

● JUNE 2023

SAVANNAH RIVER NUCLEAR SOLUTIONS



SRNS Today



Run, Hide, Fight

Site Emergency Response Organization completes successful active shooter exercise



SCAN ME
to connect with
our social media

This month

Mobile training laboratories • Summer safety campaign • Family scholarships • Mini grants



Welcome

to the June 2023 edition of

SRNS Today

Stuart MacVean
SRNS President and CEO

On the cover

Several emergency response controllers and evaluators, among others, carefully watch as SRS Fire Department personnel quickly respond to treat the mock wounded during a recent active shooter exercise at the Site.

The safety and security of our employees is SRNS' number one priority. This has been said a million times but will always bear repeating. One of the important facets of our robust safety and security culture is the Emergency Response Organization; this team recently put together and executed an active shooter emergency exercise at SRS. This exercise was a massive undertaking that took a lot of manpower and resources to prepare and execute. These efforts will be worth it, however, if our employees are prepared to keep themselves safe during the unlikely event of an active shooter at SRS.

SRNS is also focusing on safety with our annual 100 Critical Days of Summer safety campaign. This year's theme is "Back to the Basics: A Foundation for a Safer Future" and focuses on individual hazard analysis during this hot and distracting time of year.

Additionally, H Canyon employees completed the layup of the First Uranium Cycle process, a cost-saving effort related to the Accelerated Basin De-inventory mission. We continued our support of the community through the awarding of the annual Innovative Teaching Mini Grants Program and to business development through supporting the Savannah River Federal Business Opportunities Forum.

I hope you enjoy this month's edition of SRNS Today.



Savannah River Nuclear Solutions, LLC, is a Fluor-led company whose members are Fluor Federal Services, Newport News Nuclear and Honeywell. Since August 2008, SRNS has been the management and operating contractor for the Savannah River Site, a Department of Energy-owned site near Aiken, South Carolina. The SRNS corporate and community offices are located in the renovated 1912 "Old Post Office" building in Aiken. The primary initiatives of SRNS are national security, clean energy and environmental stewardship. SRNS Today is published monthly by SRNS Corporate Communications to inform our employees and other stakeholders of the company's operational- and community-related activities. If you have questions or comments, please contact us at 803.952.6131 or visit our website.

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COMMON ACRONYMS

Savannah River Nuclear Solutions (SRNS) • Savannah River Site (SRS) • Department of Energy (DOE) • National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) Central Savannah River Area (CSRA) • Science, technology, engineering and math (STEM)



H Canyon Facility Operators Billy Wilkes and Phillip Alexander use the recently acquired HuPerT labs to exercise their use of three-way communications.

SRNS EMPLOYEES recently acquired mobile training laboratories to assist their continuous training efforts and to strengthen their Conduct of Operations (ConOps) and Human Performance Improvement (HPI) toolboxes.

Three-way communications

- First, a message's sender clearly states their message to the receiver.
- Next, the receiver acknowledges the communication by repeating the message to the sender.
- Finally, the sender acknowledges the receiver's reply and confirms that the message is properly understood.

The laboratories, Human Performance Trainer (HuPerT) Labs, are designed to exercise accurate three-way communications and willingness of the participant to initiate a timeout when necessary. Three-way communications are one of the HPI tools used frequently in SRS nuclear facilities.

"Human performance is the product of behaviors and personal

discipline used to carry out specific tasks accurately and safely," said SRNS Senior ConOps Technical Advisor Douglas Brill. "HPI identifies specific ways to combat potential errors that can happen due to people being human. Some of these available tools reinforced by HuPerT labs include self-checking, phonetic alphabet, three-way communications and taking timeouts,

among others. The mobile labs represent another investment in our workforce going forward."

The recently acquired HuPerT labs are smaller, mobile versions of the HuPerT cabinet units that are used in the Site's Training Facility. The suitcase-sized mobile laboratories allow facilities to directly incorporate training to shift personnel in facilities, saving time and resources.

The mobile laboratory is a consistent measuring tool to drive HPI. It consists of an elaborate display console with multiple lights, switches and indicators. The equipment has six designed programs that allow errors and faults to be inserted to test the accuracy of the participants' three-way communications and their willingness to exercise a timeout. Teams of two personnel must operate the console accurately using a procedure within time constraints provided by the facilitator. If errors occur, the console generates an electronic explosion sound to indicate an error was made. If the team successfully operates the equipment using accurate three-way communications, a congratulatory sound is received.

"In EMO, we believe that you can never stop learning and practicing the skills that will help us stay safe and succeed," SRNS Senior Vice President for Environmental Management Operations (EMO) Janice Lawson said. "The HuPerT trainers will become an integral part of our Continuing Training program as SRNS continues our commitment to operational excellence."

Training time spent with the HuPerT labs will supplement continuing training improvements being made across EMO facilities.

H Canyon facility completes cost-saving system inactivation

Employees at the H Canyon Chemical Separations Facility at SRS recently completed the inactivation of equipment related to a process system used in previous missions.

