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Twentieth Apprenticeship Program Begins at the Savannah River Site *Furthering the Pipeline of Prospects with New Mechanical Engineering Apprenticeship*

AIKEN, S.C. – (August 29, 2023) – Career opportunities at Savannah River Nuclear Solutions (SRNS), the managing and operating contractor at the Savannah River Site (SRS), continue to grow with the start of the twentieth apprenticeship program. The new mechanical engineering discipline is part of an ongoing commitment to create innovative workforce development at SRS and fill vacant positions.

“Apprenticeships are the way of the future and provide a new approach to recruitment in addition to the previously used long-term internship programs and co-ops,” said Carla Wheeler, SRNS Engineering Staffing & Development Manager. “Through active partnerships with colleges and universities, SRNS is developing a pipeline of talent specifically tailored to fit our industry needs.”



Michael Mitchell, Mechanical Systems Engineering Manager, right, highlights aspects of the Mechanical Engineering career and apprenticeship opportunities at the Savannah River Site with an SRS employee.

The Mechanical Engineering Apprenticeship Program is designed for college students who are enrolled in an accredited engineering degree program. Students receive paid on-the-job experience while completing approximately 1,000 hours per year – up to 2-years – on competency-based and job-related

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training. Graduates from the apprenticeship program receive a nationally recognized and portable credential from the U.S. Department of Labor and an opportunity to hire on full time with SRNS.

Tucker Rayfield, the first graduate from the new mechanical engineering discipline, transitioned to full-service at SRS in June. Rayfield took part in the apprenticeship program to continue working with the Mechanical and Civil Engineering group in Tritium where he quickly found his calling as a Design Authority Engineering.

“This was the perfect head start in my training that eventually sparked a new career path for me to follow,” said Rayfield. “The mentorship I received from Michael Mitchell and other engineers in Tritium provided real-world experiences to practice the fundamentals I was learning in the classroom. If you bring the motivation, SRNS mentors will give you the support and guidance to help you achieve your goals as an engineer.”

The University of South Carolina Aiken (USCA) recently began offering four-year degrees in [mechanical engineering](#) which sparks a greater need for local apprenticeship opportunities.

“SRNS is always looking for ways to build strong ties with universities so that we can tailor the type of talent and skillsets utilized in our workforce,” said Dorian Newton, SRNS Site Training Deputy Program Director for NNSA and EM Operations. “USCA recently established a four-year program within close proximity to the Site where students can gain real world job experience in parallel with their degree program.”

Additional engineering apprenticeship disciplines at SRS include process control technologist, process software engineer, fire protection, chemical engineer and electrical engineer. Plans to expand the program to include disciplines in civil and nuclear engineering are in the approval process.

“We have several important missions to fulfill which involve national security and environmental stewardship,” said Dr. Sean Alford, Executive Vice President and Chief Administrative Officer. “For long-term success, it is crucial to grow our avenues of employment and fill our most needed roles by continuing to advance the apprenticeship program.”

Click [here](#) for more information about SRS apprenticeship programs.

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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