

News from the Savannah River Site

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Aiken Tech Radiation Protection Technology Program Fills a Local Need

AIKEN, S.C. (August 12, 2015) – The Savannah River Site (SRS) will have a projected need of more than 162 Radiological Control Inspectors by 2016 and a projected 192 Inspectors by 2017.

These Radiological Control Inspectors (RCI) needs are often filled through Aiken Technical College's (ATC) Radiation Protection Technology program. This program will be called upon for future hires, as well, said Alice Doswell, Savannah River Nuclear Solutions (SRNS) Sr. Vice President, Environmental, Stewardship, Safety and Health

“The Radiation Protection Technology program at Aiken Technical College provides a qualified local workforce to fill essential jobs at SRS,” Doswell said. “The nuclear industry is changing and anticipating a significant number of new hires as well as retirements in the coming years, which means this program will provide an excellent feeder system to replace these critical workers.”

Since 2010, SRS has hired more than 40 ATC graduates into RCI positions, a number of them kick starting their careers at SRS during their last semester of the program by fulfilling a final internship requirement, an experience that gives the students a “real-world” opportunity to apply the theories learned in the classroom.

Josh Cash, a 2012 ATC graduate, said he finished the program with a firm knowledge of how to do the job that would be expected of him.



Katie King (right) surveys equipment for radiation at the Savannah River Site. King just graduated from Aiken Technical College's Radiation Protection Technology program and is now a Radiological Control Inspector for Savannah River Remediation.

“The program set me up for success in the job market,” said Cash, an RCI for SRNS. “Students get a high-quality education in two years in a field that has a high demand for employees.”

The Radiation Protection Technology program is essential to current and future missions at SRS, as the projected need for RCIs continues to rise due to healthy attrition rates and future work scopes, said Mark Schmitz, Savannah River Remediation (SRR) Chief Operating Officer and Deputy Project Manager.

“Safety is of the utmost importance at the Savannah River Site,” Schmitz said. “And Radiological Control Inspectors are a necessary part of safely executing our mission.”

The two-year, 70-credit hour program leads to an Associate’s degree program in applied science. The program supplements students’ previous education by providing the opportunity to develop the skills necessary to evaluate a work site requiring radiological controls.

Students become certified RCIs after completing 180 application hours, through on-site internships, at a nuclear site. Other than SRS, internship site options include VC Summer near Jenkinsville, South Carolina, or Plant Vogtle in Waynesboro, Georgia.

Alandria Johnson—who just completed her internship at SRS this summer and will soon be a new hire—calls the Radiological Protection Technology program “the best two-year program around.”

“Radiological Control technicians will always be needed, especially in this area,” said Johnson, a Midland Valley native. “It’s a growing field and has a good growth in salary. You really can find safety in a career at SRS—in terms of personal safety and job safety.”

Aiken Tech has a high placement rate: During the 2012-13 school year, the latest year data is available, nearly 97 percent of graduates found employment in their field of study or chose to continue their education, said Nikasha Dicks, ATC’s Marketing and Public Relations Manager.

“Of the 16 institutions in the South Carolina Technical College System, Aiken Technical College has the highest placement rate,” Dicks said.

The fall semester begins Monday, August 17. Those interested in enrolling at ATC are encouraged to apply anytime during the year at www.atc.edu; the application is free. To register for the program, contact Enrollment Services, (803) 508-7263.

SRS News

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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. Visit us on the web at www.savannahrivernuclearsolutions.com

Additional information on the Department of Energy's Office of Environmental Management and the Savannah River Site can be found at <http://www.em.doe.gov> or <http://www.srs.gov>.