuclear Security Enterprise (NSE) • High-Fidelity Training and Operations Center (HFTOC) • Pit Production Operations and Programs (PPOP) • Plutonium Disposition Operations and Programs (PDOP) • Savannah River Plutonium Processing Facility (SRPPF) • Savannah River Tritium Enterprise (SRTE) • science, technology, engineering and math (STEM)

NNSA announces approval to begin full construction of HFTOC

The NNSA has announced approval of the construction start and established a project baseline, known as Critical Decision (CD)-2/3 approval, for the HFTOC at SRS.

The HFTOC will mimic the capabilities in the SRPPF Main Process Building and allow operators to develop pit production competencies on "like-for-like" sets of equipment with surrogate materials. The capabilities at HFTOC are essential to develop SRS' pit production workforce and will expedite the production of war reserve plutonium pits once SRPPF comes online.

SRNS was notified by NNSA of CD-2/3 approval for the HFTOC in February. The approval allows full construction of the HFTOC and marks a key milestone in establishing an enduring plutonium pit production mission at SRS in support of the nation's nuclear deterrent.

NNSA Savannah River Field Office Manager Michael Mikolanis highlighted the partnership between NNSA and SRNS as fundamental in gaining this approval and moving NNSA's pit mission forward.

"The HFTOC at SRS will be an important training facility used to accelerate the re-establishment of large-scale plutonium pit manufacturing in the United States," Mikolanis said. "Achieving this milestone shows SRS' commitment to delivering with urgency the needed infrastructure to advance this critical national security mission."

The current 103,000-square-feet HFTOC structure will be transformed through commercial construction practices into a non-nuclear training facility for SRPPF personnel and provide hands-on experience with simulated radiological controls.

SRNS has partnered with subcontractor Kiewit to build out the HFTOC. Construction activities will involve exterior and interior modifications to include demolition work and installation of new key systems such as ventilation, gas and electrical. Additional activities include procurement, installation and commission of a high-fidelity production line, material characterization system lab, receipt inspection lab, and salt processing line, as well as Balance of Plant equipment.

The HFTOC subproject will complete construction in 2028, at which time operators can begin training in the facility before construction of the SRPPF Main Process Building is complete.

SRNS Senior Vice President and SRPPF Project Director Mike Basham emphasized the importance of the demanding project execution pace to modernize the nation's nuclear weapons infrastructure.

"The SRPPF Project team is committed to supporting and accelerating NNSA's pit production mission. The HFTOC subproject team focused on implementing efficiencies from non-nuclear, commercial construction and accelerated the project delivery schedule of the HFTOC," Basham said. "SRNS is incredibly grateful to our NNSA partners, our HFTOC subcontractors and the dedicated team members across the enterprise who are working tirelessly to accelerate SRPPF construction efforts and support upholding the nation's nuclear defense and security."

The SRPPF project involves repurposing an existing Hazard Category-2 structure and support facilities to establish an enduring pit production mission at SRS and is part of the NNSA's two-site solution to produce no fewer than 80 plutonium pits per year in accordance with federal law. Plutonium pits are an essential component to nuclear weapons. The pits will be produced at facilities at SRS and Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico.

The NNSA approved Critical Decision-2/3 for the HFTOC, which will be a specialized training facility for surrogate plutonium pit production.

Think inside the box

Gloveboxes keep nuclear operations safe and secure

An SRNS operator trains in a K Area mockup glovebox.

Inside several SRS facilities, there are workstations unlike any desk or lab bench most have ever seen. These workstations, known as gloveboxes (GB), serve as extensions of the operators' hands, allowing them to perform precise tasks while maintaining strict safety protocols. For these operators, GBs are their toolkits and safeguards all in one: protecting themselves, others and the environment, while ensuring the mission moves forward.

GBs are integral to operations at SRS, where their applications and associated missions are both vital and varied.

KAC

K Area Complex (KAC) has a longstanding tradition of innovation and excellence in meeting the nation's nuclear material needs. Over the years, much of the work at KAC has relied on the versatile application of GBs, with their operators often serving as the behind-the-scenes heroes of this meticulous and demanding effort.

"Glovebox operators must maintain an acute awareness of their hands and movements. Whether manipulating materials directly through thick gloves or controlling delicate processes with a remote-operated robot, their precision and attention to detail must remain at the highest level," said Maxwell Smith, KAC Facility Manager. "Even the smallest lapse can have significant consequences, making vigilance a necessary second nature."

SRTE

SRTE prepares the nation's only supply of tritium, a radioactive isotope of hydrogen, which is a key element in nuclear weapons. Tritium GBs serve many purposes, including protecting workers from radioactive contamination and providing an inert environment that minimizes and prevents the formation of a flammable mixture of oxygen and hydrogen isotopes. These GBs also provide a mechanism for recovery of hydrogen isotopes, including tritium, minimizing environmental release. SRTE is home to over 40 GBs, which have supported the nation's nuclear deterrent since 1957.

SRPPF

Once construction is complete and the facility is operational, SRPPF will manufacture plutonium pits, using GBs as primary confinement barriers in the Main Process Building. GBs will also be used in the HFTOC, which will be a non-nuclear facility used to train SRPPF personnel and provide hands-on experience with simulated radiological controls.

Brian Pool, SRNS HFTOC Project Director, SRPPF Project Execution, explained that the HFTOC will use a significant number of "mock" GBs to help SRPPF become operational more quickly. "The mock gloveboxes will be constructed out of aluminum framing material," he said. "This will allow SRPPF operations to start operator training and procedure development ahead of the completion of the main SRPPF building."

