

Primary Media Contact
DT Townsend
Savannah River Nuclear Solutions
(803) 952-7566, lawrence.townsend@srs.gov

DOE Media Contact:
Monte Volk
U.S. Department of Energy
(803) 952-8283, monte.volk@srs.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Area Students' Cities of the Future, Protect Against Climate Change During Regional Competition

AIKEN, S.C. Jan. 25, 2023 – Students from middle schools found throughout South Carolina and the city of Augusta recently gathered to explain how their city of the future can best fight the continually pressing challenges of climate change during this year's Future City Regional Competition.

Special Awards judge Brad Nichols provides helpful advice to the team representing Kennedy Middle School.

"Designing a city of the future is a difficult task for anyone, much less these young and enthusiastic students who have boldly taken on this challenge," said Taylor Rice, Savannah River Nuclear Solutions (SRNS) Education Outreach. "Providing an effective way to offer long-term protection from the effects of global climate change can be a significant task for those studying environmental science in college. The Future City competitors used creativity, imagination and ingenuity to create the cities we're judging today. Their projects are very impressive."

Each team of three students worked together to create a 1,500-word essay describing the city in detail and their solution to the climate change challenge, followed by actually building their city to scale using recycled materials in the form of a tabletop model.



Special Awards judge Brad Nichols provides helpful advice to the team representing Kennedy Middle School.

Points were awarded for each phase of the competition leading up to the day of the South Carolina Regional Competition where groups of judges listened to presentations while asking team members challenging questions and scored their city model.

Eighth grader Stephany Atilano, Leavelle Campbell Middle School, said that she had no desire to be a part of a Future City team until her teacher explained that the process involved designing and actually building a model city. "Since I love to build things and enjoy being creative, I knew this was for me, even though it was stressful at times. The friendship and teamwork we experienced during this project was important too.

"Now, I worry that if we don't work on improving the climate, we're going to ruin our world. I want to do something about it, but I realize it requires a team effort. Being a part of Future City has changed my perspective in many ways, such as the need to recycle. We all need to work together."

After carefully evaluating each city, special awards were presented by sponsors including the overall first, second and third place winners.

News from the Savannah River Site

U.S. Department of Energy • Aiken • SC • 29808

1st Place McCracken Middle School, Spartanburg, S.C.
2nd Place Risen Christ Christian Academy, Myrtle Beach, S.C.
3rd Place Dreams, Imagination and Gifts After School Academy, Williston, S.C.

SRNS Education Outreach personnel have managed the South Carolina Future City Regional Competition for 20 years in partnership with the Ruth Patrick Science Education Center at the University of South Carolina Aiken campus (USCA), the event host site. “Our partnership with USCA is very important and highly appreciated,” said Rice. “Their dedication towards academically growing our young people throughout the region is admirable.”



Students representing Risen Christ Christian Academy, Myrtle Beach, S.C., attempt to persuade Future City competition judges that their model city deserves first place during the daylong event at the University of South Carolina Aiken.

Since returning to school earlier this fall, each team of students have been hard at work on their projects. They join students from 1,350 schools located in the U.S., Canada, China and Nigeria.

“I’ve learned a lot about our climate and how to mitigate and adapt to it,” said Kennedy Middle School eighth grader Dina Abdalla whose career goals include interior design and architecture. “Being involved in this has definitely confirmed my career choice.”

Regional winners will face off at the finals in Washington, D.C. in February.

“A resilient city ensures its residents are safe and can meet the challenges of the future,” said Rice. “With

the guidance of an educator and STEM mentor, each Future City team during this year’s competition has gained immeasurable experience and knowledge that will prepare them for even greater accomplishments that lie ahead, and hopefully, one day, a career at the Savannah River Site.”

For more information on the Future City Competition, visit www.futurecity.org