The First Uranium Cycle, or First Cycle, was used as part of the highly enriched uranium blend down process in H Canyon, which resulted in low-enriched uranium (LEU) that could be used to make commercial nuclear power. The fourth of five unit operations, First Cycle separated uranium in dissolved spent nuclear fuel from aluminum, fission products and other impurities. Producing LEU was H Canyon's primary mission from 1995 until 2022, when a new mission was approved by the Department of Energy to accelerate the de-inventory of material stored in L Area.

Called Accelerated Basin De-inventory (ABD), this mission will continue to use H Canyon to dissolve the spent nuclear fuel, and then, instead of processing the fuel, it will be sent through the Site's liquid waste facilities to be safely stored on-site until a federal repository is identified.

"ABD allows certain H Canyon systems, like the First Uranium Cycle, to be made inactive, saving processing and associated upkeep and maintenance costs," said Janice Lawson, SRNS Senior Vice President of Environmental Management Operations.

The First Uranium Cycle inactivation follows the 2022 inactivation of the Second Uranium Cycle, the fifth unit operation in the LEU blend



H Canyon Control Room Operators Tyler Sullivan and Paul Gettle check First Uranium Cycle readings during its recent inactivation activities.

down process, which occurred in preparation for the new mission. Both cycles were used to extract and purify the uranium from dissolving spent nuclear fuel bundles.

"It took a lot of coordination and effort from many different departments to execute this inactivation," said H Canyon Deputy Operations Manager Sunny Somers. "It was important that we inactivated the system while we still had personnel experienced in operating it; many of the employees familiar with First Cycle have retired or moved on to other positions. Applying lessons learned from the inactivation of the Second Uranium Cycle helped prepare us to tackle the even larger scope of First Cycle."

"ABD is a better approach to spent fuel management that will allow SRS to disposition the more than 3,000 spent nuclear fuel bundles in L Basin by 2033, when the previous operating approach would have taken until the year 2060," said Lawson.

DHEC completes successful inspections at SRS



SCDHEC audited 17 underground storage tanks across the Site.

The South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) recently performed annual inspections at SRS. Both a comprehensive underground storage tank audit and groundwater compliance monitoring evaluation were conducted to ensure the safety of the public and environment in South Carolina.

All 17 of the Site's underground storage tanks containing fuel oil such as gasoline and diesel, utilized by SRNS, Centerra and Savannah River Mission Completion, were audited; testing and maintenance records were reviewed to ensure documentation was up to date. The audit, which was originally scheduled to take place over two days, was completed in only one and resulted in no findings.

DHEC also performed a comprehensive groundwater compliance monitoring evaluation on multiple Resource Conservation and Recovery Act Hazardous Waste Management Facilities, which included a facility

inspection along with a review of records. The facilities inspected included those in M Area, F/H Areas, the Sanitary Landfill and the Mixed Waste Hazardous Waste Management facilities. No deficiencies or concerns were found during the field visit or records review.

"We are pleased to have received another successful inspection from DHEC," said Amy Meyer, SRNS Environmental Compliance Manager. "Having no findings confirms that the environmental efforts taken at the Site fully comply with DHEC regulations to ensure the safety and health of the area. It is great to work at a place where the commitment the employees place on environmental excellence is evident to DOE and our regulators, and I want to thank everyone for their commitment."

"During our most recent inspection, SRS demonstrated that it is committed to operating in compliance with the extensive safety requirements enforced by DHEC," said Myra Reece, Director of DHEC Environmental Affairs. "DHEC's role is to ensure facilities such as Savannah River Site actively operate in compliance with applicable state and federal regulations, as these regulations and laws help protect the health and safety of the facility's employees and the surrounding community, including the natural environment."

How to do business at SRS

Local and national businesses gather to learn about contract process

SRNS recently supported the Savannah River Federal Business Opportunities Forum, a two-day event held in North Augusta, South Carolina. Businesses from multiple states attended the conference, which held sessions explaining the diverse and sometimes complex procurement needs found at SRS.

According to Elizabeth Harm, Executive Director of the Energy, Technology and Environmental Business Association (ETEBA), after seven years in the making, the forum definitely met its goal.

"Everyone here is very interested in doing business with SRS. And ETEBA's mission is to connect businesses with opportunities," said Harm. "Today's regional meeting was packed with nearly 300 attendees. And that's because of the work SRNS and the other Site contractors are doing. People want to be a part of it."

SRNS is quickly growing in multiple areas and rapidly hiring personnel to support their expanding missions.

"To help meet the many procurement challenges presented by a vast increase in work scope, we knew financially supporting and heavily participating in this forum would be of great benefit for us," said Lisa Tanner, SRNS Senior Manager, Supply Chain Excellence, Small Business Liaison Officer. "At the same time, we genuinely desire to reach out and help those with whom we do business – especially small and minority-owned businesses. Most of those participating in this conference are from small businesses. They are the backbone of our economy, and we put a high value on what they contribute."



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Lisa Tanner,
SRNS Senior Manager, Supply Chain Excellence



Tanner also noted that this event offered the opportunity for face-to-face communication and the building of strong, long-term buyer/supplier relationships. The forum helped SRNS identify areas of expertise among the participants.

"ETEBA helps meet the procurement needs of our organization and the needs of a wide range of subcontractors. They act as a liaison to bring us all proactively together. Without them, it would be difficult to hold this type of event," said Tanner.