GBs are more than just specialized tools—they are a cornerstone of SRS' enduring mission to safeguard national security and environmental stewardship. From supporting tritium production to future plutonium pit manufacturing, GBs continue to exemplify the precision, innovation and commitment that define SRS' vital role in the nation's nuclear missions.

Mission delivery mindset

Accelerating non-nuclear construction with commercial standards and OSHA+

By implementing commercial requirements paired with Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)+ safety standards, SRNS is embracing a transformative approach to accelerate non-nuclear, non-complex construction projects at SRS. This strategic shift marks a critical modernization effort designed to ensure cost-effective, timely project delivery without compromising safety or mission readiness.

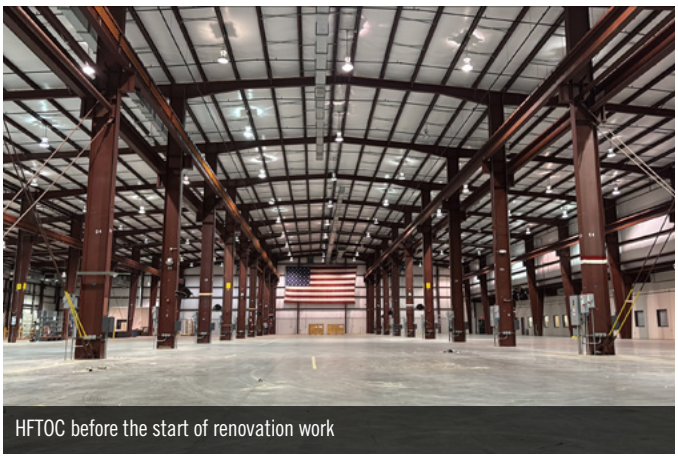
As SRS faces an era of unprecedented mission demand to support NNSA priorities, this streamlined design and construction model allows SRNS to better align its non-nuclear activities with the NSE.

"We must adopt commercial standards whenever possible to deliver for our nation," said Jim Dawkins, SRNS Executive Vice President and Chief Operations Officer. "Moreover, an increased sense of urgency at SRNS is required to ensure we return to a NSE that prioritizes production in order to meet our nation's nuclear deterrence requirements."

SRNS is piloting this commercial approach as part of an enterprise-wide initiative to streamline non-nuclear projects, such as warehouses and administrative buildings. The approach simplifies design and construction processes by aligning the DOE Facility Safety Order 420.1C with OSHA+ safety standards. OSHA+ is a NNSA-specific compliance tool for construction projects that simplifies requirements in early-stage procurement documents, making it easier for contractors to understand and meet their obligations. Contractors building these facilities are no longer required to adhere to mishap-prevention protocols intended for radioactive material handling or industrial hazards that are not relevant to their scope of work.

"SRNS remains focused on maintaining its credibility as a forward-thinking, cost-conscious steward of taxpayer resources," said Jay Johnson, Senior Deputy Vice President, Business Services and Chief Contracting Officer. "By adopting a concise, focused bid process, we are cutting through the red tape that has traditionally discouraged contractors from working with SRS."

> *"By targeting commercial standards where appropriate, we've been able to increase industry competition and drive significant project savings without compromising quality, safety or operational readiness."*
>
> **Brian Pool,**
> **SRNS HFTOC Project Director, SRPPF Project Execution**



HFTOC before the start of renovation work

Floor removal operations within the HFTOC

A prime example of this shift is the HFTOC, which will be used to accelerate the re-establishment of large-scale plutonium pit manufacturing in the U.S. Originally subject to nuclear-grade requirements, SRNS reevaluated the HFTOC's design and execution to align with commercial standards. Changes included eliminating unnecessary witness and hold points, such as oversight during fabrication processes, and tailoring requirements to match commercial standards. In one instance, the procurement of HVAC equipment for the HFTOC significantly cut costs by opening bidding to more fabricators and adjusting requirements to align with standard commercial equipment.

"By adopting this model, SRNS will achieve an overall cost reduction and position the HFTOC project to meet critical mission training objectives for SRPPF, on time and within budget," said Brian Pool, SRNS HFTOC Project Director, SRPPF Project Execution. "By targeting commercial standards where appropriate, we've been able to increase industry competition and drive significant project savings without compromising quality, safety or operational readiness."

NNSA recently announced approval of Critical Decision (CD)-2/3 for the HFTOC, which will be a pit production training facility for SRPPF, authorizing SRNS and its subcontractors to proceed with the full construction. Future non-nuclear facilities such as administrative buildings, warehouses and shops are expected to generate similar cost and time efficiencies using this method.

SRNS submits SRPPF baseline estimate to NNSA

SRNS marked a significant achievement with initial delivery of the Project Y799 Critical Decision (CD)-2/3 package to the NNSA on Jan. 30, 2026. This package contains the cost and schedule estimate for the construction of the SRPPF Main Process Building. The submission represents a crucial step in advancing the project.

SRNS Senior Vice President and SRPPF Project Director Mike Basham highlighted the collaborative efforts and innovative teamwork demonstrated by SRNS, the project's Construction Management subcontractor Fluor, and NNSA when putting together this CD-2/3 package.

"The CD-2/3 package proposes the performance baseline for the scope, schedule and cost of the Main Process Building," said Basham. "The package serves as a proposed baseline against which the project's actual progress will be measured, evaluated and controlled."

