

News from the Savannah River Site

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Future City Regional Competition Winners Announced: Kennedy Middle School Takes First Place

Students create cities of the future during this annual event involving South Carolina and Augusta-Area Middle Schools

AIKEN, S.C. (January 22, 2018) – Teams of middle school students from across South Carolina and throughout the greater Aiken-Augusta area have been building intricate table top models that hopefully best represent the most innovative and practical city of the future with the goal of winning this year's Regional Future City® competition.

This past weekend a team from Aiken, S.C., Kennedy Middle School, took first place, while a strong finish by Aiken Area Home Educators led to a second-place trophy. Westview Middle School from Greenwood, S.C., came in third.

The first-place team will soon travel to the Future City National Finals in Washington, D.C. In addition, the top prize is \$7,500 for the school's science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) program plus a trip to U.S. Space Camp in Huntsville, Ala.

"Through this program, students learn how today's engineers and city planners deal with citywide sustainability issues like waste management, pollution and lack of adequate mass transit systems," said Future City Regional Coordinator and Savannah River Nuclear Solutions (SRNS) employee Kim Mitchell. "They research cutting edge technologies and develop an imaginative and plausible solution that can exist for generations."



Students of Kennedy Middle School, Team Agua Sabia, 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 campus.

The student teams, along with an educator and volunteer mentor, research and design a solution to a city-wide challenge that changes each year. This year's challenge is the "The Age-Friendly City."

Long-held assumptions about aging are being radically redefined. Older adults are living longer, staying in the workforce longer and living independently for longer than ever. This population is also growing and altering society's overall demographics. By 2050, older adults will outnumber children under the age of 14.

"I do want to become an engineer," said Kayla Goldschmidt, an eighth grader at Kennedy Middle School. "The competition helped me experience different types of engineering, such as civil and environmental engineering, and the field of architecture as well. The engineering aspects of this project gave me an idea of what that lifestyle would be like."

Since returning to school earlier this fall, 45 student teams have been hard at work on their Future City projects. They join more than 40,000 middle school students from 1,350 schools in 41 U.S. regions around the country, all of whom are engaged in similar regional competitions.

Working closely together, students are first challenged to design a virtual city using SimCity™ software. Next, they research today's public spaces and write an essay about their solutions and city design. And finally, students bring their ideas to life by building a tabletop scale model of their city using recycled materials on a budget of \$100 or less and give a brief presentation about their city to a panel of judges.

Future City has received national attention and acclaim for encouraging middle schoolers nationwide to develop their interest in a STEM-based education. The annual challenge is one of the nation's leading engineering education programs and among the most popular.

"This isn't a weekend project. The learning curve is significant, involving months of planning and hard work," said Mitchell. "The creativity and ingenuity found within each project is impressive. Each team should be proud of their city."

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

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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