

● MAY 2024

SAVANNAH RIVER NUCLEAR SOLUTIONS



SRNS Today



Safety first, fun always

Expo activities teach Site employees about safety culture



SCAN ME
to connect with
our social media

This month

Augmented and virtual reality • Mentor-Protégé program • Family Scholarship winners



Dennis Carr
SRNS President and CEO

On the cover

Employees are all smiles as they race to stack up their safety knowledge and Connect-4 at the SRNS BATS (B Area Trailers for Safety) Local Safety Improvement Team booth.

Welcome

to the May 2024 edition of

SRNS Today

May was another busy month for us here at Savannah River Nuclear Solutions (SRNS) and our teams were more than up for the challenge.

We recently held our annual Safety Expo, which I am pleased to say was a resounding success. There were several challenges that we faced with the event being held at a new venue and our organizers met those challenges head-on. Over 4,000 people from around the Site came out and engaged in the safety culture; and there were over 70 informational booths set up showcasing a range of safety topics. It truly was wonderful to see everyone at the expo again this year.

Our teams over in Savannah River Plutonium Processing Facility are also making great strides in modernizing pit production operations through the revolutionary use of augmented and virtual reality technologies. These efforts have allowed the team to deliver cutting edge solutions to streamline the design of gloveboxes within the facility, improving efficiency and saving millions of dollars in the process.

We have also strengthened our commitment to small business growth through the Department of Energy (DOE) Mentor-Protégé Program. Through this program, SRNS has been able to improve subcontracting abilities of small businesses, more than doubling the revenue of these businesses, increasing their capabilities and broadening their customer base to include other DOE sites.

The work that we continue to accomplish here continues to be as inspirational to me as I hope it is to you.

Please enjoy this month's issue of SRNS Today.



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) • Savannah River Plutonium Processing Facility (SRPPF)
Central Savannah River Area (CSRA) • science, technology, engineering and math (STEM)



Employees use augmented reality/virtual reality technology at SRPPF to create an immersive experience, simulating proper procedure execution in a safe and secure environment.

Augmented reality and virtual reality transforms pit production operations

Augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) technologies are revolutionizing efforts to modernize pit production operations (PPO) at SRPPF. Development Teams between SRPPF and SRNL have been collaborating to develop and deliver cutting-edge AR/VR solutions to streamline the design of equipment within the SRPPF facility, improving efficiency and saving millions in the procurement process.

“The SRPPF and PPO organizations are not only harvesting AR/VR technology but also continuing to explore innovative ways to leverage this technology in the creation of a digital and modern manufacturing facility,” said Shakeel Khan, Director, Information Services. “The success of this venture has largely been a result of collaboration between Operations, Design Agencies, Training and Knowledge Preservation.”

During fiscal year 2023 and fiscal year 2024, the team took a strategic leap into the future of design, initiating a Model Based Design project, which allows stakeholders a virtual tour of the SRPPF Main Process Building (MPB). This approach has enhanced the design of the MPB, providing users with a vision of the facility’s operational dynamics and the ability to identify potential design improvements. As construction efforts increase, the technology is also enabling safe navigation of the facility by reducing the number of visitors and stakeholders requiring in-person access.

In addition, integration of AR/VR technology has led to improvements within the design review process, as the team identifies potential issues at an early stage. This reduces the risk of delays, increasing cost savings and benchmarking future projects within the organization.



“As the risks are identified, a collaborative effort to mitigate them will speed the adoption of these various technologies across the board.”

Shakeel Khan,
Director, Information Services



Members of the team recently attended the Second Annual Extended Reality (XR) Symposium at the Oak Ridge Enhanced Tech and Training Center. A key objective of the Symposium included collaboration with other DOE sites, industry vendors and academia, with a focus on XR technologies. Discussions and demonstrations held during the Symposium provided insight into the future of AR, VR, XR and artificial intelligence technologies in various industries, with examples ranging from improved headsets to tabletop holographs used for command and control.

“The challenge of security concerns continues to be echoed across the DOE complex,” said Khan. “As risks are identified, a collaborative effort to mitigate them will speed the adoption of these various technologies across the board. In an age where technology is changing the way we work and collaborate, SRPPF and PPO are at the forefront of embracing these advancements, ensuring that the pit production operations effort progresses with the highest levels of safety and efficiency.”

NNSA Information Management visit

The NNSA Office of Information Management toured SRS May 7-8, receiving updates on the SRS pit production mission, modern manufacturing and digital transformation efforts, along with Information Technology/Operational Technology initiatives. The visit also included a tour of the Machining Training Center and discussions with SRS leadership from both the DOE and NNSA.

SRNS is integrating Modern Manufacturing — the use of advanced technologies and proven operational principles to deliver quality product in a timely manner — into pit production operations. Several elements of Modern Manufacturing fall under the purview of two entities that NNSA has established to guide its digital transformation efforts across the Nuclear Security Enterprise (NSE), including the Product Realization Integrated Digital Enterprise (PRIDE) and the Digital Transformation Senior Steering Group (DTSSG).