"SRNS gets it," said Harm. "Several of their top executives served on panels during the forum. [Their] collective experience is impressive, and they were our Diamond sponsor. They understand the potential impact of our mission and, for the last six years, have partnered with us for the benefit of numerous businesses, locally and throughout the nation. This forum was founded at their request and will now be an annual opportunity for all."



Jay Johnson, SRNS Deputy Vice President, Contracts and Supply Chain Management, speaks at a recent two-day forum held to help businesses from multiple states understand the diverse and sometimes complex procurement needs found at SRS.

180 students earn intern spots with SRNS



(Right) Sean Alford, SRNS Executive Vice President and Chief Administrative Officer, addresses interns during the Internship Program Meet and Greet.

One hundred eighty student interns representing 59 colleges and 15 states recently earned a spot in the SRNS Summer Internship Program. The interns will engage with a variety of disciplines within SRNS, including engineering, computer science, physical sciences, business services, communications, information technology and more.

"With over 2,000 applicants, it was an extremely competitive process to be accepted into this program," said Bryan Ortnier, Manager, SRNS Talent Acquisition and Analytics. "We are excited to see our local pipelines paying off, as well as a 30% increase in the number of Historically Black Colleges and Universities represented in this class."

The SRNS Internship Program creates the opportunity for students to gain hands-on learning experiences related to their field of study while earning a competitive hourly pay and the ability to network with SRNS professionals and industry leaders.

"This is a chance of a lifetime for any young professional," said Sean Alford, SRNS Executive Vice President and Chief Administrative Officer. "I expect our interns to engage and interact with senior executives, managers and other students to leverage this opportunity to advance in their careers."

One out-of-state sophomore was impressed by the number of opportunities available working with a premier contractor like SRNS.

"My home state lacks professional experiences in the nuclear industry," said Spencer Bailey, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. "I've spent the last three weeks exploring theories and concepts of nuclear engineering, integrating myself with the team and learning how SRNS makes the world safer."

The goal of the internship program is to bridge the gap between

academic study and its application in professional practice. Participating students get a glimpse into the SRNS work environment that could translate into a full-time position at the Site.

"SRNS has grown by 20% in the last three years, in part due to internship programs that allow personnel the chance to spark relationships with potential new hires," said Ortnier. "We will continue to grow this program and provide a valuable experience that brings students back to the Site."

For more information about SRNS internship opportunities, visit savannahrivernuclearsolutions.com, click on "Careers" and then "Opportunities for Students."



Stuart MacVean engages with incoming interns during the Internship Program Meet and Greet, which connected 180 interns with SRNS senior executives and managers.

Back to the Basics Summer safety campaign kickoff

SRNS recently kicked off their summer safety campaign: "Back to the Basics: A Foundation for a Safer Future." This campaign coincides with the 100 Critical Days of Summer, a window of time between Memorial Day and Labor Day, which presents heightened safety risks for employees.

This campaign will focus on individual hazard analysis and provide employees with resources to general safety materials, such as the basic hazard control handbook. Some safety messages that will be highlighted include general safety incidents, heat stress, ergonomic awareness, hand injuries and tool use.

"This year's summer campaign is all about raising our awareness about the little everyday things we often take for granted," said Kristin Creed, SRNS Health and Safety. "We are going 'back to the basics' to educate our employees on the basic hazard control handbook and how to prevent injuries, both in and out of the workplace."

"We strive to protect our employees by making safety culture a part of their everyday lives in the hopes of getting everyone home the same way they came to work or better," said Mike Conaway, Director, SRNS Safety and Health. "Currently, about 50% of our company's entire workforce has less than five years of experience at SRS. With the increase in new employees, it is crucial to educate on safety basics to provide them a foundation to build upon throughout their careers and lives."

The SRNS Local Safety Improvement Teams (LSITs) will implement several engagement activities over the next several months, including:

- LSIT Refocus Days: The LSITs will conduct refocus meetings to recap the engagement initiatives, demonstrate that safety engagement is more than just a Behavior Based Safety (BBS)



At the 100 Days of Summer campaign kickoff, SRNS Senior Vice President of ESH&Q Rick Sprague encouraged LSIT members to keep safety at the forefront.

observation and educate the workforce on LSIT membership, roles and responsibilities.

- BBS Summer Safety Template: A newly developed BBS observation template will address trending at-risk safety behaviors. Employees are encouraged to complete at least one BBS observation using this template over the course of the campaign.
- Safety Meetings: Basic safety information will be included in monthly safety meetings, along with additional safety related games, to help keep employees engaged and educated on key campaign topics.
- Quizzes: LSITs will reinforce safety basics by utilizing quizzes on various procedures within the BBS template.

"The more our workforce talks about safety, the better we perform," said Rick Sprague, SRNS Senior Vice President, Environment, Safety, Health and Quality (ESH&Q). "This campaign will reinforce the importance of our company's safety values and help provide employees with the necessary tools for success."

SCMA honors SRNS for outstanding safety accomplishments

The SRNS Operations and Construction divisions were recently honored by the South Carolina Manufacturers Alliance (SCMA) for outstanding workplace safety accomplishments during 2022.

To qualify for nomination, facilities must have a low rate of incidents resulting in lost workdays, job transfers or restrictions. Plants that had an incident rate below the statewide average for their North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) code earned the award, with 97 industrial facilities across the United States recognized in total.

