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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SRNS Hosts “Reverse Career Fair” for Local Colleges and Universities

AIKEN, S.C. (Feb. 28, 2018) – At a traditional college career fair, students meet dozens of potential employers at a time and describe their job qualifications. A different dynamic was underway at the Savannah River Site (SRS) when the management and operating contractor Savannah River Nuclear Solutions (SRNS) hosted its first “reverse career fair” at the Applied Research Center in Aiken, S.C.

Career counselors and professors from nine local colleges and universities in the CSRA had the opportunity to meet with SRNS employees to learn about the various internships and full-time positions available that may be of interest to their students.

“I’ve been on the tour of SRS before, and I’m familiar with the Site and its missions, but this event has given me a comprehensive overview of what companies here are looking for from students in terms of internships and long-term opportunities,” said Corey Feraldi, Director, Office of Career Services, University of South Carolina Aiken. “The Savannah River Site is so large that sometimes it’s hard to know exactly who does what, but now I have a better understanding of the application process, which will help me bridge that gap for our students.”

The event kicked off with an introduction from SRNS President and CEO Stuart MacVean, who described the wide range of career paths available for prospective employees.



Donna Wendt (left), Director of Career Services, Augusta Technical College, visits the Savannah River National Laboratory's exhibit during the reverse career fair held by Savannah River Nuclear Solutions at the Applied Research Center in Aiken, S.C. During the event, nine colleges and universities from the CSRA had the opportunity to learn about the variety of career opportunities at the Savannah River Site.

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“Savannah River Nuclear Solutions is on track to hire about 400 employees this year, and we anticipate having between 150 and 175 interns this summer,” MacVean said. “We have jobs that range from janitorial and lawn care to operations and maintenance to engineering and the sciences, as well as teachers for our training department, and at the pace we’re hiring the training needs are even higher. Our work at the Savannah River Site has a tremendous impact not just for national security, but for global stability and will continue for many generations, as we have new missions coming to us that are projected to last for decades into the future.”

Following the introduction, the college representatives were given an overview of the Savannah River Site’s history, current missions and employment opportunities. After the overview, the attendees visited SRNS organizational booths including Site Services, Engineering, IT, Environmental Stewardship & Safety and Health, Radiological Protection, Savannah River National Laboratory, Workforce Services, Tritium, and Environmental Management Operations.

“I really appreciate the opportunity to meet professionals from the Savannah River Site face to face,” said Dr. Joe Newton, Assistant Professor of Nuclear Science, Department of Chemistry and Physics, Augusta University. “After visiting each of the tables, I have gained a ‘big picture’ understanding, so I can be more effective at preparing my students. I plan to spend time in class showing them how to search for available job postings at SRS and explaining the timeline involved with the application process.”

SRNS employee Michael Roeber was among the exhibitors who shared his experience with the career counselors and faculty. After starting his internship with SRNS Site Automation Engineering in January 2017, he became a full-time employee six months later after he graduated from Augusta University with a bachelor’s degree in computer science.

“I think an internship is a great way to go because it’s the best way to gain hands-on learning experiences,” said Roeber. “Your group can get a feel for what you enjoy doing, while they observe what you’re capable of and how quickly you apply what you’ve learned. My advice for anyone starting an internship at SRNS would be to enjoy learning, ask questions and have fun – work can be enjoyable.”

Following the reverse career fair was a site driving tour that included the Savannah River National Laboratory, MOX Construction Site, H Canyon, Defense Waste Processing Facility, Saltstone Facility, and Salt Waste Processing Facility.

“After interacting with the exhibitors from SRS, I’m going to encourage my students to start looking at job descriptions from SRS now and not wait until their junior or senior year,” said Allen Kanapala, Instructor of Computer Science and Engineering, University of South Carolina Salkehatchie. “First-year students can start looking for future job opportunities and start evaluating if they want a certain kind of job and align their courses accordingly. Rather than learning multiple subjects and wondering later whether they’re interested in a particular area, they can focus on their interests and take the required courses.”

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The reverse career fair was the first event of its kind at the Savannah River Site, and the guests included representatives from Aiken Technical College, Augusta Technical College, Augusta University, Benedict College, Claflin University, Denmark Technical College, University of South Carolina (USC) Aiken, USC Salkehatchie, Voorhees College and the Savannah River Site Community Reuse Organization.

Savannah River Nuclear Solutions is a Fluor-led company whose members are Fluor Federal Services, Newport News Nuclear and Honeywell, responsible for the management and operations of the Department of Energy's Savannah River Site, including the Savannah River National Laboratory, located near Aiken, South Carolina.

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