As a member of the DTSSG, Pit Production Operations and Programs (PPO) at SRS is actively engaged in multiple initiatives supporting NSE modernization. Examples include efforts to enable digital engineering, model-based systems engineering, model-based engineering decision-making, model-based definition and establishment of a digital thread — a tool used in manufacturing to capture and analyze data during a product’s entire lifecycle. The Senior Steering Group also plans to leverage existing initiatives across the complex to achieve strategic goals.

“PPO is excited about leveraging emerging technologies and bringing innovation that has never before been used at SRS,” said Erika Baeza-Wisdom, Deputy VP, Pit Production Operations. “We are shepherding a new generation of employees and advancements in the ways we’ve historically performed work. We are fully engaged in both PRIDE and DTSSG activities and are working closely with NNSA, including visits



such as this one with the Office of the Chief Information Officer, to ensure that our vision of a modern manufacturing enterprise is aligned with theirs.”

Jamie Wolff, NNSA Chief Information Officer said of the visit, “My team and I are always inspired when we get the opportunity to experience, first-hand, all the groundbreaking work being done at the partner labs, plants and sites. We’re especially excited as we work to transition SRS from the DOE Office of Environmental Management to NNSA, allowing us to embark on a mission to continue to meet NSE priorities.”

PPO is also establishing an Augmented Reality/Virtual Reality (AR/VR) Laboratory capable of supporting the design reviews, facility acceptance and commissioning for SRPPF. During the recent visit, participants observed an AR/VR demonstration illustrating how PPO is using AR/VR technology to evaluate production systems, mitigate risks and accelerate training and procedure development to support SRPPF.

“The goal of utilizing this technology is to facilitate competency development and training,” said Baeza-Wisdom. “This supports PPO in the onboarding of the next generation of workers while bridging the gap between the older management and operations infrastructure and Modern Manufacturing SRPPF plant.”



B Area storm shelters provide safe haven

The Site’s B Area is home to two portable storm shelters, which offer protection to employees in the event of severe weather or natural disasters. Emergency Management recently invited employees to walk through the shelters located in B Area and to learn more about their safety benefits in emergency situations.

The shelters, purchased from B-Safe Industries, Inc., the world’s “leading manufacturer” of commercial and industrial storm, tornado and hurricane shelters, are compliant with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration regulations, and are handicap accessible. They are 10’ tall x 64’ long x 8’ wide; capable of holding a maximum capacity of 212 people and resisting 250 mph winds. Inside, the shelters are equipped with bench seating, a private restroom with handrails and high lumen solar powered lighting with a five-hour battery backup.

In 2022, SRS was recertified as a National Weather Service StormReady community.



SRNS and Los Alamos National Laboratory Supply Chain leaders sign a charter solidifying ongoing mutual support agreements.

Supply chain leaders solidify mutual support agreement for pit production

SRNS Supply Chain Management (SCM) recently visited Los Alamos National Laboratory to solidify ongoing mutual support agreements across several initiatives.

Since 2023, SRNS SCM and Los Alamos' Supply Chain Logistics (SCL) have identified best practices to meet the demands of the overall pit production mission. In the most recent visit, team members from each site established a Center of Excellence in support of critical missions for DOE and NNSA.

"By collaborating on lessons learned, weapons quality and other elements of the supply chain, we will continue to perform at our maximum potential," said Jay Johnson, Deputy Vice President, SRNS Contracts and SCM.

SRNS and Los Alamos signed a collaboration charter to solidify a forum for monthly management discussions on best practices, lessons learned, acquisition strategies, risk management, warehousing concerns and Lean processes.

"Los Alamos is tasked with delivery of a first production unit W87-1 pit in the near future," explained Shannon Blaylock, Los Alamos SCL Technical Project Manager. "As a result of the supply chain efforts required to meet production deadlines, Los Alamos can offer lessons learned, while SRNS offers insight into vendor resources, streamlined processes and best practices."

According to Leo Thompson, who supports the SRS pit production mission and is stationed at Los Alamos, the collaboration on supply

chain issues will be essential to the mission's success.

"The nation's efforts to modernize the nuclear security enterprise presents numerous supply chain challenges including competition for specialized manufacturing capacity and a shortage of skilled manufacturing workers," said Thompson. "The collaboration is a creative way for both pit production sites to jointly address supply chain challenges."

In the early stages of the collaboration, the pair established an approach for SRNS to acquire the same type of specialized equipment that is used at Los Alamos through an existing equipment manufacturer subcontract. To meet this need, Los Alamos increased the quantity of their order, which created time and cost-savings for SRNS.

"Improving our communication could ultimately lead to greater efficiencies for the pit mission through coordinated procurement actions like the approach taken for the specialized equipment," continued Thompson.

Presently, there are ten on-going collaborative activities between the two organizations. In addition, SRNS has six engineers embedded at Los Alamos to learn different aspects of pit production. SRNS and Los Alamos will continue to collaboratively address supply chain and logistics challenges through regularly scheduled meetings, DOE/NNSA-sponsored risk management summits and future benchmarking sessions.



CTI was tasked with the deactivation and demolition of the SRS legacy coal handling facility at the D Area powerhouse. This project included asbestos abatement and removal of the coal feed conveyor.

Mentor-Protégé Program advances small business contractor

SRNS is committed to assisting small businesses through the Mentor-Protégé Program (MPP). This initiative has more than doubled a protégé firms' revenue, improved their capabilities, and broadened their customer base.