SRNS received two nominations; one was given to the operations division and the other to the construction division.

"Ensuring [that] workplace safety is a top priority is the hallmark of any successful manufacturing operation," said Sara Hazzard, President and Chief Executive Officer of SCMA. "The facilities earning this prestigious award have exceeded rigorous safety standards and demonstrated a workplace culture where teamwork and a

commitment to excellence occurs every day. We are proud to recognize these South Carolina companies and their associates for their unwavering dedication to a safe work environment."

SRNS accomplished nearly 10 million safe hours (without a lost workday due to an on-the-job injury) in fiscal year 2022, ultimately returning safety performance below the company's challenging Days Away, Restricted or Transferred (DART) rate goals for the first time in almost three years.

"We are always seeking out new ways to reinforce the importance of safety to employees and strengthen our many safety programs," said Rick Sprague, SRNS Senior Vice President, Environment, Safety, Health, and Quality. "These awards further validate that the Site continues to be a safe, secure and reliable asset, both locally and nationally."

Simulated active shooter exercise tests SRS Emergency Response

Site personnel proactively prepared for what has unfortunately become a familiar scenario by recently conducting its second active shooter training exercise, which involved more than 300 employees.

“This year’s emergency preparedness exercise involved an active shooter scenario resulting in simulated wounded and deceased personnel,” said Greg Hightower, SRNS Environmental Management Drills and Exercise, Emergency Response Organization (ERO) Group Manager. “Though this hypothetical tragedy is one we hope never occurs at SRS, the reality is we have to be prepared for such a situation. And our preparations must extend not just to the SRS ERO, but also to every one of our employees at SRS, training them to run, hide or fight.”

Hightower also explained that SRS employees need to take this same awareness of their environment and ability to quickly react to dangerous situations when they are off-site, as well.

“This was a highly realistic scenario that fully challenged all involved, which was one of our goals,” said Hightower. “Planning began over a year ago, beginning with selecting a location for the simulated attack. Easily, hundreds of hours have gone into carefully planning this exercise.”

According to Amber Rodriguez, SRNS Site Drills and Exercise Coordinator, making the exercise as real as possible was crucial to test all involved and prepare everyone for an actual emergency.

“We had 40 role players – employees who agreed to play as if they were the wounded, traumatized or deceased – for the event,” said Rodriguez. “Many were actually transported by ambulances to Aiken Regional Medical Center. Others were declared dead at the scene by the Aiken County Coroner. It was highly realistic.”

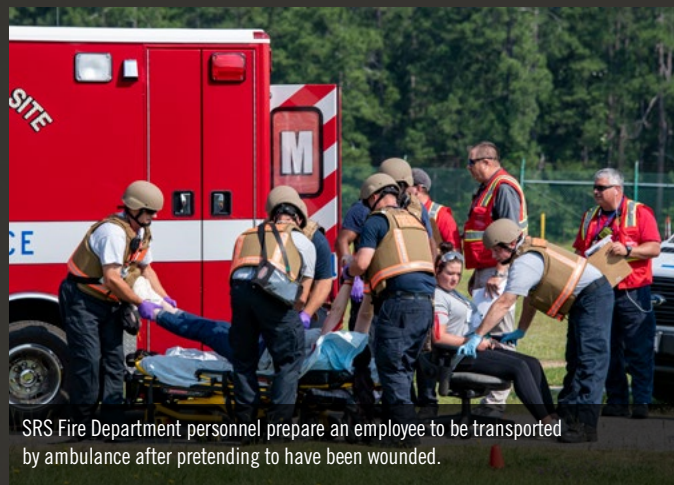
Hightower explained that the ERO, Fire Department personnel and protective force security personnel collectively worked together, each fulfilling their duties to the best of their abilities.

“The active shooter threat has emerged nationwide, and it is imperative that we continue to train and prepare our Protective Force to respond quickly and effectively to mitigate this type of event,” said Mark Bolton, General Manager at Centerra-SRS, the Site security contractor. “In these exercises, we are able to evaluate our response capabilities and be better prepared to provide a seamless integration of all Site resources, including security, fire, medical and emergency management.”

“We have an amazing team of highly-trained SRS personnel who man 92 ERO positions, each with specific responsibilities,” said Hightower. “The training for each specific position – during past annual drills and exercises – paid off, yet again, during the active shooter exercise, which included the participation of the FBI, who led the post-incident investigation, as well.”

Hightower stated that three site-level emergency preparedness drills, one exercise and several tabletop drills are held each year at SRS. From high-level executives down to employees within the affected facilities, each is trained and tested within a wide range of potential emergency situations.

“Our Emergency Response Organization is ready to take on just about anything, be it radiological, chemical, severe weather or related to security,” said Lee Schifer, Director of Safeguards, Security and Emergency Services. “We fully recognize it’s our responsibility and take that seriously. Protecting our employees, the environment and the public surrounding the Site is of the utmost importance.”



SRS Fire Department personnel prepare an employee to be transported by ambulance after pretending to have been wounded.



A police officer with the SRS security contractor collects evidence from the SRS employee who agreed to play the role of an “active shooter.”



SRS security employees work as a team to clear the building where an active shooter exercise was recently conducted. More than 300 Site personnel were involved in the training.