Basham emphasized that reaching this milestone "marks a pivotal and momentous event in the project's timeline, underlying SRNS' dedication to modernizing the nation's nuclear weapon infrastructure and capabilities."

The SRPPF project involves repurposing an existing Hazard Category-2 structure and support facilities to establish an enduring pit production mission at SRS. Once constructed and fully operational, SRPPF will be responsible for plutonium processing and the production of plutonium pits, which are critical components of every nuclear weapon.

Mike Dansevicus, the SRNS Project Controls Manager for the SRPPF Project, highlighted the dedication of the SRPPF Project Controls team to deliver a high-quality CD-2/3 package on schedule.

"The CD-2/3 package included over 750 documents and represented hundreds of hours worked by the SRPPF Project Controls team as they painstakingly created construction schedules and developed cost estimates for labor and materials," Dansevicus said. "Meeting this milestone toward establishment of a project baseline is a vital step in ensuring accountability, monitoring and the successful management of a large-scale project like SRPPF."

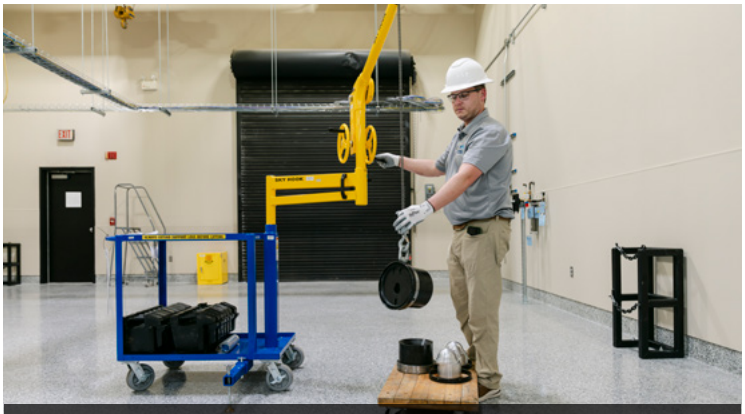
> *"Time is critical on this mission of national importance, and every day matters as we work to deliver SRPPF project completion in the 2030s."*
>
> **Jim Dawkins,**
> **SRNS Executive Vice President**
> **and Chief Operations Officer**

After CD-2/3 approval, the SRPPF project will immediately begin significantly increased mobilization in the field for construction activities.

"Significant progress is happening in F Area at SRPPF right now, and that will increase," said Jim Dawkins, SRNS Executive Vice President and Chief Operations Officer. "Time is critical on this mission of national importance, and every day matters as we work to deliver SRPPF project completion in the 2030s. I want to thank the teams working together to achieve this CD-2/3 submittal as the next step on our path to CD-4, which will be project completion and turnover to operations."

SRPPF is part of the NNSA's two-site solution to produce no fewer than 80 plutonium pits per year in accordance with federal law. The pits will be produced at facilities at SRS and Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico.

The SRPPF Critical Decision (CD)-2/3 package was submitted to NNSA on Jan. 30, 2026.



Operations Specialist Zane Vanover prepares for a machining chuck changeout in the Manufacturing Technology Center's third bay.

MTC addition expands training capabilities

A new milestone has been reached by SRNS PPOP in the Manufacturing Technology Center (MTC), expanding training capabilities with the recent addition of a third bay.

Since October 2024, the facility has operated two bays capable of building precision machining, inspection, welding and assembly in an unclassified, non-nuclear setting. These skills are used in a variety of capacities to further the Site's NNSA national security missions. Turnover of a third bay was recently completed, upgrading the 1,500 square foot space to allow for future installation of modern manufacturing equipment, the first of which will be used for developing additional welding capability.

According to Erika Baeza-Wisdom, Deputy Vice President PPOP, equipment in this new bay will be key to accelerating the SRS pit mission, as the need for developing additional modern manufacturing core competencies increases. Additionally, when an opportunity to help fast-track Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL)'s machining efforts recently emerged, the MTC team was eager to partner with their NSE colleagues.

"LANL informed us that they urgently needed parts for their own welder, so we worked with our vendor to provide LANL with what they needed to meet their timeline," she said. "In the spirit of partnership and enterprise mission enablement, we helped our colleagues receive what they need because we recognize the urgency of LANL's production missions. SRNS remains committed to the two-site mission and to our partnership with LANL."

The MTC is scheduled to receive its welder in May, allowing operations specialists to continue developing competencies.

"The welder, along with other equipment in the MTC, facilitates building proficiency in critical skills for the next step in manufacturing competency development," said Rick Connolly, PPOP Business Management Director. "The experiences gained in the MTC have already proven invaluable, as the MTC continues to provide a dedicated space for operations, maintenance, engineering and other supporting organizations to learn how to integrate the equipment into a modern manufacturing work environment. This is a force multiplier, enabling acceleration of the Site's critical mission support areas by training personnel in all facets of operations, maintenance and production integration quickly and efficiently."

Birkett selected for 2027 NWMOC

SRNS employee Katharine Birkett has been selected to participate in the prestigious Sandia National Laboratories (SNL) Nuclear Weapons Management Orientation Course (NWMOC).

NWMOC is a well-known program within the NSE. Entrance into the program is highly competitive, with only 24 participants accepted each year. Half those spots are designated for SNL employees, while the remaining half are for other DOE and Department of War sites with a max of two participants per site.

