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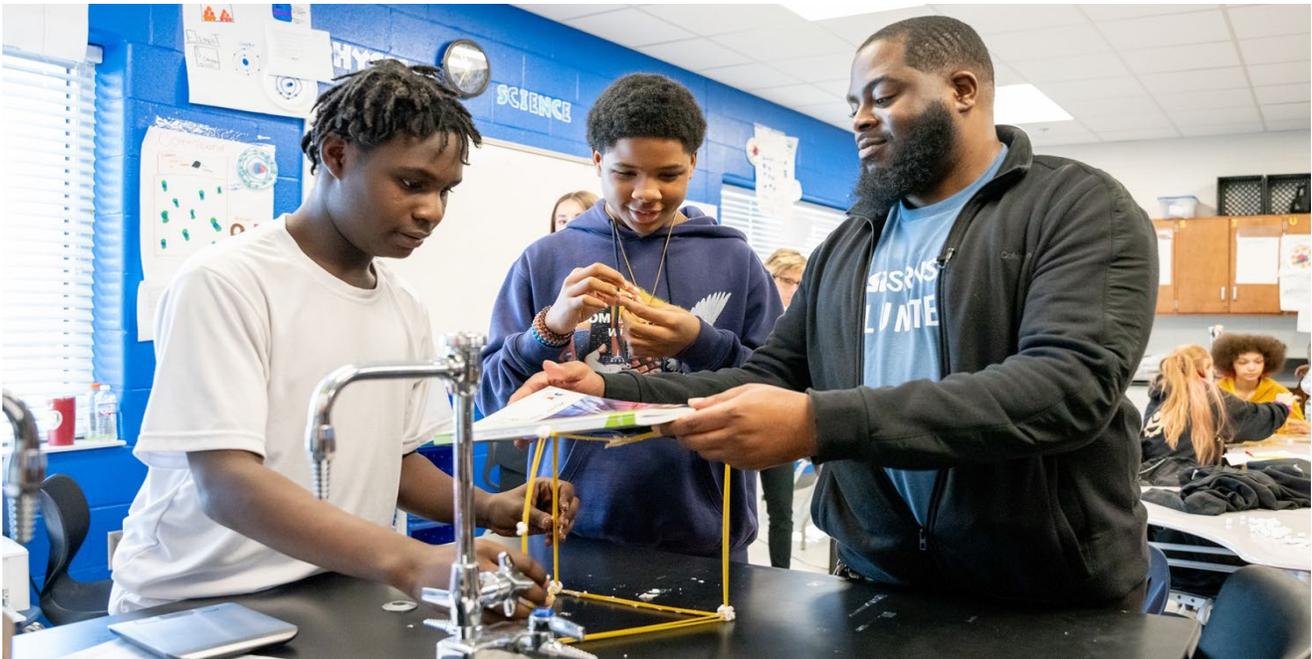
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For Immediate Release

Over 1,400 students ‘Discover Engineering’ with SRNS volunteers

AIKEN, S.C. – (February 28, 2024) – During the week of Feb. 2-9, Savannah River Nuclear Solutions (SRNS) engineers helped Central Savannah River Area middle school students “Discover Engineering.” As part of the celebration, 40 engineers led 1,484 students through 72 hands-on activities.

Formerly known as “Engineering Teach-Ins,” “Discover Engineering” highlights how engineering impacts the world from the perspective of engineers. Since the outreach program’s start in 2008, Savannah River Site (SRS) volunteers have gone into classrooms to share thousands of hours of science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) experiences with more than 30,000 students.



Savannah River Nuclear Solutions Engineer and volunteer Terry Wilder, right, assists Murphey Middle School students Tyrrell Yeldell, left, and Kelvon Williams with the “Leaning Tower of Pasta” activity, which focused on design engineering techniques.

“This is a major opportunity to expose students to the world of engineering,” said Taylor Rice, SRNS Education Outreach Specialist. “Our partnership with local schools continues to spark interest in our most-needed scientific and technical careers. It supports a growing and viable workforce.”

SRNS Engineer Terry Wilder volunteered at Murphey Middle School ([MMS](#)) and led an activity called “Leaning Tower of Pasta,” teaching students the importance of structural design engineering.

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“I truly enjoy connecting with the next generation of future leaders,” said Wilder. “Engineering is a promising career option in a world where students tend to idolize professional athletes, celebrities and social media influencers. These activities show students key elements that we look for in our future engineers and that this career could be the perfect fit for them.”

Tyrrell Yeldell, an eighth grader at the school, noted how critical engineers are to building safety. The event also inspired him to consider a computer engineering career.

“Although my group struggled to build a spaghetti structure that could withstand the pressure of the textbooks, I realized how important engineers are to the world and the safety of buildings all around us,” Yeldell said. “I love Minecraft and working with computers. Terry showed me how I can transform these talents into a computer engineering career.”

In conjunction with [National Engineers Week](#), the demonstrations are part of [DiscoverE](#), which celebrates the contributions of engineers world-wide. SRNS volunteers focused on engineering degrees, average salaries, recommended courses, extra-curricular activities, and other ways students can plan for early success.

Tanya Redic, a science instructor at MMS, was amazed at the opportunities SRNS has provided local schools since becoming a science teacher nearly 20 years ago.

“This program is the engine that will drive my students in the right direction to become future scientists, engineers and mathematicians,” said Redic. “SRS is making a difference and helping students pursue bigger dreams.”

Students benefit from a wide variety of demonstrations that include: “Straw Rockets,” “Paper Airplanes,” “Building Contests” and “Protect the Pringle.” These activities focus on the design, construction, testing and redesign that often occurs in engineering occupations.

“Middle school is the time for students to learn about the many disciplines in the world of engineering and build a solid foundation in science and math,” said Katrina Phoenix, SRNS Engineer and volunteer at [New Ellenton Middle STEAM Magnet School](#). “My goal is to help students define their ‘why’ so they will have a clearer path to success.”

SRNS Education Outreach provides a variety of science and engineering outreach programs with the goals of drawing interest in STEM and improving education in the local community. For more information about these programs, click [here](#).

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Savannah River Nuclear Solutions Education Outreach Specialist Taylor Rice assists Murphey Middle School students in building a structure made from spaghetti and marshmallows.

Savannah River Nuclear Solutions, a Fluor and HII partnership company, is responsible for the management and operations of the Department of Energy's Savannah River Site, located near Aiken, South Carolina.

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