Celebration honors area military enlistees

A third annual enlistee recognition gala was recently held to honor area high school students who are graduating from academia to the military, choosing to serve and protect our country.

The event was hosted by Our Community Salutes (OCS) Midlands South Carolina Chapter, with the generous financial support of multiple sponsors. SRNS was the “Circle of Honor” top sponsor.

“We’re here to recognize and honor the impressively brave commitment these young men and women have made for us and also to provide their parents or guardians with community support as their son or daughter transitions into military service,” said Jim Foley, Chairman for OCS, a nonprofit organization. “All the veterans who came together to help form the Our Community Salutes Midlands Chapter experienced the same anxieties and challenges each enlistee attending today’s event now are facing after making the decision to join the military. And each had the same courage, the same guts to raise their right hand, sign those documents and take the oath.”

In addition to an impressive list of guest speakers, including the first female from South Carolina to hold the rank of Lt. General Maria Gervais,



Midland Valley High School senior Christian Carrillo receives advice from Medal of Honor recipient Sergeant Ryan Pitts, (U.S. Army, Airborne), during the Our Community Salutes gala.

the enlistees each were escorted by a member of the U.S. Armed Services, provided an excellent meal and presented with a specially minted challenge coin commemorating the occasion.

The keynote speaker for the evening was Medal of Honor recipient Sgt. Ryan Pitts (U.S. Army, Airborne).

Pitts distinguished himself by extraordinary acts of heroism at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty during combat in Afghanistan. He chose to attend the event to honor the enlistees, provide advice and create a scholarship fund for the Veteran and Military Success Program at the University of South Carolina Aiken.

He began his presentation by describing the attack he and his fellow soldiers endured the night of July 13, 2008, in the vicinity of a tiny village in a highly mountainous region of the country.

“Valor was everywhere that day,” said Pitts. “And the real heroes are the nine men who made the ultimate sacrifice so the rest of us could return home. It is their names, not mine, that I want people to know.”

SRNS Senior Vice President Workforce Services and Talent Management Francine Burroughs, who attended the event, said she was impressed by the speakers and applauded the OCS Midlands South Carolina Chapter for the time and effort each member put in to ensuring a rewarding experience for the graduating students.

“I’m proud to have had the opportunity to witness and be a part of this ceremonial gala held for the benefit of each young adult who chose to step forward and say ‘Yes, I will go. I will defend this nation.’ We, as a company, support a wide range of educational and philanthropic needs throughout the region. We hope these young men and women carry with them, throughout their time in the military and beyond, the sage advice provided by tonight’s speakers,” said Burroughs.

BlueCross BlueShield recognizes workplace wellness

BlueCross BlueShield (BCBS) of South Carolina recently presented SRNS with a 2023 LiveLifeBlue award. This award is given to a BCBS of South Carolina affiliated organization that actively encourages and displays high standards in the areas of workplace health education, health policies, benefits and more.

The BCBS of South Carolina seeks out companies who take all aspects of employee health into consideration, including financial, physical, professional and social well-being. SRNS, along with previous winners of the LiveLifeBlue award, are prime examples for other companies to follow in how to support their employees.

BCBS recognized SRNS for not only taking employee health and wellness solutions seriously, but for developing an approach to wellness that effectively engages employees as they make improvements to their overall health.

During the BCBS of South Carolina conference in April, the SRNS benefits administration staff participated in a panel discussing the award process and the mental health educational programs that the company has put in place which contributed to SRNS receiving this recognition.

“SRNS takes the health and wellness of its employees very seriously,” said Francine Burroughs, Senior Vice President, Workforce Services and Talent Management. “We strive to make sure our employees are set up with all the necessary tools and resources to encourage them to focus on their overall well-being.”



SRNS awards Family Scholarships

More than 200 graduating high school students have benefitted from the SRNS Family Scholarship Program since its inception in 2009, providing \$675,000 in college scholarships.

This year, 15 family members of SRNS employees each received \$3,000 scholarships.

“With \$3,000, I can pay for all my books or my housing for a whole semester,” said Jason Edwards, Williston-Elko High School. “I think this is a great thing, especially when you consider that SRNS is providing scholarships to so many others from many local schools.”

The winning students were graded and selected based on ability, leadership, community service and scholastic achievement.

“Each student was so impressive,” said Rich Zaharek, SRNS Senior Vice President, Chief Engineer and Nuclear Safety Officer. “It’s not just their academic excellence. These students always seem to excel in multiple areas of their lives, be it sports, at their place of worship or devoting time and other resources to those in need. They’re all so exceptionally mature for their ages and incredibly gifted. We hope many of these young men and women, like their parents, will one day join the SRNS family.”

“This gift is going to help lift a pretty big burden off my back, regarding what I’m going to have to pay for college,” said Midland Valley senior Shelby Saunders. “It’s highly appreciated.”

Saunders plans to attend the College of Charleston, majoring in biology and pre-med, with the career goal of being a medical examiner.

“I’ve always had an interest in criminal justice and law, in addition to health care. So, this is the perfect blend,” said Saunders. “When I tell others about my plans for the future, I usually get ‘Oh, that’s disgusting’ or ‘Wow, that’s really cool.’”