Katharine Birkett

"I am looking forward to joining the 2027 Nuclear Weapons Management Orientation Course. The entirety of my career has been with the objective of working in the nuclear industry, now focused on the nuclear deterrence mission," said Birkett, SRPPF, Pit Technology Process Development and Modeling Manager. "This program offers an unparalleled opportunity to deepen connections I am already building. Relationships throughout the complex and understanding of each element's contribution to our collective deterrence mission is invaluable when leveraging each other's strengths and capabilities to achieve mission success."

NWMOC provides advanced nuclear weapon-related education and training to management, while offering professional networking opportunities with other participants from across the NSE. The 11-month course covers a variety of topics, from the history of nuclear weapons to nuclear deterrence systems.

"We are proud of Katharine's service to the nation through participation in NWMOC. Her technical expertise will represent SRS well, within this key NSE program," said Lee Sims, SRNS Senior Vice President, Plutonium Operations and Programs. "Leveraging strong relationships with other NSE partners ensures SRS' ability to maintain a credible, resilient and responsive nuclear deterrent and urgently deliver these collective national security missions."

REBUILDING THE FUTURE

SRTE achieves CY25 Outage milestone

TOP: New equipment is being loaded onto tractor trailers to be delivered to SRTE.

ABOVE: Workers wear respiratory protection and protective clothing to shield themselves from potential radiological hazards.

AFTER FIVE YEARS of strategic planning, personnel from the SRNS SRTE, have achieved the production of war reserve quality tritium with the replacement of key components vital to sustaining the nation's tritium supply needs. The achievement—referred to as the Calendar Year 2025 (CY25) Outage—was completed on schedule and without interruptions of delivering tritium-filled reservoirs to the U.S. military.

"This milestone represents one of the most significant accomplishments in the history of SRTE," said Senior Vice President of Tritium Operations and Programs Nick Miller. "This is a testament of how we can handle complex, mission-critical challenges and deliver exceptional results that strengthen the nation's defense. I could not be prouder of our team for their commitment to excellence and their ability to adapt to every challenge."

The $125 million project required replacing aging equipment vital for supplying high-quality tritium to the Department of War. Adding to project complexity, workers had to raise and lower both old and new equipment through a rarely used access hatch. The hatch removal was simulated extensively prior to the actual evolution to ensure a safe and controlled evolution. After the removal of the hatch, old equipment was removed, the new equipment was carefully lowered into the facility and the hatch was securely replaced—all within a tight 48-hour window.

CY25 Outage team members stand at the hatch location where they successfully executed the removal and installation of critical equipment in support of the project.

"It's like rebuilding a ship inside a glass bottle," said SRTE Area Operations Manager Kevin Cross. "Every move required orchestration down to the finest detail—engineering, technicians and rigging teams collaborated, mapping out every angle, clearance and load limit. It was a testament to teamwork, innovation and precision planning."

Planning for the outage began in 2020, with a detailed schedule of six critical milestones developed to ensure smooth execution. Critical to execution was a 3D-printed mockup of a valve station, allowing Design and Construction personnel to streamline execution by planning for constructibility and practice equipment installation, identifying potential challenges in the process.

"Based on mission needs and production directives, 2025 was identified as the ideal time to perform this crucial maintenance," said CY25 Project Manager Charlene Hidlay. "In 2020, we initiated detailed planning for six projects to be executed simultaneously with support from our NNSA customer. This was an excellent integrated team effort."

Due to the hazardous environment, personnel worked in respiratory protection and plastic suits, adding an additional layer of difficulty to an already intricate task.

"This milestone represents a pivotal achievement in maintaining the operational readiness of the United States' nuclear deterrent," said Jeff Griffin. "It reflects our commitment to national security and reaffirms our responsibility to secure our nation's nuclear capabilities."

"I am pleased to announce the successful on-time completion of the CY25 Outage. The team executed critical modernization upgrades with precision and unwavering commitment to ensure the facility's continued operation for years to come. This achievement is evidence of the hard work and expertise of all involved and reflects the well-coordinated effort between NNSA and SRNS partners," said NNSA Savannah River Field Office Manager Michael Mikolanis.

SRTE, operated by SRNS for the NNSA, provides the nation's sole source of tritium, an isotope of hydrogen that plays a crucial role in the functionality of nuclear weapons. This accomplishment highlights SRNS' commitment to addressing infrastructure needs to help sustain a reliable nuclear stockpile well into the future.

CY25 Outage celebration

SRNS recently celebrated the successful completion of the CY25 Outage project by hosting an event to honor the dedication and hard work of all personnel involved.

Taylor Rice, SRNS Education Outreach Programs Lead, collaborates with students as they reinforce their models, ensuring their structures can withstand the simulated earthquakes.

Over 2,600 students 'Discover Engineering'

Fifty engineers from SRS engaged over 2,600 students from area middle schools in hands-on activities during Discover Engineering week earlier this year, demonstrating how engineering shapes everyday life.

Through initiatives that span from pre-K to high school, SRNS Education Outreach Programs introduces students to STEM in ways that are exciting and accessible for all. Thousands of volunteer hours have been devoted to providing impactful experiences to over 600,000 students, educators and community members since 2008.

"These young minds grow into our next cohort of interns, apprentices and future leaders who will deliver critical missions for DOE and NNSA," said Taylor Rice, SRNS Education Outreach Lead.