Established by DOE, the SRNS MPP improves small businesses' subcontracting abilities within the complex. Since 2016, the SRNS MPP has grown from one to five protégés managed annually—increasing the overall spend from \$400,000 to \$41 million.

Lisa Tanner, SRNS Supply Chain Small Business Liaison Officer, mentioned, "We offer technical and developmental support to protégés, equipping them with the necessary knowledge, skills and capabilities to successfully compete for DOE prime contracts."

In 2018, SRNS selected CTI and Associates, Inc., a small construction and remediation company based in Michigan, to perform field work for Environmental Compliance and Area Completion Projects.

"CTI has grown significantly, with SRS expanding our task orders to include more capable jobs and increased opportunity," said Morgan Subbarayan, President of CTI. "This mentorship has allowed us to grow our production payroll, improve infrastructure, enhance our safety program and completely transform our business and technical capabilities."

In 2020, CTI faced significant challenges due to the coronavirus. Remarkably, their partnership with SRNS proved to be a turning point. The collaboration expanded CTI's capabilities, spotlighting their efforts across DOE and increasing their company size from 91 to over 200 employees.

"We have expanded from simple deconstruction to include heavy civil and rad exposure – capturing the attention of Oak Ridge National Laboratory and Hanford," continued Subbarayan.

To date, CTI has successfully delivered 20 task orders with

\$14.7 million of scope ahead of schedule. This past year, CTI successfully completed eight task orders, one involving the remediation of Cs-137 contaminated sediment in the R-Area Reactor Discharge Canal, earning the Lower Three Runs project the DOE Secretary of Energy Achievement Award. Another was the early completion of the LA-4 well abandonment, which led to significant cost savings of over \$1 million for SRS.

Selected protégé companies perform mission critical scope for SRS to include deactivation and demolition, construction, infrastructure services, staffing and information technology.

DOE-Savannah River Small Business Program Manager Robert Meek, stated, "The utilization of the Mentor-Protégé Program by SRNS to support and grow small businesses, while accomplishing the demanding management and operations mission, is a shining example at SRS and across the entire DOE Complex."



CTI personnel remove contaminated sediment from the R-Reactor Discharge Canal.

SRNS children's Earth Day art contest



"The Earth" by Amelia Wheeler

Art contest winners

GRADES K-2

First: "Earth Day in Dots"
Artist: Hudson White
SRNS Employee: Daniel White

Second: "We Love the Earth"
Artist: Rosa Read
SRNS Employee: Steven Read

Third: "Yay Earth Day"
Artist: Ivan Schoultz
SRNS Employee: Alex Schoultz

GRADES 3-5

First: "The Earth"
Artist: Amelia Wheeler
SRNS Employee: Carla Wheeler

Second: "There's Only One Earth"
Artist: Olivia Spracklin
SRNS Employee: Robert Spracklin

Tied for third place: "Free Hugs"
Artist: Alexa Jimenez
SRNS Employees: Krista and Jorge Jimenez

Tied for third place: "Plant a Tree"
Artist: Jack Kryshtalowych
SRNS Employee: Chris Kryshtalowych

GRADES 6-8

First: "If Not Now, Then When?"
Artist: Caroline Peachey
SRNS Employee: David Peachey

Second: "Let's Take Advantage and Save This Planet"
Artist: Vidhi Trivedi
SRNS Employee: Kavyesh Trivedi

Third: "Bee the Change"
Artist: Lesley Keck
SRNS Employee: Matthew Keck

GRADES 9-12

First: "Heart of the Matter"
Artist: Analiese Bell
SRNS Employee: Susan and David Bell

Second: "Love the World"
Artist: Hagen Beckham
SRNS Employee: Jonalyn Miller

Third: "The Folds of Earth"
Artist: Grant Whitman
SRNS Employee: Jonalyn Miller

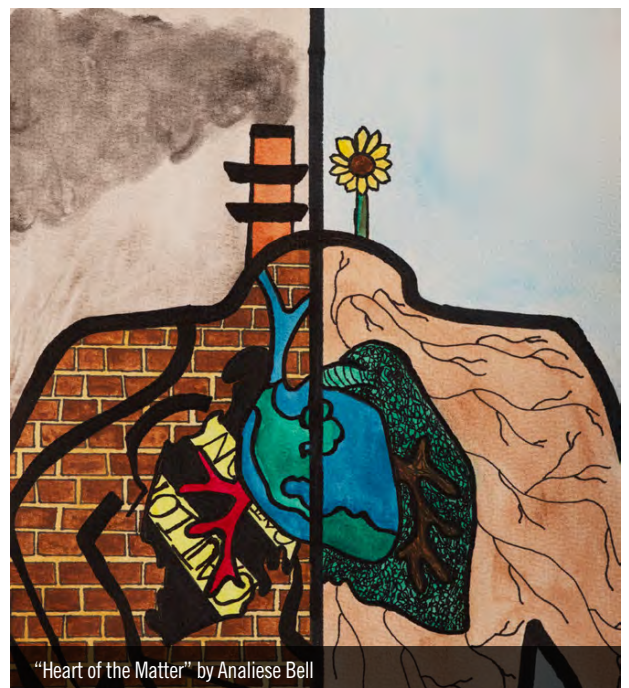
In celebration of Earth Day, SRNS sponsored an art contest for its employees' children and grandchildren to express what Earth Day means to them. Throughout March, the contest received over 80 submissions.