In an interesting coincidence, scholarship winner Tristan Troutman’s mother received a family scholarship 23 years ago from Westinghouse, the SRNS management and operations contractor, at the time. “It was exciting then, but I’m even more excited for Tristan today,” said Rebekah Troutman.

2023 Recipients

- **Karoline Bolen**, Barnwell High School, daughter of Adam Bolen, Environment, Safety, Health and Quality (ESH&Q)
- **Shea Bolt**, Aiken Scholars Academy, son of Shawn Bolt, Engineering
- **Caroline Bowers**, South Aiken High School, daughter of Len Bowers, Business Services
- **Sarah Cullen**, Evans High School, daughter of Dawn Cullen, ESH&Q
- **Sarah Diacetis**, Grovetown High School, daughter of Christopher Diacetis, Business Services
- **Jason Edwards**, Williston-Elko High School, son of Thomas Edwards, Engineering
- **Caroline Lewis**, T.L. Hanna High School, daughter of Michael Lewis, ESH&Q
- **Ireland Mack**, Silver Bluff High School, daughter of Jason Mack, Technical Services
- **Aydan Masterson**, South Aiken High School, son of Anh Masterson, Engineering
- **Connor Salch**, Silver Bluff High School, son of William Salch, ESH&Q
- **Shelby Saunders**, Midland Valley High School, daughter of Harold Saunders, ESH&Q
- **Caylee Scott**, Aiken High School, daughter of Leon Scott, Engineering
- **Isabella Shappell**, Mead Hall Episcopal School, daughter of Joseph Shappell, Engineering
- **Tristan Troutman**, Aiken Scholars Academy, son of Duane Troutman, ESH&Q
- **Micah Woodsmall**, Selah Christian Academy, son of Todd Woodsmall, Engineering

SRNS grants \$900,000 to area teachers

During a recent celebration, SRNS awarded 114 local educators grants ranging from \$500 to \$1,000. To date, SRNS has given \$900,000 to support regional educators as part of its Innovative Teaching Mini Grants Program.

“This monetary awards program recognizes the value of, and appreciation for, our local teachers,” said Taylor Rice, an SRNS Education Outreach Specialist. “Using this money, teachers can purchase equipment, supplies and resources to enhance students’ academic performance.”

More than 18,630 students from 69 schools are expected to benefit from this year’s grants from SRNS.

Joseph Cordova with Copeland Elementary in Augusta, Georgia, said SRNS’ belief in the school’s vision and commitment towards improving science education will make a significant difference in the lives of students at Copeland.

“SRNS’ support will empower our teachers to provide quality education that equips our students with the knowledge and skills necessary for success in the ever-evolving field of science,” he said. “We are humbled by their commitment to education and the positive impact they have on our school community.”

The grants support projects that enhance elementary, middle and high school classroom wish lists with an emphasis on science, mathematics and technology academic programs.

The grants are typically used to purchase project materials, hands-on kits and computer programs such as Using Maps and Robots to Explore Animal Shelters; Marvelous Math Stations; Creations and Coding Using 3D Printing; Innovative Smart Cars; Journey into the Human Body; and Designing Virtual Worlds!

All CSRA elementary, middle and high school educators from public and private institutions are eligible to apply for the grants each year. That area includes the eastern Georgia counties of Burke, Columbia, Glascock, Hancock, Jefferson, Jenkins, Lincoln, McDuffie, Richmond, Taliaferro, Warren, Washington and Wilkes, as well as the western South Carolina counties of Aiken, Edgefield, Allendale, Barnwell and McCormick.

“I think this program is amazing, and it’s also going to benefit SRNS as well because the students we’re educating may one day be their employees,” said Karen McCall with Hammond Hills Elementary in North Augusta, South Carolina. “There have been so many things I’ve been able to teach with the grant money we’ve been awarded. The mini grants are fabulous and easy to apply for.”

SRNS education outreach programs use unique SRS resources to enhance interest in STEM while supporting improvements in education. The SRNS management team believes the business, industry, government and academic communities should partner to improve educational opportunities for all local students.



(Right) Cindy Hewitt, SRNS Education Outreach Specialist, leads a gumdrop dome building activity which addresses the stability of structures.

DIG STEM Festival Creating big dreams in small places

At the Dreams, Imagination and Gift (DIG) STEM Festival in Williston, South Carolina, SRNS recently celebrated STEM-based opportunities in rural communities. DIG creates educational opportunities to underserved communities in the CSRA, while providing a safe environment that enriches and engages the 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.

“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 fields 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.”



April Barbin, a teacher at Cedar Ridge Elementary, in Grovetown, Georgia, received a special prize in addition to her mini grant award. Greater Aiken-Augusta area educators recently received grants ranging from \$500 to \$1,000, during this year’s SRNS Innovative Teaching Mini Grants Program.

Nearly 40 years of serving K-12 students

For almost four decades, SRNS and the Ruth Patrick Science Education Center (RPSEC) at the University of South Carolina Aiken (USC Aiken) have partnered to infuse a love for STEM in area students’ hearts and minds.

“Few counties in the U.S. offer an education center of STEM programming like RPSEC, which is designed to impact students throughout their academic years. Using a hands-on approach to teaching, science and math are experienced through interesting displays, features and events,” said Kim Mitchell, SRNS Lead, Education Outreach. “It is a priceless asset to students of all grades, educators and the residents of communities throughout the greater Aiken-Augusta area.”