Hunter Harris, an SRNS Process Control Engineer, volunteered at Highland Springs Middle School, leading a lab on plate tectonics and earthquake-resistant structures. The twist? He was teaching in the classroom of Becky Miller, his former fifth grade teacher.

"This was a full circle moment for me," said Harris. "I volunteered to show her students how teamwork drives innovation. In engineering, collaboration is key, and when diverse ideas come together, great things can happen. Every student has the potential to contribute to something bigger than themselves, and I hope I sparked that curiosity."

"Seeing Hunter's accomplishments since leaving my classroom is proof of what these kids can achieve," Miller said. "When students see someone like them succeed, it broadens their horizons and makes STEM careers feel attainable. Investing in local schools strengthens our community and prepares students for the jobs we need to fill locally."

The students learned how engineers design earthquake-resistant structures by building wooden stick models and testing their stability and survivability on a shake table.

Hunter Harris, SRNS volunteer and engineer, guides Highland Springs students through the design phase, sharing insights on how to create earthquake-resistant structures.

A proud Highland Springs Middle School team showcases their complete structure alongside a design plan, highlighting their teamwork and engineering creativity.

"It was both exciting and slightly nerve-wracking to watch it shake, but our structure held up really well," shared sixth-grader Jaxon Prosser. "I'm even more interested in pursuing construction engineering, following in my dad's footsteps, and learning how organizations like SRS create structures designed to stand the test of time."

The SRS volunteers also discussed engineering degrees, salaries, recommended courses and strategies for early success.

Lakeside High School Team 1 Steven Zhang, Eliana Benevides, Arnav Patel, Kareem Hassan and David Wang earned an all-expense-paid trip to the national DOE Science Bowl.

2026 Savannah River Regional Science Bowl

The pursuit of scientific excellence and the development of a highly skilled workforce converged at the annual DOE Savannah River Regional Science Bowl®, hosted at the University of South Carolina Aiken by SRNS Education Outreach Programs. The regional event, which drew 16 teams from South Carolina and the greater Augusta, Georgia area on Feb. 21, showcased the impeccable talent of 76 students from 11 high schools competing in a fast-paced, academically rigorous competition.

This year's winners, Lakeside High School Team 1 from Evans, Georgia, carried home more than just the victory, earning an all-expense-paid trip to the National Science Bowl® in Washington, D.C., from April 30-May 4, 2026. Notable finishers also included Davidson Fine Arts Magnet School in second place and Dorman High in third.

The Regional Science Bowl represents an incubator for the next generation of STEM leaders who are essential to the success of broader DOE and NNSA missions. The rapid-fire questions are rooted in biology, chemistry, Earth science, space science, physics and energy.

"Competitions like this do far more than test academic skill," said Cindy Hewitt, SRNS Education Outreach Specialist. "Science Bowl is an investment in our future workforce. It creates an enduring love for STEM disciplines and introduces students to mission-critical work at SRS, energizing and equipping competitors with the skills they need to join our workforce when the time is right."

SRS is one of only three DOE sites participating annually at the regional level since the program's inception in 1991.

"I've had the incredible opportunity to go to nationals three times," explained Arnav Patel, a sophomore on Lakeside High School Team 1 who has been a competitor since seventh grade. "Each time, I've met so many like-minded people, and the connections you build go beyond just science—in many ways, they help you grow as a person and broaden your perspectives. You're exchanging ideas, learning from others and improving yourself. It's opened doors for me in terms of confidence and future career opportunities."

To reach the National Science Bowl®, teams from across the United States must win one of 65 regional tournaments. More than 350,000 students have faced off in the finals throughout its 35-year history.

SRNS hosts service member career event

SRNS Workforce Services and Talent Management recently hosted a Career Engagement Event at Fort Gordon, located near Augusta, Georgia. The event offered a casual, conversational space for transitioning service personnel to connect with hiring managers through face-to-face conversations.

Representatives from organizations on-site shared career insights, answered questions and helped over 90 service members to understand where their skills could align with SRNS opportunities. Organizations represented at the engagement event included: Infrastructure Modernization and Sustainment; Engineering; Business Services; NNSA Operations and Programs; SRTE; Information Technology; Environment, Safety, Health and Quality; and Environmental Management Operations.

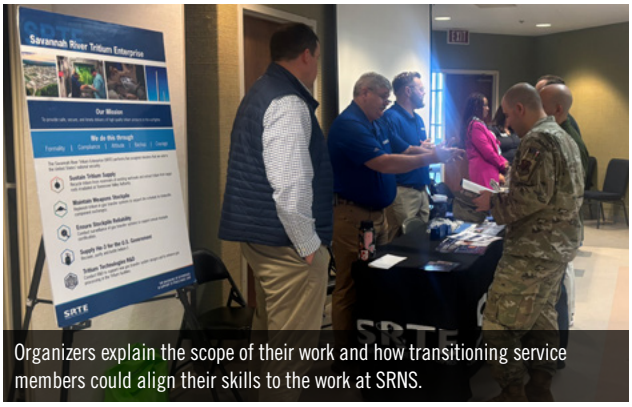
The Fort Gordon engagement event is part of the broader workforce development and pipeline strategy put forth by SRNS. This strategic investment aims to hire and retain talented personnel to secure the proper skills to support the current mission and future initiatives.

University Engagement Program Manager and Program Coordinator for Hiring Our Heroes Anitra McManus organized the event and said, "Our partnership with Fort Gordon allows us to build a direct pipeline to experienced leadership and highly skilled talent who already possess the discipline, adaptability and mission focus aligned with SRNS' work."