Entries were grouped into the appropriate grade categories, providing opportunities for elementary, middle and high school aged students to participate.

Five finalists from each grade category were selected and reviewed by a panel of judges to determine which pieces would be awarded first, second and third place in each grade category. Entries were evaluated based on originality, interpretation of the subject matter and theme, creative techniques, composition and overall art appearance.

SRNS Earth Day Co-Chair and Environmental Compliance Subject Matter Expert, Bette Ross, stated, "We wanted to host an art contest to engage families in discussions about Earth Day, and hopefully broader environmental issues. It is especially fitting for this year, as our theme is 'Our Earth, Our Future – Make Every Day Matter.' Children are the future and we want to encourage their engagement in issues affecting our planet as early as possible. It was very interesting to see the progression of thinking and processing in the art submittals by age; it's clear that our children are concerned about protecting the Earth."

"We were very pleased with the level and quality of participation," continued Ross. "The art was so inspiring that we intend to have an Art Show in the fall to display and recognize the efforts of all the participants." The winners were also highlighted at the SRS Safety Expo and given cash awards and prizes.



"Heart of the Matter" by Analiese Bell



VIEW THE ARTWORK

Find Savannah River Site on Flickr, see the album "Earth Day art contest 2024"



SRS strengthens safety culture at expo

The Site recently hosted its annual Safety Expo on April 23 and 24. It featured over 70 informational booths designed to educate and engage SRS employees on a range of topics that underpin the Site's legacy of safety culture and performance.

This year's event, held at a new location, the New Ellenton Parks and Recreation Center in New Ellenton, South Carolina, welcomed more than 4,000 attendees from all SRS contractors for two days of safety engagement. The event, sponsored by SRNS, shared information with employees ranging from safety, security and environmental stewardship to personal health, wellness and other community services designed to improve quality of life.

"Every year, the SRS Safety Expo brings employees from across the Site together to celebrate and reinforce our workforce's strong safety culture," said Rick Sprague, SRNS Senior Vice President, Environment, Safety, Health and Quality. "Involvement in these events is what empowers our team with the knowledge necessary to continuously improve safety at work, at home and in the community."

Twenty-six Local Safety Improvement Teams (LSITs) hosted interactive booths at the Expo, along with participants from Savannah River Mission Completion, U.S. Forest Service, Savannah River National Laboratory and Centerra, as well as several community organizations.

There were also multiple new initiatives this year intended to promote safety engagement, including the LSIT passport which allowed attendees to collect stamps from various LSIT booths and submit a completed passport for a chance to win a prize. A QR code registration system was also implemented to improve the collection of attendance information.

"This year's Safety Expo really showcased our workforce's passion for safety," stated H Area Operations Support Specialist and H Area Wise Owls LSIT Chair, Ashley Allen. "I enjoyed the addition of the LSIT passport; it was a fun way to encourage employees to engage with our LSITs while we promoted safety. Pairing that experience with delicious food and the outdoor atmosphere made it difficult to leave an incredible event!"

According to Safety Expo Planning Lead and Health and Safety Manager, Lea Simons, "The Safety Expo empowers employees by providing opportunities for them to expand their safety knowledge. Empowered employees are happier and healthier; we saw so many smiling faces this year!"

"Safety has and always will be a core value at SRS," said Dennis Carr. "Thank you to everyone involved in making this event possible and to all of our employees who made it a priority to attend. My goal is for every SRNS employee to engage with their Local Safety Improvement Teams as we strive for an injury-free workplace."

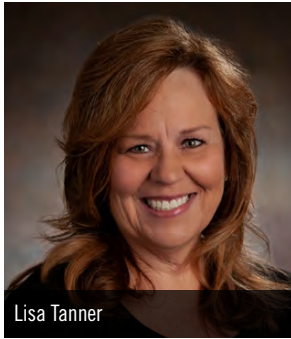


This year's Safety Expo was bigger than ever, as the new location allowed for the event to expand, including more informational booths and vendors.



SRS employee named 2023 EM Small Business Advocate MVP

Lisa Tanner, SRNS Small Business Liaison Officer, was recently named the DOE 2023 Small Business Advocate Most Valuable Player (MVP) during an annual Supply Chain Management Center event.



Lisa Tanner

“In fiscal year 2023, I collaborated with Rachel Boyd, Deborah Tyler and the SRNS Supply Chain Procurement team to improve the visibility and performance of the supplier-onboarding process, with the pending implementation of the supplier portal and risk assessment software,” Tanner said. “I remain focused on the deployment of these tools for future onboarding efficiencies.”

Every year, DOE’s Small Business Awards Program recognizes outstanding individuals and organizations that promote and expand small businesses. In fiscal year 2023, SRNS granted \$732 million in total small business awards, marking a 70% increase from the previous year.

