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For Immediate Release

SRNS Engineers share expertise with students during SRS tour and job shadow opportunity

AIKEN, S.C. – (February 15, 2024) – Fifteen Aiken County Public School District (ACPSD) high school students recently completed job shadow experiences with Savannah River Nuclear Solutions (SRNS) leadership, Engineers, and Education Outreach personnel to get an inside look at engineering, facilities and career opportunities at the Savannah River Site (SRS).



Aiken County Public School District students test out a mock glovebox during a tour of the Waste Solidification Building (WSB) at the Savannah River Site.

“My hope is for students to walk away from today feeling confident in pursuing a career in engineering,” said Kim Mitchell, Education Outreach Program Lead for SRNS, the Site’s managing and operating contractor. “National Job Shadow Day and National Engineers Week created a perfect opportunity for our engineers to expose students to the different disciplines of engineering in a real-world setting. This experience will bring the next generation of future leaders right back through our gates.”

Students toured the Waste Solidification Building (WSB), which was designed and built as a nuclear facility and repurposed for tours and training. During the tour, SRNS leaders stressed the importance of workplace, public and environmental safety in their overview of SRS. SRNS Engineering Managers Carla

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Wheeler and Will Cosey highlighted the [SRS Apprenticeship School](#), [SRNS Internship Program](#) and additional workforce opportunities for graduating seniors interested in engineering.

“We are constantly addressing staffing concerns in engineering and gearing up to build a sustainable and qualified workforce to support our national security missions,” said Rich Zaharek, SRNS Chief Engineer and Nuclear Safety Officer. “Our organization supports all aspects of SRS missions and it is incredibly important for students to see their potential in different engineering disciplines.”



Savannah River Nuclear Solutions personnel led the WSB tour that focused on the safety design features of the facility and roles of engineering within a built environment.

The ACPSD selected students from Midland Valley High School, South Aiken High School, Aiken High School, Silver Bluff High School, and Aiken Scholars Academy to participate based on their interest in a four-year degree program involving STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math).

SRNS Director of Engineering Technical Services Eric Johnson served as a mentor and educator, leading students through the WSB facilities, while discussing career pathways at the Site.

“Hiring, developing, and maintaining engineers is critical to the future of SRS,” said Johnson. “We have a great deal of talent in the local community and recruiting that talent starts with helping students understand their interests and the endless STEM opportunities that exist across the Site.”

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Johnson's son, Tyler, was one of the attending students from South Aiken High, who has an interest in mechanical engineering. "My dad has always pushed me to pursue engineering because of the opportunity and variety of work on a day-to-day basis," said Tyler. "After seeing the Site for myself today, I can imagine myself following in his footsteps and joining this workforce."

"In my 23 years at SRS, I have witnessed many young engineers begin their career with this company," continued Johnson. "The thought of my son joining the ranks to support our national security mission is exciting, especially knowing that he can carry on our contributions and legacy in engineering."

For more information about SRNS Education Outreach programs, click [here](#).

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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