In addition to the traditional university engagement workforce pipeline, SRNS seeks to include early-career, mid-career and experienced personnel in critical skill areas through regional partnerships, like the one with Fort Gordon.

"By leveraging local partnerships like Fort Gordon, we are strengthening our ability to meet current demands while preparing for future initiatives," McManus said.

SRNS continues to build and seek long term, sustainable pathways that support mission continuity, leadership readiness and workforce resilience alongside local and regional partners.



Organizers explain the scope of their work and how transitioning service members could align their skills to the work at SRNS.

Sandia and SRNS drive nuclear modernization

Rita Gonzales, Sandia National Laboratories Deputy Director for Nuclear Deterrence and Science and Chief Technology Officer, and Chrisma Jackson, Director of Cyber Security and Mission Computing and Chief Information Security Officer, recently visited SRS to explore collaborative opportunities in modernizing nuclear defense capabilities and advancing digital transformation across the NSE.

Discussion focused on SRNS' digital transformation initiatives, lifecycle management strategies, research and development efforts, Augmented Reality (AR) demonstrations, and showcased how unclassified environments prepare personnel for future production operations.

"Our partnership is built on a shared mission and a collective drive for excellence as we navigate similar pressures in manufacturing, modernization and mission delivery," said Bruce Page, SRNS Senior Vice President and Chief Information Officer. "Learning from and leaning on each other strengthens our deterrence mission and the broader NSE."

Gonzales, who oversees Sandia's nuclear deterrence modernization efforts, praised SRNS' alignment with enterprise goals. "Digital transformation is not only an enabler of faster, cost-effective solutions but is also critical for readiness in an evolving global landscape," she said. "We're impressed with the Site's efforts and excited about opportunities for shared learning."

The visit included an AR demonstration that replicates the High-Fidelity Training and Operations Center facility with unmatched realism. Using augmented reality, users can interact with virtual gloveboxes, manipulate objects and enlarge finer details for analysis and discussion.

Leaders from Sandia National Laboratories tour SRS.

"As SRPPF progresses toward becoming the first fully digital pit fabrication facility in the enterprise, we're aligning our infrastructure to support war reserve environments and ensuring seamless collaboration with the NSE," said Katharine Birkett, SRPPF, Pit Technology Process Development and Modeling Manager. "This effort requires connecting the dots across contracts, product flow and system maturity to meet ambitious deadlines, and we rely on enterprise partnerships to drive us forward."

SRNS' approach to integrate design engineering into operations, advance workforce training and leverage digital environments for readiness sets a new standard for innovation. Together, SRNS and Sandia are driving progress, innovation and the mission-critical strength of U.S. nuclear deterrence.

Repurposing containers saves millions

A recent initiative to repurpose specialized containers is delivering significant cost savings for the NNSA. By transferring these containers to Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL), SRNS is helping delay LANL procurement costs of over $4.4 million while optimizing storage space at SRS.

Reflecting on this impactful collaboration, Lee Sims, Senior Vice President, Plutonium Operations and Programs, expressed, "These kinds of projects often take considerable time and may not always yield immediate results. It was gratifying to witness a project progress from inception to successful completion. It was also inspiring to see the unified support and cooperation among the diverse groups involved to achieve this accomplishment."


3013 containers (a nested package of three containers) are used to store surplus plutonium material.

The initiative originated when SRNS' PDOP team reviewed an annual inventory report of items stored under the Storage for Others program. Among the items identified were empty Cogema cans and a set of 3013 containers, both of which had remained in storage for several years. 3013s are stainless steel containers used for the long-term safe storage of plutonium-bearing materials (such as plutonium oxides). The Cogema cans, also used for plutonium storage, are nested inside the 3013s.

The use of Cogema cans alone will delay the need for LANL to procure, test, implement and certify new containers by up to three years, avoiding costs of approximately $675,000. The addition of 3013 containers extends the timeline for LANL's next procurement by up to four years, representing a cost avoidance of $3.75 million.

Kristen Honig, Program Director for the ARIES (Advanced Recovery and Integrated Extraction System) Program Program at LANL, remarked, "The 3013 containers provided to LANL by SRS allow us to be more agile in our procurement strategy over the next few years, adapting to budgetary constraints while meeting supply chain demands. This discovery could not have been timelier, as LANL is preparing for a new 3013 procurement in fiscal year 2026. Getting these containers simplifies our immediate container needs."

Office of Innovation established

SRNS continues to lead next-generation innovation and research, reinforcing its role in national defense and advancing solutions aligned with the missions of the DOE and NNSA. On Sept. 1, 2025, SRNS solidified its commitment to scientific progress by establishing the Office of Innovation, a dedicated hub for driving targeted research and technology at SRS.

"This effort is designed to accelerate breakthroughs that cut project timelines, lower costs, modernize outdated practices, address technological obsolescence, and bolster programs essential to national security," said Greg Cefus, Director, SRNS Office of Innovation.

The Office of Innovation is tasked with crafting a strategic research plan that aligns discretionary investments with NNSA priorities. By fostering cooperation across the NSE's Labs, Plants and Sites, as well as academia and private industries, the office delivers solutions that enhance technological capabilities at SRS.