Dave Dietz, SRNS Senior Director of Procurement, emphasized, “Lisa and the team are key in establishing our Supply Chain Center of Excellence by consistently assessing and evaluating supplier performance. Lisa also supports the ‘Small Business First’ policy by guiding our various buyer teams to consider small business suppliers whenever possible — with some buyers awarding over 80% of work in any given month to small businesses.”

Tanner also oversees the SRNS acquisition forecast, continuous improvement program, and the Mentor Protégé Program — a DOE initiative designed to assist small businesses in enhancing their capabilities.

“The SRNS Small Business Program is pivotal in nurturing companies for DOE missions and is a model for supplier development,” said Jay Johnson, SRNS Deputy Vice President of Contracts and Supply Chain Management.

“Lisa has been an excellent advocate and raises our level of commitments, resulting in record highs in protégé and small business awards.”

Tanner and SRNS Supply Chain Procurement continue to ensure diversity in procurement and long-term subcontract agreements by participating in trade fairs; establishing relationships between the small business community and buyers; and developing government subcontract plans in compliance with federal and DOE Acquisition Regulations.

“While this award may be an individual honor, success in Procurement is often a collective effort,” Tanner expressed. “I am delighted by this recognition that shines light on the entire team’s dedication to maximizing small business opportunities.”



Despite rainy conditions, community members attended the annual CSRA Heart Walk, in March, to show their support for a critical cause.

AHA Heart Walk Campaign success

Participants from SRNS, Battelle Savannah River Alliance (BSRA) and Savannah River Mission Completion (SRMC) recently gathered for the SRS American Heart Association (AHA) Heart Walk Campaign awards ceremony to celebrate individuals and their companies for their generous contributions to this year’s campaign.

During the ceremony, SRNS was recognized for raising \$136,986 for this year’s campaign. The SRNS top organization was awarded to Environmental Management for raising over \$33,000, and the top team was Environmental Management Operation’s ‘Heart & Sole,’ raising over \$26,000.

SRNL was recognized for their significant contribution of \$24,636, surpassing their company goal of \$20,000. SRMC finished out the campaign with over \$34,000 raised.

The SRS top walker was presented to SRNS Senior Vice President of Environmental Management Operations and American Heart Walk Executive Management Sponsor Janice Lawson, for raising over \$8,000. SRNS Senior Vice President of NNSA Operations and Programs J.C. Epting was also given an award for being the campaign’s MVP — helping to raise over \$8,000.

Together, SRNS, BSRA and SRMC raised a total of \$196,275.

Marah Curry, AHA of the CSRA Development Director, spoke during the awards ceremony, expressing her appreciation for the hard work and dedication put in by SRS employees.

“Over the past century, the Association, alongside our dedicated volunteers, supporters and collaborating organizations, has strived to foster longer, healthier lives. As we celebrate this milestone year, we take immense pride in the success and impact of the 2024 CSRA Heart Walk, made possible by the unwavering commitment of our volunteers and supporters, such as SRS, who have contributed to this year’s achievements,” said Curry.

On March 22, SRS volunteers joined other participants from across the CSRA for the annual CSRA Heart Walk held at the SRP Park in North Augusta, South Carolina. Despite the rainy weather, participants were determined to show support for this year’s Heart Walk.

Family Scholarships distribute \$45K among 15 winners



(Second from right) Senior Vice President, SRNS Workforce Services and Talent Management Francine Burroughs stands with Dennis Carr and the SRNS Family Scholarship winners.

SRNS has awarded 15 college scholarships to graduating high school students who are children of SRNS employees. Each student received a \$3,000 scholarship and was recognized during a special ceremony held at Newberry Hall in Aiken, South Carolina.

The selected applications were chosen based on scholastic achievements, community service, leadership, extracurricular abilities and overall accomplishments.

“The Family Scholarship program is our way of investing in the future and showing our commitment to the well-being and success of our employees and their families,” said Dennis Carr. “By providing these scholarships, we hope to make a lasting impact and open the doors to endless opportunities.”

Since 2009, SRNS has presented college scholarships to more than 200 graduating high school students, providing \$720,000 overall. Through this program, SRNS employees see the high value their company places on education.

Caiden Garnett, son of SRNS employee Christopher Garnett, appreciates how the scholarship will help fund his upcoming academic endeavors.

“I am honored that I was chosen to receive this scholarship from SRNS,” said Gannet. “It’s stressful finding ways to pay for college. Knowing that I can focus more on my academics and community outreach rather than focusing so much on how I am going to pay for school is a big help.”

Garnett will be attending Clemson University, declaring a major in wildlife biology.

