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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SRNS \$28,000 Donation Promotes Academic Growth through Robotics Programs in Region's Schools

AIKEN, S.C. – Jan. 18, 2017 – Jane Monroe has a vision, that every school in the Central Savannah River Area will have a multi-team robotics program, which will in turn enhance and grow science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) studies throughout these same schools. Savannah River Nuclear Solutions has helped financially fuel that dream with a recent donation of \$28,000 to Monroe's Clarke and Concordia, Inc., a nonprofit organization.

"Supporting local education continues to be important to Savannah River Nuclear Solutions (SRNS) and Honeywell," said Wallis Spangler, SRNS Senior Vice President, National Nuclear Security Administration Operations and Programs. "Investing in educating young people is an investment in our local communities, industry and our future workforce. We are pleased to be able to assist Clarke and Concordia with a program that really engages and excites the students."

For the last three years Monroe, a teacher at North Augusta High School, has championed this effort through Clarke and Concordia.

"Kids learn best through hands-on, investigative challenges, and I believe robotics, including associated support programs, is a very effective method to reach and retain many students who otherwise would not have found interest in STEM-related classes much less, a STEM-related career," said Monroe, founder and Executive Officer of Clarke and Concordia Engineering and Technology Initiatives, Inc. "We are grateful to SRNS for partnering with us. They understand the importance



North Augusta students on the Full Metal Jackets team prepare for the next robotic competition, this year's FIRST TECH CHALLENGE state championship in Gaffney, S.C., from left, Tanner Harmon, 7th grade; Annamarie MacMurray, student mentor and SRNS engineer; Anna Rowell, 10th grade; and Abby Rowell, 10th grade.

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of thinking outside of the box and pursuing nonconventional concepts to ensure our students academically achieve their full potential.”

Monroe explained that, at this time, 15 teams are participating within eight schools in South Carolina and two schools in or near Augusta, Ga. “We’re seeing interest, and therefore participation, beginning to grow rapidly, not just in our middle and high schools. The FIRST LEGO League robotics program is very attractive at the elementary level as well,” said Monroe. “The costs are lower and the program is neither too simple nor too complex for students at this age.”

Home base for Clarke and Concordia is currently in two locations, North Augusta High School for new high school teams and Chukker Creek Elementary in Aiken for elementary and middle schools. SRNS employee Tim Arnold recently joined Clarke and Concordia’s project implementation group to leverage his experience coaching FIRST LEGO League teams at Chukker Creek. Workshops are offered frequently at both schools.

“I’ve always had an interest in engineering,” said Grant Calloway, a junior at North Augusta High School and member of the E-404 Student Engineering Team. “I’m one of the main designers, so it’s fun and rewarding to help create a robot I envisioned in my head and see it be made into something real.”

Calloway also expressed a desire to pass on his knowledge to those just entering the program in an effort to continue the string of first place finishes in state-level competition. His plans are to graduate from college with degrees in mechanical engineering and aerospace technology.

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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