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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Williston DIG STEM Festival Creates Big Dreams in Small Places

Motivating, Mentoring and Educating Rural Communities with SRNS Partnership

AIKEN, S.C., – (May 31, 2023) – Savannah River Nuclear Solutions (SRNS) recently celebrated science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM)-based opportunities in rural communities at the [Dreams, Imagination and Gift \(DIG\) STEM Festival](#) in Williston, South Carolina.

DIG creates educational opportunities to underserved communities in the Central Savannah River Area (CSRA) while providing a safe environment that enriches and engages the community's youth. Through mentorship, recreation and community involvement, DIG impacts over 540 students annually and partners with businesses and corporations to promote local development.

"We hope to encourage children to believe that big dreams can be achieved in small places," said Steven Brown, President and Co-Founder of DIG. "By establishing the pipeline from grades one through 12, we notice more kids growing into well-paid, established and successful careers in STEM."

With over 1,700 people in attendance, the 2023 DIG STEM Festival showcased dozens of regional exhibitors who provided hands-on activities, live performances, interactive demonstrations and family-oriented STEM entertainment for many in the community. Parents were able to learn the importance of providing STEM opportunities in their child's life and the potential career opportunities available.



Cindy Hewitt, SRNS Education Outreach Specialist, leads a gundrop dome building activity which educates children and parents about the engineering design process to ensure stability of structures.



Ember Landers, from the Aiken High School robotics team, M'Aiken Magic, watches as a young DIG STEM Festival attendee operates a robot built by Landers for the 2022 VEX robotics competition.

"The DIG event provides a great opportunity to show students how their personal strengths and hobbies can cross over into a math and science career path," said Cindy Hewitt, SRNS Education Outreach Specialist. "Our kid-friendly science activities help us connect with parents and students while introducing them to SRNS and future opportunities in the field of math and science."

Brown hopes to spread the impact of his organization across multiple counties which will require additional funding from local corporations. "We can't accomplish our mission without support from organizations like SRNS who serves as the model and key sponsor for DIG STEM," said Brown. "Collaborations like this help us bridge the gap with big industries so that our small community has the same educational experiences as highly populated cities in South Carolina."