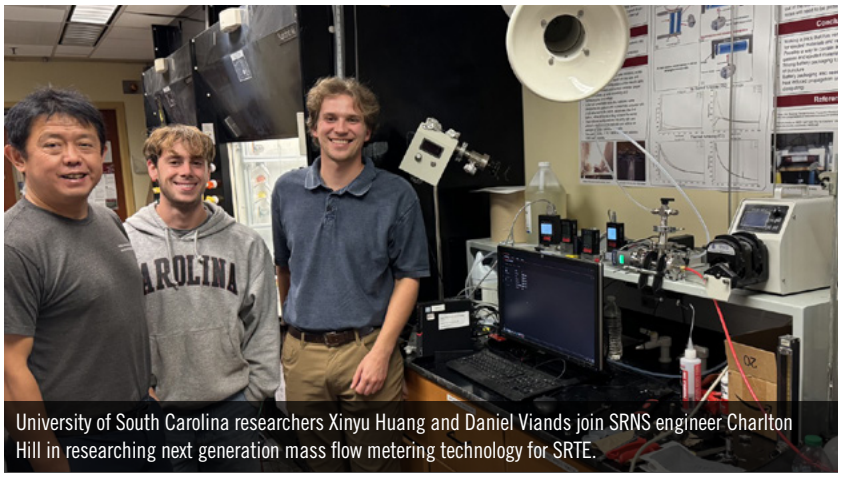
The SRNS Office of Innovation team: Ashley Charlton, Senior Strategy Manager; Hannah Williams, Project Coordinator; Jared Clark, PDRD Program Manager; and Greg Cefus, Director.

Expanding the PDRD Program

A centerpiece of the SRNS research efforts is the Plant-Directed Research, Development, and Demonstration (PDRD) Program. Originally established in 2001, under the Defense Authorization Act to advance SRTE missions, the PDRD Program underwent significant realignment in 2025 under the Office of Innovation. This transition broadens its scope to encompass PPOP and PDOP.

Aligning with NNSA's Office of Engineering and Technology Maturation objectives, the PDRD Program prioritizes replacing aging technologies, spurring manufacturing innovation and investing in workforce development.

"By adopting a sitewide approach to R&D, the PDRD Program minimizes duplicative efforts, integrates cross-cutting technologies and redirects resources to our most critical mission area research needs," said Jared Clark, PDRD Program Manager. "We must demonstrate our commitment to innovation and strengthen the Site's role as a vital contributor to national security. PDRD is an investment in our people, processes and the future of SRS and builds on our 75-year legacy of excellence through modernization efforts."


University of South Carolina researchers Xinyu Huang and Daniel Viands join SRNS engineer Charlton Hill in researching next generation mass flow metering technology for SRTE.

Partnerships with leading universities

SRNS' research momentum is strengthened by strategic partnerships with top-tier academic institutions, including Clemson University, University of South Carolina (USC) and Georgia Institute of Technology (Georgia Tech).

- Clemson University is investigating the effects of carbon-based species on the lifespan of getter materials used in tritium separations. Their research seeks to mitigate flow restrictions and optimize getter bed performance, improving efficiency and lifespan across critical systems.
- USC is tackling the challenge of upgrading hydrogen and tritium measurement techniques. By designing advanced, tritium-compatible instrumentation, the team aims to replace cumbersome traditional methods with precise, real-time monitoring capabilities, offering improved flexibility and efficiency within SRTE.
- Georgia Tech will soon develop thermodynamic models utilizing novel temperature sensors to non-intrusively monitor vessel temperatures and infer tritium content, which will provide critical tools for process safety and operational oversight.

Safety starts with Site Medical

Site Medical provides comprehensive occupational health care to ensure employee wellness.

Site Medical provides necessary services to ensure the safety of employees and the Site as a whole, such as scheduling and performing: medical surveillance physicals; return to work appointments; medical record services; consultation appointments; fitness for duty appointments; treatment of occupational illness and injuries; drug and alcohol testing; laboratory services; psychological testing and evaluations; and safety eyeglass services. The Occupational Medicine team's wide variety of roles help identify and verify work controls that mitigate workplace hazards. They perform special medical monitoring to keep employees safe and healthy. Their strong commitment fosters a work environment that prioritizes the overall well-being of all those on-site.

"Our team is deeply committed to ensuring that every employee has access to comprehensive care. We support the unique demands of our workplace, so they can perform their jobs safely every day," said Dr. Monica Manigo-Johnson. "We take immense pride in knowing that our services directly contribute to a culture where safety and health are top priorities."

In addition to general workplace health services, Site Medical has also played a significant role in supporting the Human Reliability Program (HRP), which ensures that personnel working in sensitive or safety-critical roles meet rigorous standards of reliability and psychological readiness. HRP endeavors have been significantly enhanced by the presence of a fully staffed psychological HRP team, which includes three psychologists.

The HRP team is making exciting progress in developing an online portal. Once fully implemented, the portal will streamline operations, reduce delays and eliminate potential lapses.

Site Medical addresses evolving workplace health and safety needs by leveraging specialized expertise and a collaborative approach. Whether through routine occupational health care, emergency response or specialized initiatives, Site Medical serves as a cornerstone of employee well-being and operational integrity at SRS.

"Site Medical plays a critical role in safeguarding the health and well-being our workforce," said Safety, Health and Medical Director Diana Bowers. "They ensure employees are both prepared and protected, as they carry out their vital roles. Our focus has always been to balance preventive care, safety and occupational health expertise in a way that fosters confidence and strengthens the overall safety culture of the Site."

By offering specialized services, like safety eyeglass fittings, Site Medical prioritizes employee job readiness.

