

News from the Savannah River Site

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Ten Years of SRS Engineers Sharing Knowledge and Experience during Area Teach-Ins

Hands-on STEM demonstrations impact thousands of local students

AIKEN, S.C. (March 8, 2018) – Savannah River Site (SRS) employees observed National Engineers Week 2018 by conducting science and engineering demonstrations for more than 3,000 students throughout the greater Aiken-Augusta area.

More than 60 SRS engineers, scientists and technicians conducted over 150 “Teach-In” demonstrations during a two-week period at 29 middle schools, with a focus on seventh-grade students.

Teach-Ins promote the importance of math, science and technology literacy. SRS volunteers provide interactive demonstrations and informative discussions to give students a broader understanding, predominantly in the field of engineering.

“Ten years of providing this service has permitted us to improve and fine tune the program, creating an optimum opportunity for our SRS scientists and engineers to meet the needs of local students in their classrooms,” said Gladys Moore, Savannah River Nuclear Solutions (SRNS) Education Outreach. “This is one of many ways we are reaching into area school systems and colleges to develop an interest in a potential career with SRNS, part of an extensive effort to create a pipeline for future workers.”

Middle schools in the South Carolina counties of Aiken, Allendale, Bamberg,



Missy Byrnes helps North Augusta Middle School students build a structurally-strong house of cards at a Teach-In event during National Engineers Week. Byrnes, a Savannah River Nuclear Solutions engineer, used bags of pennies to test each structure to see how much weight each could withstand before collapsing. From left are sixth grade students Kyle Hurley and Sarah Henry.

Barnwell and Edgefield, plus the Georgia counties of Columbia and Richmond, have participated in this outreach program managed and sponsored by SRNS since 2008. During this time period, over 20,000 students from this region have benefited from the creative work and hours of effort provided by hundreds of enthusiastic Teach-In volunteers.

“Today’s experiment was cool because it helps you think about the importance of science,” said North Augusta Middle School sixth grade student Walker Geddes. “The SRNS presentation helps you to decide whether engineering is right for you. Now I’m thinking about becoming an engineer.”

“I appreciate the time SRNS invested in my students’ future by sharing their time and talent to promote STEM education,” said Deborah Garrett, Sixth Grade Science Teacher, North Augusta Middle School. “The visiting engineers made science real to the kids, because these adults are doing real science for a living. Middle school is such an important time for STEM education as it is the first time that it becomes a true course focus. Activity like engineering week can hook a student for life. Thanks for making my job of teaching science easier, because I saw the interest, engagement, and smiles on my students faces today while they were practicing being tomorrow’s engineers.”

A project of DiscoverE, National Engineers Week celebrates the positive contributions engineers make to society and is a catalyst for outreach across the country to kids and adults alike.

The SRS Teach-In Program is managed by SRNS Education Outreach personnel for the DOE Savannah River Operations Office. DOE and SRNS provide a variety of science, engineering and literacy outreach programs to reach tens of thousands of students each year in the Central Savannah River Area through the unique resources available at SRS.

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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