News Savannah River Nuclear Solutions

SAVANNAH RIVER SITE . AIKEN . SC 29808

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For Immediate Release

Local students learn about Cold War history and Savannah River Site career opportunities

AIKEN, S.C. – (February 20, 2024) – On Feb. 9, a panel of volunteers from the Savannah River Site (SRS) aimed to inspire and motivate students from Tall Pines STEM Academy (TPSA) to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). Students toured the SRS Museum and Café Scientifique to learn about Cold War history and discuss science with full-service employees.



Tall Pines STEM Academy students complete a toy block activity at the SRS Museum to understand the precision needed to work effectively in a glovebox environment.

"The goal for this event was to connect students with five panelists who represent multiple specialities at SRS and spark student interest in STEM careers," said Cindy Hewitt, Education Outreach Specialist for Savannah River Nuclear Solutions (SRNS), the Site's managing and operating contractor. "In order to learn about a 'day in the life' at SRS, student attendees prepared questions for our panelists."

Established in 2015 and owned by the SRS Heritage Foundation, the SRS Museum serves as a primary vehicle for sharing the Site's unique history. It also highlights the important role employees play in the nation's defense, deterrence and discovery. The historical building is conveniently located in Downtown Aiken and continues to expand its collection of Cold War-era artifacts.

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TPSA eighth grader Sophia Premo and fifth grader Charlotte Premo, jumped at the opportunity to try something new outside of the classroom.

"Seeing the model of a nuclear reactor in the SRS Museum was my favorite part," said Sophia. "After speaking to real engineers, I could see myself becoming a Geological or Aerospace Engineer."

"I was surprised at the sheer size of SRS and how many different jobs are available," said Charlotte. "I love animals and would like to work with the canine unit or the ecology lab in the future."

Featured panelists included Maggie Chapman, SRNS Business Services; Terry Wilder, SRNS Staffing and Development Engineer; Rakeem Jones, SRNS Information Technology Services Engineer; Colleen Davis, SRNS Environmental Compliance and Area Completion Projects; and David Tamburello, SRNS Mechanical Engineer.



Tall Pines STEM Academy students ask five panelists about their experiences working at the Savannah River Site.

"I participate in these volunteer opportunities because I started at the Site as a student and see the benefit in influencing and motivating children at an early age," said Chapman, who began work at SRS as a teenager. "The job variety and security is the best part about working here, and I think any child interested in STEM should take a look at what we have to offer."

SRNS Education Outreach continues to create opportunities for students to match their interests with mission-critical occupations. Since 2008, the program has reached more than 500,000 students, educators, community members and volunteers. Many programs rely on volunteers to mentor, teach and provide valuable insight to future job candidates.

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"Even if I touch just one life today, it was worth it," said Jones. "I want these students to understand that they can make this a reality in the near future. I am 22 years old, the 'baby' of most work groups, but this has been such a rewarding experience. I'd recommend that other employees get involved and inspire the next generation of future leaders."

To learn more 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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