2024 SRNS Family Scholarship recipients

Kadence Anderson

Curtis Baptist School, child of Johnny Anderson, NNSA Plutonium Programs and Operations

Katherine Battey

Aquinas High School, child of Thomas Battey, Environmental Management (EM)

Analiese Bell

Fox Creek High School, child of Susan Bell, SRPPF Project Delivery and David Bell, Engineering

Brianna Brown

South Aiken High School, child of Steven Brown of Engineering and Allyson Brown, Savannah River Tritium Enterprise (SRTE)

Valencia Bustamante

Randolph ISD High School, child of Vicente Bustamante, Technical Services

Gavin Carraway

South Aiken High School, child of Anthony Carraway, EM

Ava Chavous

North Augusta High School, child of Terry Chavous, Engineering

Caiden Garnett

North Augusta High School, child of Christopher Garnett, SRTE

Anna Karius

South Aiken High School, child of Kenneth Karius, Engineering

John Litchfield

Aquinas High School, child of John Litchfield, Technical Services

Griffin Martin

Spring Hill High School, child of Robert Martin, Engineering

Kamdyn Neal

Silver Bluff High School, child of Zachary Ashcraft, Environment Safety Health and Quality

Paul Pham

Lakeside High School, child of Quang Pham, Engineering

James Therrell

River Bluff High School, child of James Therrell, EM Operations

Cameron

Woiczehowski
Aiken High School, child of Steven Woiczehowski, NNSA Operations/Programs

STEM Pals

Connecting STEM experts to the community

The long-lost art of letter writing is linking the next generation of scientists and engineers with SRS experts.

The SRNS “STEM Pals” program aims to demystify STEM careers, humanize STEM professionals and empower students to explore new opportunities. Since January, the yearlong letter writing program has connected with nearly 200 students across five schools in Aiken County.

“The ‘STEM Pals’ initiative allows elementary and middle school students to ‘pick the brain’ of expert scientists and engineers,” said Cindy Hewitt, SRNS Education Outreach Specialist. “Exchanges happen pretty rapidly, with roughly one letter shared each week between SRS and participating schools.”

Educators initiate the relationship by drafting a letter with students that contains questions on SRS careers and STEM-related topics.

After months of exchanging letters, Jackson STEM Middle School students had the opportunity to meet their experts face-to-face.

“My favorite part of the experience was reading the unique and thoughtful questions from each student,” said Allison Flatt, SRNS Mechanical Systems Engineer. “I am not here to make every student an engineer; but to inspire students to pursue higher education opportunities and find their true passion.”

Jackson STEM Middle School educator Jennifer McMillian was amazed at how the letters quickly became a class favorite.

“My students have anxiously awaited the opportunity to meet their pals, after corresponding since January on STEM topics,” said McMillian. “It is a great way to incorporate writing into our curriculum while getting to know real experts in the scientific community.”

Letter topics often connect to classroom lectures, studies, field trips and local STEM opportunities.

“Our ‘STEM Pal’ initiative makes it easy for our employees to volunteer and broaden students’ scope of career possibilities, including at SRS, as they advance through school,” said Hewitt.

To watch the full SRNS “STEM Pals” reveal, search for “STEM PALS - Jackson STEM Middle School” on Vimeo. To become a pen pal, contact cynthia.hewitt@srs.gov.



SRNS “STEM Pal” Colleen Davis discusses engineering careers with students at Jackson STEM Middle School.



SRNS Volunteers Blythe Waters and Brad Wilson led a hands-on binary code activity to demonstrate how computers communicate.

SRS educates >2,000 at DIG STEM Festival

SRNS Education Outreach personnel and SRNS volunteers recently connected with over 2,000 spectators at the annual Dreams, Imagination and Gift (DIG) STEM Festival in Williston, South Carolina.

DIG provides STEM opportunities to promote rural growth and development. This year, SRNS provided \$30,000 in sponsorship for both the DIG Scholar Enrichment Academy (after-school program) and the DIG STEM Festival.

“This annual STEM celebration is a great opportunity to show students how their personal strengths and hobbies can cross over into STEM careers,” said Cindy Hewitt, SRNS Education Outreach Specialist. “SRNS plays a pivotal role in DIG’s ability to inspire, mentor and empower children in rural South Carolina and we often provide financial and volunteer support to engage more students in STEM.”

The 2024 DIG STEM Festival showcased over 50 regional exhibitors who provided hands-on activities, live performances, interactive demonstrations and family-oriented STEM entertainment.

“We had some incredible exhibits this year, with representatives traveling from as far as Raleigh, North Carolina, to support this event,” said Steven D.K. Brown, President and Founder of DIG. “We appreciate SRNS’ ongoing support which allows us to impact more students in the community.”

SRNS Systems Engineer Apprentice Blythe Waters volunteered at DIG STEM to teach budding students about the binary code using beaded bracelets. During the activity, students wrote the first letter of their name in zeros and ones, with each number represented by a different color bead.

“My favorite part of DIG STEM was getting to teach all different ages about a small part of the computer field,” said Waters. “When I was a kid, I attended many different STEM events that ultimately inspired my career decision. Making the time to volunteer and give back to the next generation helps to positively represent SRS and bring future prospects to the SRS Information Technology department.”

Since 2015, SRNS has donated over \$171,000 to DIG’s programs and festivals to help this grassroots organization make dreams a reality.

'I Spy Math in Nature' offers online learning for budding students

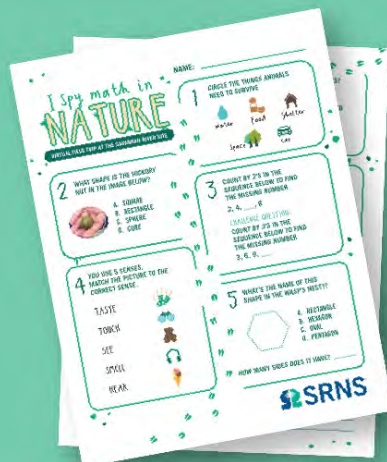
Kimberly Fickling, University of South Carolina Aiken Ruth Patrick Science Center (RPSEC) Director of Environmental Education, and Beth Eberhard, RPSEC Student Programs Specialist, teach viewers about a box turtle found in the forests of the Site.