Jennifer Bootle

AT SRNS: Clinic Manager and Family Nurse Practitioner

IN THE COMMUNITY: Volunteer for Millbrook Baptist Church

THE PEOPLE OF SRNS

Jennifer Bootle, Clinic Manager and Family Nurse Practitioner, has been an integral part of the Site Medical team for nearly seven years. Overseeing multiple clinic departments, she ensures Site Medical operates effectively for both the patients it serves and the staff it supports. In addition to her leadership role, Bootle occasionally assists with patient care as needed.

Bootle earned her Doctor of Nursing Practice degree from the Medical University of South Carolina. Before joining the team at SRS, she worked for several years in Urgent Care as a Family Nurse Practitioner. "Advancing from Family Nurse Practitioner to Clinic Manager has deepened my understanding of why we do what we do at Site Medical and how it directly supports the Site's operations," said Bootle. "I truly enjoy meeting people across the Site and learning how their roles come together to support our shared mission."

Bootle not only excels in her professional role but also actively contributes to Site initiatives. She is a member of the Aspiring Mid-Career Professionals group, the KOBRAS Local Safety Improvement Team and leads Site Medical's IDEAS program. She also supports site-led fundraisers for organizations like United Way and Toys for Tots, volunteers with local groups such as Project Vision and actively serves in Millbrook Baptist Church's kids' ministry.

Outside of work, she enjoys spending time with her family, traveling and baking. As a dedicated runner, she has completed half-marathons in 13 states and is working toward her goal of running one in all 50 states. She also recently began learning golf, with the goal of someday beating her husband in a friendly round.

Creating 'next generation' equipment

Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) employees recently visited the Site to evaluate and test a new and improved fixture used to load and unload transuranic (TRU) waste shipping containers and advance the progress toward use of this fixture across the complex.

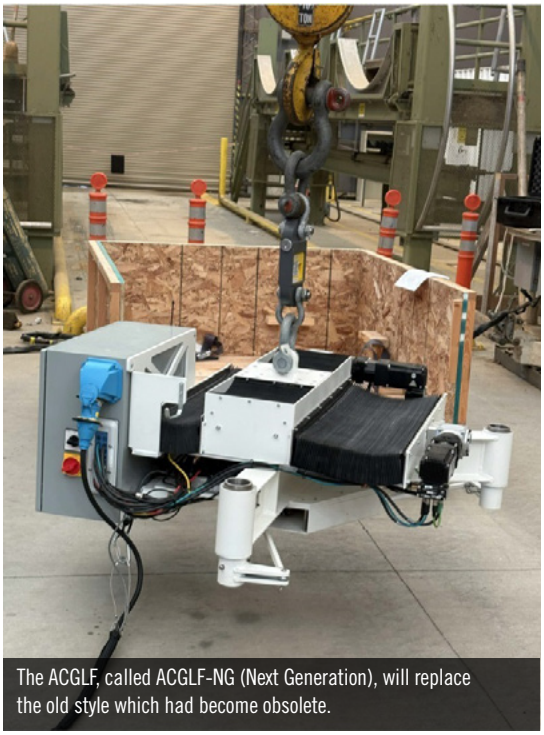
The fixture, called an Adjustable Center of Gravity Lifting Fixture (ACGLF), is used to balance unbalanced loads caused by TRU waste containers with different weights being loaded or unloaded into special shipping containers.

"The old style of ACGLF has been in use across the complex for decades," said Solid Waste Engineer Trey Black. "Because of its age, replacement parts are now difficult to find or obsolete."

Funded by SRS, the new style ACGLF, called ACGLF-NG (Next Generation), has been designed for use in TRU waste shipping and receiving locations. This allows for more easily replaceable parts and a modernized method of balancing TRU waste containers during loading and unloading.

The WIPP visit allowed representatives to test the capability of the ACGLF-NG and translate the load balance settings between the two styles. The results of the visit were very positive, enabling WIPP to certify the use of and build additional ACGLF-NGs for use across the complex.

"SRNS employees are constantly looking for new, improved and more efficient ways to get work done," said Senior Vice President of Environmental Management Operations Janice Lawson. "We are proud of playing a role in improving TRU waste loading and unloading operations across the complex."



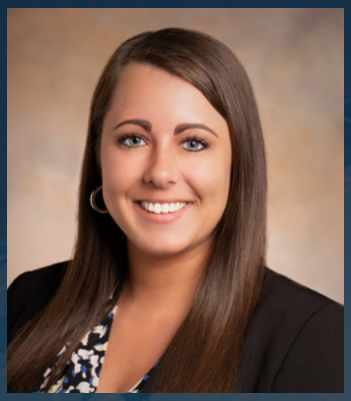
The ACGLF, called ACGLF-NG (Next Generation), will replace the old style which had become obsolete.

FEATURE FRIDAY

The following employees were highlighted as part of the SRNS Feature Friday series on social media.

SCAN ME
to connect with our social media

Cameron Chisolm
Software Engineer



Brianna Chavis
Human Resources Business Partner

Jennifer Bootle
Clinic Manager and Family Nurse Practitioner

Ginger Williams
K Area Spare Materials Manager/Storage Coordinator

SRNS

Supplying products and services necessary to maintain the nation's nuclear deterrent

Securing nuclear materials to prevent unwanted proliferation

Developing innovative approaches to deliver on our environmental commitments and nuclear materials challenges

Transforming nuclear materials into assets and stable wasteforms

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