Mitchell added that an RPSEC endowment fund contribution is an investment toward the future that yields excellent science-based education for all participants.

“It’s an amazing facility with a small staff of dedicated and highly-qualified individuals who continuously impress us. We at SRNS truly enjoy working with them throughout the year on a number of projects and programs,” said Mitchell.

Examples of SRNS/RPSEC programs

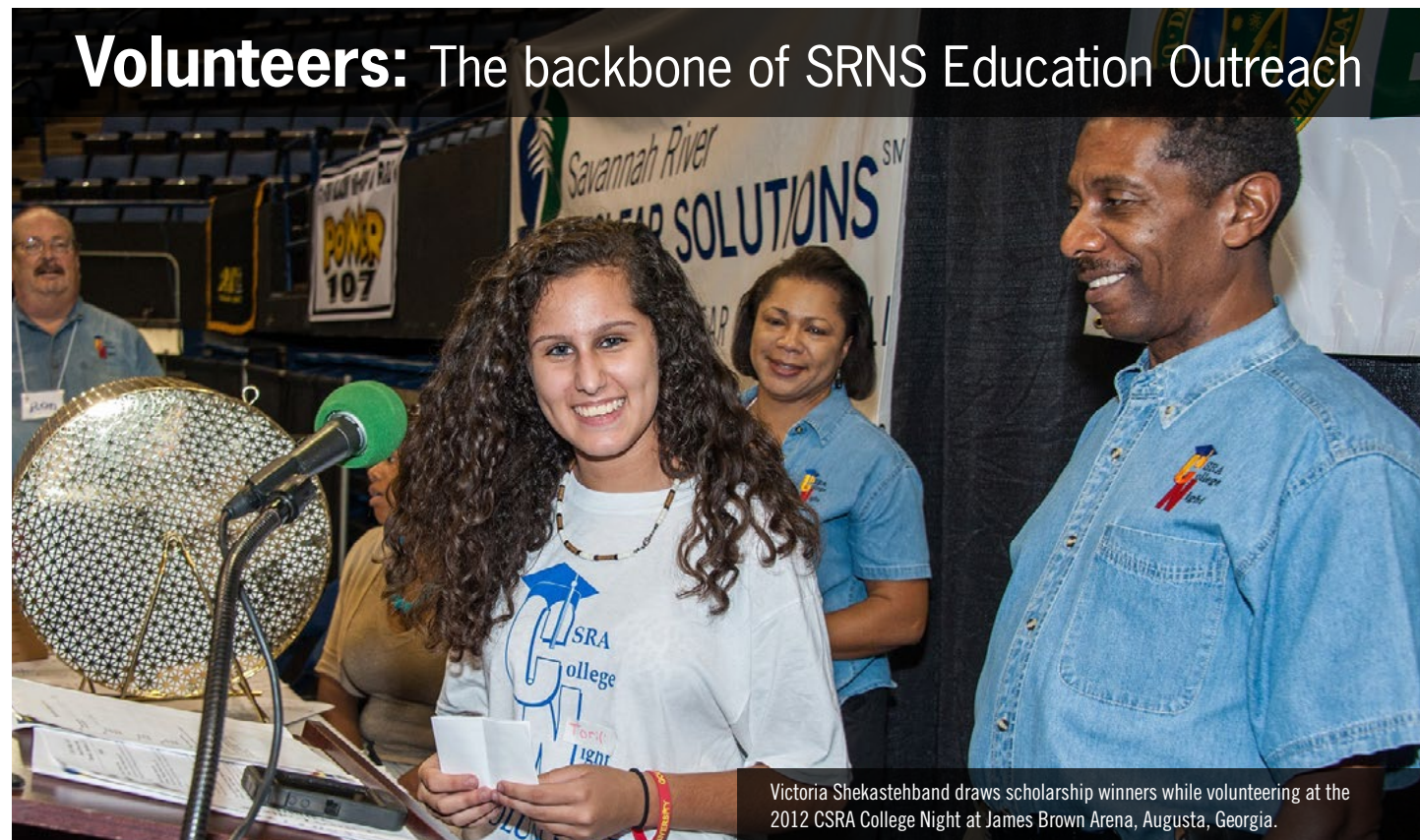
- DOE Savannah River Regional Science Bowl
- Future City Regional Competition
- CSRA Regional Science and Engineering Fair
- Science and Technology Enrichment Program
- Traveling Science Demonstration Program
- The DuPont Planetarium

Gary Senn, Director of the RPSEC, explained that through this partnership, SRNS Education Outreach can use a wide variety of resources, including USC Aiken buildings at a reduced or no cost.

According to Senn, Bob Alexander, USC Aiken’s third chancellor, and Herb Eleuterio, the Technical Director for DuPont at the Savannah River Plant (now SRS), the SRS management and operating contractor (now SRNS) originally developed the concept for a science center on a paper napkin, in 1985. Over the years, they have been integral to the history, funding and success of the RPSEC.

