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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Fourth Cohort of Nuclear Operator Apprentices Graduate from SRNS/ATC

AIKEN, S.C., (December 15, 2022) – Savannah River Nuclear Solutions (SRNS) and Aiken Technical College (ATC) celebrated the graduation of the fourth cohort from the SRNS Nuclear Operator Apprenticeship program on Thursday, Dec. 8, after they completed the Nuclear Fundamentals Certificate program at ATC.

Fifteen apprentices participated in the eight-month Nuclear Operator Apprenticeship Program, which provides ATC students a unique learning opportunity by allowing them to simultaneously receive on-the-job training while completing their required classroom work. Students spent two days a week receiving instruction from ATC and two days a week training at the Savannah River Site (SRS).

“Our apprenticeship partnerships are a great way to support workforce development efforts. It allows participants to earn a college credential while also gaining relevant, on-the-job experience,” said School of Technical and Continuing Education Dean Steven F. Simmons, Ed.D. “The success of this program has opened the door to exploring ways we can expand to offer similar opportunities for other critical positions at the Savannah River Site.”

Apprentices learned the basic qualifications of a production operator, including conduct of operations principles, radiation worker training and qualification and how to perform shift rounds. All were hired full-time and have been put to work in areas around the Site.

Operator Apprentice Christopher Smith said it was a little hard to go back to school at first. “It’s been about 15 years since I was last in school. They really made it easy, though, by whittling down the information that applies to the job and not adding extra stuff.”

Smith continued by saying he was looking forward to work at SRS. “There is opportunity at the Site to grow and do what you want while making money doing it.”

The Nuclear Fundamentals Program, created in 2016 in collaboration with SRNS, prepares students for entry-level positions in the nuclear industry. The recent addition of the apprenticeship program pathway further helps to build the workforce pipeline.

“So far, this Apprenticeship Program has been a huge success for the apprentices, SRNS, and ATC,” said SRNS President and CEO Stuart MacVean. “The program helps us with developing our operator pipeline while also providing meaningful employment for members of our community as well.”

The Nuclear Operator Apprenticeship Program is part of Apprenticeship Carolina™ (AC). AC is a division of the South Carolina Technical College System, and leads South Carolina in registered apprenticeship programs that help businesses and communities thrive economically. With the guidance of AC as well as the Lower Savannah Council of Governments, the operator apprenticeship program has been registered both with the state and nationally.

For more information about the SRNS Nuclear Operator Apprentice program, contact Dorian Newton, SRNS Program Manager, Apprenticeship and Pipeline Training, at (803) 645-7665, Non-Exempt/Apprentice Recruiter Patrick Ott at (803) 679-7080, or Janessa Smith, SRNS Human Resources Specialist, at (803) 646-3538.



The fourth cohort of the Nuclear Operator Apprenticeship Program was recognized in a ceremony on Thursday, December 8, at Aiken Technical College. From left, first row: Operator Apprentices Christopher Smith, Loren Smith, Shawn Wright. Second Row: Operator Apprentices Jonathan Blanchard, Jacob Carver, Anna Cook, Alan Glass, Sean Hodges, Joshua Irby, Dalton Lalonde, Samantha Lancaster, William Newsome, James Randall. Third row: ATC Department Chair of Chemistry, Physics & Nuclear Technology Aherial Polite; ATC Dean of Technical and Continuing Education Dr. Steve Simmons; SRNS Program Manager for the SRS Apprenticeship School Dr. Dorian Newton; SRNS Executive Loan/Deputy Program Manager for the SRS Apprenticeship School BooBoo Roberts; SRNS Apprenticeship School Program Lead David Jackson; SRNS Deputy Director Operational Excellence and Quality Assurance Kevin Whitt; SRNS Senior Vice President Environment, Safety, Health and Quality Rick Sprague; SRNS Senior Vice President of Environmental Management Operations Janice Lawson; and ATC President Dr. Forest Mahan.

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For more information about the Nuclear Fundamentals program, visit www.atc.edu.

About Savannah River Nuclear Solutions

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 located near Aiken, South Carolina.

About Aiken Technical College

Aiken Technical College is a two-year comprehensive college located in Graniteville, South Carolina. Founded in 1972, the College provides educational and workforce development opportunities through academic programs, continuing education, and corporate training services. Visit www.atc.edu for more information.

About Apprenticeship Carolina

Apprenticeship Carolina™ is an integral part of the SC Technical College System that works to ensure all employers in South Carolina have access to the information and technical assistance they need to create demand-driven registered apprenticeship programs. Apprenticeship consultants are available to guide companies through the registered apprenticeship development process from initial information to full recognition in the National Registered Apprenticeship System. These services are available to South Carolina employers free of charge. Interested employers are encouraged to contact Apprenticeship Carolina™ at (803) 896-5287 or visit www.apprenticeshipcarolina.com.