Through recently reintroduced virtual field trips, SRS is sharing its vast forests with a new age of local and international students.

Virtual field trips are a cooperative effort between SRNS Education Outreach and the University of South Carolina Aiken Ruth Patrick Science Education Center (RPSEC). SRNS Education Outreach hosts in-person student field trips as part of the Science and Technology Enrichment Program (STEP), but age restrictions for on-site tours limit the team's capacity to reach children below the third grade.

"Age restrictions at SRS created a huge need for virtual opportunities so our younger audiences could experience SRS," said Taylor Rice, SRNS Education Outreach Specialist. "We are now impacting kindergarten through third grade from inside the classroom."

Educators that apply for the SRNS virtual field trip experience receive a themed student worksheet, teacher key, vocabulary list and state standards for the focused material.



Filed in what became the first national environmental research park in 1972, SRNS virtual field trips correlate to academic math and science standards. Approximately 280-square-miles of forest are home to many rare, endangered species and serve as the perfect setting for age-appropriate learning material.

"Not only is this a free resource for educators and the National Science Teaching Association, but virtual field trips can also be used to support grade-specific standards and pacing guidelines," said Kimberly Fickling, RPSEC Director of Environmental Education.

Students follow along to observe animals and changes in nature, identify shapes and solve nature math.

Three previous virtual field trips have been released at the middle and high school level. "Wet Wonders" studies macroinvertebrates through biotic testing. "Feathers in the Forest" includes an assessment hike that determines the best habitat for the previously endangered red-cockaded woodpecker. "A Trip Down Under" uncovers the mysteries of soil.

"I love that we can introduce nature to children in a fun, multi-sensory way that builds excitement in exploring the outdoors," said Beth Eberhard, RPSEC Student Programs Specialist. "Even things that are a commonplace to us as adults — such as a beetle or a pine needle — can open the eyes of our next generation to the unique environment around them."



REQUEST A VIRTUAL FIELD TRIP

Educators can apply at
www.surveymonkey.com/r/SRSNatureMath

‘STEM That Travels’ captivates K-12

SRNS captivates K-12 classes through the “STEM That Travels” volunteer program, in which expert scientists and engineers from SRS enrich STEM-based curricula in area schools.

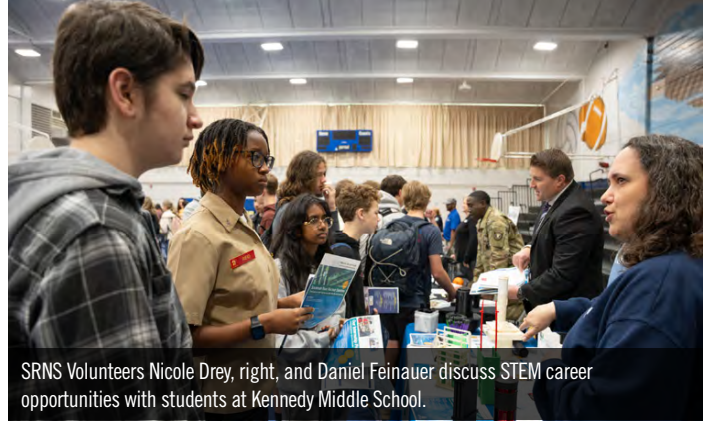
“Our volunteers work with eight different school districts to support numerous career fairs, STEM-themed events and classroom activities,” said Cindy Hewitt, SRNS Education Outreach Specialist. “The sky is the limit for this program, as we continue to craft awe-inspiring demonstrations and interactive lessons.”

SRNS Manager of Engineering Technical Services Eric Johnson had the chance to volunteer at Millbrook Elementary’s “Family STEM Night.” He demonstrated fire protection engineering and home evacuation plans for over 300 attendees.

“Seeing students ‘light up’ during our fire demonstrations was the most rewarding part of the night,” said Johnson. “I continue to volunteer for ‘STEM That Travels,’ to provide more insight into fire protection careers and help students understand the importance of fire safety at home.”

“We are building a strong foundation in math and critical thinking skills that can be used cross-curricular,” said Jacque Osteen, Millbrook Elementary School Principal. “STEM demonstrations inspire and motivate parents to introduce math and science careers to their child at an early age. Involving companies like SRNS, in family STEM nights helps to bring new or niche occupations to light.”

For four decades, SRS Education Outreach and the University of South Carolina Aiken Ruth Patrick Science Education Center (RPSEC) have partnered to infuse the wonder of science into learning



SRNS Volunteers Nicole Drey, right, and Daniel Feinauer discuss STEM career opportunities with students at Kennedy Middle School.

experiences for students. SRS volunteers support area schools by utilizing RPSEC science and math kits for educational displays and activities.

“Our volunteers are able to reserve science kits from RPSEC to conduct demonstrations and experiments,” said Hewitt. “We continue to highlight DOE mission-critical skills and careers to support a capable workforce.”