During 1985, the nation became increasingly aware of serious shortcomings in science and mathematics education that were first broadly publicized in the U.S. Department of Education 1983 publication, “A Nation at Risk.” A discussion about those shortcomings resulted in a commitment by Alexander and Eleuterio to use their combined resources to improve the area’s science and mathematics education.

Volunteers: The backbone of SRNS Education Outreach



Victoria Shekastehband draws scholarship winners while volunteering at the 2012 CSRA College Night at James Brown Arena, Augusta, Georgia.

Since 2008, the success and reach of SRNS education outreach programs have relied on the support of volunteers. One mother-daughter duo continues to go above and beyond to provide valuable support to educational initiatives that impact the community.

LeAnne Barkley, SRNS Senior Program Planner for Environmental Compliance and Area Completion Projects, has supported education outreach for over 20 years. Her daughter, Victoria “Tori” Shekastehband, SRNS NNSA Capital Projects Senior Operations Support Specialist, began attending outreach events with her mother as a little girl.

“I first exposed Tori to SRNS volunteering when she was in elementary school,” said Barkley. “After years of attending those events with me, Tori found her own passion for volunteering. It has been remarkable to watch her grow from a volunteer into a full-time role at the Site.”

Shekastehband was a student at University of South Carolina Aiken when she became a full-time intern at SRNS. In 2020, she accepted a job involving the termination of the MOX project and later transitioned to her current role at the new Savannah River Plutonium Processing Facility. She now volunteers her free time with the SRS United Way of Aiken County Campaign, Celebrity Waiter Night Children’s Place Campaign and the CSRA College Night as the layout coordinator and point of contact for the attending colleges.

“I never intended to follow in my mom’s footsteps but when I was given the opportunity to move into a full-service role at the Site, I had to jump on the opportunity,” said Shekastehband. “By volunteering, I get to collaborate with so many different employees, colleges and students. It is a totally different role than what I do in my day-to-day job at SRS.”

SRNS has impacted more than 507,300 students and teachers across eight counties. From 2021 to 2022, over 420 Site employees volunteered their time to share STEM-related programs with local students and educators.

SRNS Education Outreach Lead Kim Mitchell sees major potential in teaching younger generations about our sitewide operations. “LeAnne and Tori are the perfect example of how we grow our future leaders from the start,” said Mitchell. “Creating that interest early on can change the whole trajectory of a child’s life. Tori learned a lot about the Site when she was just a little girl and is now a full-time employee supporting our mission.”

There is a continued need for volunteers to mentor, teach and provide valuable insight to future job candidates. Education outreach programs include: CSRA College Night; DOE Savannah River Regional Science Bowl; Innovative Teaching Mini Grants Program; Future City Competition; CSRA Regional Science and Engineering Fair; Science and Technology Enrichment Program; and Traveling Science Demonstration Program.

“Don’t be scared to get out there and do this type of work,” said Barkley. “There are numerous ways to volunteer, and it does not require a large commitment of time. I always learn something new that I can apply in my life or job, and I cannot thank education outreach enough for the opportunity.”

Mitchell sees future opportunities and advancements in education outreach. “When you volunteer your time and expertise, it broadens your knowledge and understanding of the Site. Many of our frequent and dedicated volunteers move into positions of increasing responsibility because they are recognized as leaders both at SRS and in the community.”



Lisa Tanner

AT SRNS: SRNS Senior Manager, Supply Chain Excellence, Small Business Liaison Officer

IN THE COMMUNITY: Supporting small and minority-owned businesses in the region

THE PEOPLE OF SRNS

Lisa Tanner is a Senior Manager of Supply Chain Excellence, as well as the Small Business Liaison Officer in the Procurement Department of SRNS.

Prior to her current role, Tanner was the Senior Manager at STIHL Inc., where she retired after 27 years of employment. A U.S. Navy veteran, she holds a bachelor’s degree in Business Administration from Averett University and a master’s in Business Administration from Saint Leo University. Tanner has a Green Belt in Six Sigma, as well as being a Certified Purchasing Management (CPM), Certified in Planning and Inventory Manager (CPIM) and Certified Supply Chain Professional (CSCP).

“Small businesses make up the backbone of all communities large or small,” said Tanner. “More than 60% of new net jobs are created through the support of small businesses. SRNS understands this and puts small businesses first, and I am incredibly proud of the support we give to the local South Carolina and Georgia communities.”

SRNS is a DOE leader in not only meeting but exceeding small business goals, achieving a recent five-year average of 68.9% in contracts awarded to small businesses.

When asked what she enjoys most about working at SRNS, Tanner said, “Our safety, team and mission first culture. I really feel I am part of something critical to our nation.”

She resides in New Ellenton, South Carolina with her husband Mike and their three dogs. They spend the majority of their free time outdoors.

Laboratories, Plants and Sites Planning Summit



NNSA held the Laboratories, Plants and Sites Planning Summit, which is a valued opportunity for NNSA’s federal and management and operating leadership to come together and discuss strategic goals for the next five years and to bring new ideas on how to increase the effectiveness of the enterprise.

We make the world safer.

SRNS

Developing innovative approaches to deliver on our environmental commitments and nuclear materials challenges

Supplying products and services necessary to maintain the nation's nuclear deterrent

Securing nuclear materials to prevent unwanted proliferation

Transforming nuclear materials into assets and stable wastefoms



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