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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SRNS Wins National Cyber Award for Innovation Excellence at USC Aiken

AIKEN, S.C., November 14, 2019 – Savannah River Nuclear Solutions (SRNS) Cyber Security Engineer Barry McIntosh, Ph.D., was recently presented the Government Innovation Award for Public Sector Innovation for his assistance towards the creation and implementation of a multi-faceted cyber degree program at the University of South Carolina Aiken (USC Aiken).

During the ceremony, awards were presented to winners by the Government Innovation Awards (GIA) organization. GIA officials described the awards ceremony as a celebration of “transformative government projects, individual change agents and industry partners that are reimagining public-sector IT.”

McIntosh participated on a four-person team of SRNS Information employees providing a high level of expertise to assist in developing the new cyber degree program. As a result, the curriculum was approved by the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education and is now a new undergraduate major for students studying Applied Computer Science.

“While I was nominated for this award as an individual, the project was completed by a team that consisted of Dan Farmer, Project Controls and Automation Engineering (PC&AE); John Walker, PC&AE; and John Bobbitt, Savannah River National Laboratory, each providing their unique capabilities. The team was able to blend the perspectives of cyber operations, industrial controls cyber operations, software development and cutting-edge cyber research conducted in the Savannah River National Laboratory.”

The new degree provides both theoretical foundations and practical experience in network security, cryptography, ethical hacking, cyber defense, digital forensics and cyber ethics.



SRNS Cyber Security Engineer Barry McIntosh recently received the Government Innovation Award for Public Sector Innovation due to his contributions towards the creation of a cyber degree program at the University of South Carolina Aiken.

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According to McIntosh, a pressing need for qualified cyber professionals in the Central Savannah River Area (CSRA) region identified the need for the major. “At SRS, we have a growing demand for cyber professionals to protect the nation’s assets. Additionally, the CSRA is home to the Army’s Information Assurance Training center, the NSA and the U.S. Cyber Command. With the expanding military cyber presence, many large cyber companies have chosen to open local offices. This sudden growth has rapidly exceeded the local availability of qualified candidates, which is why SRS, the Army and NSA are all working with local colleges, high schools and even grade schools to develop academic programs that can supply a human talent chain that can support the ongoing missions of all this local cyber industry,” he said.

Over several months, the SRNS team worked with USC Aiken administrators and faculty, including the provost and former dean of the College of Sciences and Engineering, Daren Timmons, Ph.D., to develop a new curriculum for the degree program.

“The synergy and strong motivational drive exhibited by the team members right from the start was inspirational,” said Timmons. “With the escalating number of cyber-attacks experienced annually, we knew this new degree program in cyber security had to be part of our redesigned Applied Computer Science program here at USC Aiken. We’re thankful to Dr. Jeff Priest, former USC Aiken provost, for pulling this team together, and for the extensive resources, time, and energy invested by Dr. McIntosh and the other contributors. USC Aiken students, SRS, and the CSRA will benefit from this cooperative project for many years, and possibly decades, to come.”

McIntosh also noted that the successful development of the new cyber curriculum would have not been possible without the expertise and contributions of the SRNL and SRNS Process Control and Automation Engineering employees in the fields of High Performance Computing and Process Control.

The project was conducted during off-hours in the evenings over roughly a six-month period. “The team and I would meet with either the provost or a group of professors in the evenings on the USC Aiken campus. At the end of the six-month period, we submitted our final recommendations. These recommendations are largely represented in the current degree with some minor adjustments that likely came out of the year-long accreditation process with the board of regents,” said McIntosh.

The awards ceremony was sponsored by Federal Computer Week, GCN, Washington Technology and Defense Systems.

Savannah River Nuclear Solutions, a Fluor-led company with Newport News Nuclear and Honeywell, is 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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