Four SRS volunteers participated in Kennedy Middle School’s “Career Reality Fair” for more than 340 students.

“Eighth grade is a crucial year for students to explore and discover careers that fit their unique skills and assets,” said Ryan Ashley, Kennedy Middle Principal. “We’ve helped our students develop career clusters based on their strengths and real-world scenarios that can impact salary. Today, they were able to apply that knowledge by connecting with various businesses and professionals in those clusters.”

SRNS “STEM That Travels” reaches six schools in South Carolina and two in Georgia.



Turkey Hunt breaks barriers for disabled sportsmen

On an early April morning, 15 hunters and their escorts made their way to their assigned hunting locations for the 19th Annual Wheelin’ Sportsmen/SRS Ultimate Turkey Hunt.

Sponsored by the National Wild Turkey Federation, DOE - SRS, the U.S. Forest Service and a recent new partner: The Outdoor Dream Foundation, this annual hunt provides disabled sportsmen with a unique opportunity to hunt the eastern wild turkey across designated areas spanning 170,000 acres of the Site’s pristine woodlands.

Steve Fleming was one of 15 hunters selected to participate this year.

“I wouldn’t miss this hunt for anything,” said Fleming. “Thanks to this event, I was able to take home two turkeys and a lifetime of memories.”

“The collaboration between the different SRS entities and nonprofit organizations is invaluable because they unite a wide range of resources to accomplish a shared objective,” said U.S. Forest Service Savannah River Wildlife Program Manager Tal Mims. “These partnerships foster an environment where the hunters feel welcome and, hopefully, they will leave SRS with unforgettable memories.”

SRNS Construction Coordinator Curtis Crenshaw escorts Steve Fleming during the 19th Annual Wheelin’ Sportsmen Turkey Hunt.



Sandra (Lea) Simons

AT SRNS: Health and Safety Manager, Planning Lead for the annual SRS Safety Expo

THE PEOPLE OF SRNS

Sandra (Lea) Simons currently serves as a Health and Safety Manager at SRNS. In this role, she is responsible for cultivating safety culture engagement to ensure that all employees not only are physically safe but also feel safe in their places of work.

With a Bachelor of Science in Biology, emphasis in Environmental Science, from the University of South Carolina, Simons has worked in the safety industry for over 30 years. Prior to working at SRNS, Simons served as the first ever Safety and Risk Manager at Riverbanks Zoo and Garden, where she learned the importance of the emotional aspects of safety, stating, "A culture of safety in the workplace is established, sustained and more effective with a willing heart rather than a wagging finger. Allowing people to be creative and express their values innately is profound and ultimately how a deep-seated culture of safety is perpetuated."

Aside from her standard job functions, Simons serves as the Planning Lead for the annual SRS Safety Expo, where she and a core team meet throughout the year to ensure the Expo is executed safely and successfully. She has also been actively involved with the Local Safety Improvement Teams, furthering the discussion of safety with leaders across the Site.

Simons was born, raised and still resides in Lexington, South Carolina where she lives on her family's farm. In her spare time, she enjoys tubing down mountain rivers with her family. She is also an aspiring bagpiper and has written the children's book *Mini Coo Penny Lou*, which conveys a message of accepting differences in people.

Teamwork makes the dream work

EACH YEAR, the success of our Site's annual SRS Safety Expo is driven by the dedication and hard work of the Safety Expo Core Team. This group of committed professionals brings together diverse expertise and a shared passion for promoting workplace safety. From venue walkdowns to vendor selections, the Core Team works year-round to ensure every detail is perfected to create an impactful, safe and memorable experience for attendees.

The success of the SRS Safety Expo is not only a testament to the work of the Core Team but also to the collaborative efforts of 26 Local Safety Improvement Teams (LSITs). Every year, each LSIT puts in the effort to create fun, engaging and educational booths, ensuring that every visitor leaves the Expo with a deeper understanding of safety practices.

Together, these teams create an event that not only educates and engages but also drives continuous safety improvements throughout our organization.



The Safety Expo Core Team consists of SRNS employees:

Lea Simons, Health and Safety Manager; Kristin Creed, Principal Industrial Hygienist; Fallan Flatow, Corporate Communications Specialist; Brad Clark, Local Safety Improvement Team Liaison; Michael Wiggins, Infrastructure Logistics / Railroad Operations; Donnie Cooper, Heavy Equipment Mechanic; Brandon Heath, Portable Equipment Commodity Management Center Maintenance Manager; Julie Kirby, Sign Shop; Jodie Saverance, Senior Operations Support Specialist; Janice Shelby-Bentley, Physical Security Lead – General Site, H & L Areas; Kim Rhoden, Meeting and Event Coordinator; Aunarey Herbert, Associate PR/PI Specialist

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



Hope Nehring

H Area Old
Manufacturing Deputy
Operations Manager



Lateayrra Tyus-Jenkins

Associate Systems
Engineer



Scot Beck

Senior Fellow
Engineer



Chaunte' Bost

Information System
Security Officer



Sean Bohrer

Design Authority
Engineer

SRNS

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

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

Securing nuclear materials to prevent unwanted proliferation

Transforming nuclear materials into assets and stable wasteforms



Savannah River
NUCLEAR SOLUTIONSSM