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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SRNL Seeking Partners for the DOE Visiting Faculty Program

AIKEN, S.C. (November 26, 2019) – Are you a college or university professor with a focus in computer science, energy materials science or environmental remediation who is looking to advance your research experience? If so, you may wish to consider spending your summer term conducting research at the Dept. of Energy's Savannah River National Laboratory.

SRNL is actively seeking full-time, higher-education faculty members from universities with maturing research programs to participate in a joint 10-week research project. Sponsored by the U.S. Dept. of Energy's Office of Science, the Visiting Faculty Program (VFP) offers faculty and students the chance to learn more about DOE-sponsored programs by gaining hands-on research experience inside a national laboratory.

Venkata Atluri, Associate Computer Science Professor at Alabama A&M University visited SRNL and gave a presentation to employees on the new partnership that explores ways to apply machine learning to cyber-security requirements.

A broad and diverse network is critical to solving tough scientific challenges. This program aims to expand academic partners focused on Dept. of Energy problem sets by targeting faculty members and students from institutions historically underrepresented in the research community. This includes faculty from any Historically Black College or University (HBCU) and those universities that are not yet rated by Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education® as "high" or "very high" on the research activity index.

"At SRNL, we rely heavily on our partnerships with academic research institutions. What's exciting about the VFP, is that it strives to expand that sphere of collaboration by encouraging new academic faculty partners," stated Dr. Elizabeth Hoffman, SRNL's Director of Innovation and University Engagement. "New partners offer fresh ideas and alternate approaches to R&D challenges. These partnerships can re-energize teams, leading to innovative developments and novel solutions."

In short, the program can result in lab-academic partnerships that may not have been otherwise pursued. It also affords faculty members the opportunity to bring up to two students with them for the summer to aid in selected projects.

DOE requires applicants to select a host laboratory and co-sponsor for all proposed research projects, which is why SRNL is proactively seeking individuals to take advantage of this program. The lab must work with interested candidates in advance to shape mutually beneficial research endeavors.

This is the second year Savannah River National Lab has participated in the program. During the 2019 summer cycle, Venkata Atluri, Associate Computer Science Professor at Alabama A&M University partnered with SRNL to explore ways to apply machine learning to cyber-security requirements.

"The Department of Energy summer Visiting Faculty Program at Savannah River National Laboratory gave me a one-of-a-kind opportunity to have exposure to cutting edge research, to collaborate, work with, and learn from research teams with vast experience and knowledge, as well as to apply my skills and contribute," stated Atluri.

This research is helping to shape the SRNL strategic cyber program direction by helping to identify anomalous network traffic, which is critical to detecting and limiting the impact of cyber-attacks.

"Alturi's research illustrates how much we can accomplish through these summer partnerships," said Dr. Hoffman. "The 2019 program was a great success for us, and we are hoping to be rewarded with even more participants this year," said Dr. Hoffman.

Faculty members in the areas of physics, chemistry, biology (non-medical), engineering, environmental sciences, geology or geosciences, mathematics, materials sciences or computer or computational sciences are encouraged to reach out to SRNL.

While SRNL is open to speaking with any interested faculty member about potential opportunities, they are particularly seeking partners in the areas of cyber and computer science, energy materials, and studies on the fate and transport of contaminants. These scientific areas represent those where there is a high likelihood of mutual interest and the ability to make relevant contributions on a short timeline.

Interested candidates must hold U.S. citizenship to apply. Additional information on program eligibility can be found on the VFP website. Co-sponsored applications are required no later than Jan. 9, 2020 at 5:00 p.m.

Eligible candidates interested in conducting summer research projects with SRNL should contact Dr. Elizabeth Hoffman to discuss areas of mutual interest and identify potential co-sponsors.

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