

News Savannah River Nuclear Solutions

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SRNS President and CEO Visits SRS Retiree Resource Center

Carol Johnson tours new resource center and presents corporate sponsorship

AIKEN, S.C. (Oct. 8, 2014) – President and CEO of Savannah River Nuclear Solutions (SRNS) Carol Johnson surprised some unsuspecting members of the Savannah River Site (SRS) Retiree Association with a \$5,000 corporate sponsorship for the new SRS Retiree Resource Center. A partnership between the Lower Savannah Council of Governments (LSCOG) and the SRS Retiree Association, the resource center provides assistance with health expense reimbursements related to SRS retiree benefits as well as Medicare and certain other retirement benefits at no cost to SRS retirees.

“This contribution will help us provide top quality services to the retirees who spent many years of their professional lives serving our nation as they worked at the Savannah River Site,” said John Veldman, Chairman of the SRS Retiree Association. “We can use the money to make a difference for the retirees, but I think the fact that Carol Johnson came out here, taking time out of an incredibly busy job to meet with us, is an indication of her commitment to our new resource center.”

The resource center is located at the LSCOG, a non-profit planning and development agency that provides seniors with information



SRNS President and CEO Carol Johnson (left) presents a corporate sponsorship to John Veldman, Chairman of the SRS Retiree Association, for the new SRS Retiree Resource Center.

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on aging and disability resources. The LSCOG offers services such as assistance with obtaining Medicare benefits and transportation options for residents in Aiken, Allendale, Bamberg, Barnwell, Calhoun and Orangeburg Counties.

For more than 16 years, the SRS Retiree Association has assisted SRS retirees with maintaining their benefits and pensions. Dr. John Plodinec, who is the former Chairman of the SRS Retiree Association, played a major role in organizing this retiree resource center initiative, according to Veldman.

The partnership between LSCOG and the retiree association began evolving after three SRS retirees attended a training course at the LSCOG to become certified Medicare counselors by the state of South Carolina.

“One of the retirees enrolled in the course mentioned that the association wanted to provide a resource center. Since the LSCOG is the area’s agency on aging, it seemed to go hand-in-hand together,” said Mary Beth Fields, LSCOG Aging and Disability Programs Manager. “Our executive director Connie Shade was kind enough to lend the office space and equipment. The LSCOG already offers information on Medicare, so it seemed like a natural fit, to blend into this partnership that allows us to help more people.”

The three retirees who attended the LSCOG training course are now certified by the state to provide counseling on Medicare. The rest of the 40 volunteers who staff the resource center are also available to answer questions, assist in the multi-step reimbursement process, troubleshoot problems and help retirees make an informed decision about their benefits. All of the volunteers received training on WageWorks, a Medicare reimbursement company, and My Medicare Advocate, a service that helps retirees select medical and prescription drug plans.

“It’s no small task to run a volunteer service organization, and I’ve been impressed by the number of people pitching in. I’m really glad to be located with LSCOG rather than in an independent storefront because the people who work at LSCOG can offer their expertise, and we can also avoid duplicating services. Our resource center addresses specific questions about WageWorks reimbursements, and no other agency offers that right now,” said Laureen Feinman, SRS Retiree Resource Center Coordinator. “Retiree response has been phenomenal. We have been contacted by 83 clients in our first 12 days of operation, and already had 39 appointments. The volunteers are great and have really risen to the occasion.”

SRS retirees do not have to be a member of the SRS Retiree Association to take advantage of these services. Even retirees who are under the age of 65 are eligible to meet with the center’s volunteers for help with Medicare or SRS benefit options.

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The SRS Retiree Resource Center is located in the LSCOG office at 2748 Wagener Road, Aiken, S.C. 29801. The center is open 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday, and appointments may be scheduled by calling the office at (803) 508-7033 or toll free at (866) 845-1550.

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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