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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SRNS Hosts CSRA Lean Alliance to Share Savings Techniques

Aiken-Augusta Area Businesses Learn about Continuous Improvement Practices at SRS

AIKEN, S.C. (September 9, 2015) – The Savannah River Nuclear Solutions (SRNS) Continuous Improvement (CI) group hosted the CSRA Lean Alliance at the Applied Research Center in Aiken, S.C. on Aug. 27 with 58 people in attendance.

Representatives from nine local companies attended the event, including Aiken Technical College, Shaw Industries (Aiken Plant), SCMEP (South Carolina Manufacturing Extension Partnership), MAU Workforce Solutions (Augusta), Textron (E-Z-Go), Kimberly-Clark, MTU America, Hubbell and Savannah River Remediation.

SRNS CI Manager PK Hightower presented how SRNS is implementing a new methodology called “FIT” (Focused Improvement Transformation) into the company’s business system, deploying new tools with the help of Simpler, Inc., a Lean consulting company.



Scott King, Vice President, Manufacturing Facilitation, SCMEP (South Carolina Manufacturing Extension Partnership), addresses representatives from nine local companies at the CSRA Lean Alliance event at the Applied Research Center in Aiken, S.C. The session was hosted by Savannah River Nuclear Solutions' Continuous Improvement group.

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“We have upped our game with our Continuous Improvement and IDEAS programs by transforming the way we operate as we implement our Focused Improvement Transformation called ‘FIT’ that involves ‘A3 Thinking’ for problem solving,” said Hightower. “This method uses a one-page A3 size piece of paper with nine blocks. The nine blocks take you from your current state to what you envision your future state to be.”

According to Hightower, Rapid Improvement Events (RIEs) bring together teams to address specific problem areas. The teams are made up of subject matter experts, stakeholders and people not involved in the process to get “fresh eyes” looking at the problem. Using an 11 x 17 size of paper helps formalize problem definition, focus on the metrics, identify solutions and track results with data that demonstrates improvements are being implemented and sustained.

“A3 is an excellent tool. It tells a story of how you solved a problem. If I were to go to any business in the world that didn’t have a designated problem-solving method, it’s exactly what I would recommend. The A3 maps out how to plan, do, check and act,” said Scott King, Vice President, Manufacturing Facilitation, SCMEP.

A brief overview and information about the SRNS employee suggestion program “IDEAS” (Individuals Developing Effective Alternative Solutions) followed Hightower’s presentation on FIT. Brenda Kelly, SRNS IDEAS program administrator, discussed monthly promotions for employees and the program’s numerous national and international awards. An exhibit at the meeting demonstrated the marketing techniques of the IDEAS program.

Steven Jahn, SRNS Fire Department Technical Advisor, and Rosalind Blocker, Savannah River National Lab Protocol Officer/Conference Management, presented ideas that have been nominated to receive international awards at the 2015 IdeasAmerica Training Summit in mid-September. Jahn presented on behalf of Stephen Hall, who received a nomination for the “Green Idea of the Year” for developing an innovative technique for disposing of expired fire extinguishers. Blocker described a new travel expense process that has landed a “Team Idea of the Year” nomination.

Following the presentations, SRNS employees showcased A3 storyboard displays. The exhibits highlighted A3s completed on the requisition approval process, Information Technology’s application development process, and glove box optimization.

“No matter where you are in your Lean or process improvement journey, you can always learn about new tools or concepts at these CSRA Lean Alliance events – whether it’s A3 thinking or an employee suggestion program like IDEAS. The SRNS team did a great job describing how Lean tools can be implemented in the workplace,” added King.

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The CSRA Lean Alliance is coordinated by SCMEP, a nonprofit resource for small to mid-size South Carolina businesses, offering strategies and solutions to help strengthen leadership, develop competencies, drive growth and reduce waste.

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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