Deputy Secretary visits SRS

This month
SRNS accepts turnover of former MOX facilities • Hiring success • Live Burn training
Welcome to the April 2019 edition of SRNS Today

It’s an exciting time to be at Savannah River Nuclear Solutions.

On March 29, Savannah River Nuclear Solutions accepted custodianship and operational responsibility for the former MOX facilities. Our teams have produced and are beginning to implement the transition plan for this major opportunity for the future.

The great work that our employees are engaged in has resulted in an increase of visitors to the Savannah River Site. This month, we welcomed U.S. Department of Energy Deputy Secretary Dan Brouillette to see first-hand the progress being made on the proposed plutonium pit production mission.

Recognition continues for our company’s programs and initiatives. This month, SRNS employees accepted four different honors from national and local organizations in the areas of safety, benefits, small business advocacy and United Way participation. These awards underscore the company’s leadership and our employees’ dedication.

Even with so many site activities, our employees don’t lose sight of their commitment to the community with their participation in Project SERVE and our Earth Day celebration. We also continue to educate the workforce of the future through our education outreach in the areas of engineering and environmental sciences.

I hope you enjoy this month’s edition of SRNS Today, and as always, thank you for your interest in Savannah River Nuclear Solutions.

Stuart MacVean
SRNS President and CEO

Savannah River Nuclear Solutions, LLC, is a Fluor-led company whose members are Fluor Federal Services, Newport News Nuclear and Honeywell. Since August 2008, SRNS has been the management and operating contractor for the Savannah River Site, a Department of Energy-owned site near Aiken, South Carolina, including the Savannah River National Laboratory. The SRNS corporate and community offices are located in the renovated 1912 “Old Post Office” building in Aiken, S.C. The primary initiatives of SRNS are national security, clean energy and environmental stewardship. SRNS Today is published monthly by SRNS Corporate Communications to inform our employees and other stakeholders of the company’s operational- and community-related activities. If you have questions or comments, please contact us at 803.952.6131 or visit our website.

www.savannahrivernuclearsolutions.com
SRNS has achieved another major milestone in the progress toward the future: accepting custodianship and operational responsibility for the former MOX facilities.

SRNS President and CEO Stuart MacVean praised the team of nearly 170 contractor and NNSA employees that made this milestone possible. “This has been an incredible feat to produce and begin implementation of a transition plan,” he said. “What you have accomplished in a few short months is staggering and extraordinary.”

With this milestone, the team begins the operations and disposition phase of the transition, which is expected to continue through fiscal year 2021.

Transition activities are being carried out in parallel with, but separate from, the preliminary planning for the proposed Savannah River Plutonium Processing Facility (SRPPF). NNSA’s recommended alternative for supplying a portion of the nation’s plutonium pits is to repurpose the former MOX facility for this mission. Each of these separate initiatives—MOX Transition and SRPPF planning—plays an important role in setting SRS on a future course of service to the nation as we make the world safer.

The Transition Team’s efforts so far ranged from a multi-discipline evaluation of the facilities, to installing new locks on over 200 buildings and structures, to dealing with an inventory that runs to millions of items. The first phase of their work was the development of the Transition Plan. This was followed by the implementation phase, during which assessments were performed; facilities, warehouses and laydown areas were walked down; and records were reviewed in each of the functional areas. Facilities being turned over include the 500,000-square-foot hardened production facility, 11 support facilities and more than 200 construction storage and support structures.

An independent Readiness Review Assessment confirmed SRNS was prepared for the turnover.

Upcoming transition activities, which make up the operations and disposition phase, will focus on operation and maintenance of facilities and disposition of government property. During this time, NNSA will make decisions about the disposition of all the project’s government property, with priority for property being provided to NNSA mission activities, followed by DOE missions before other government or public disposition avenues will be opened.

As transition activities began, a large number of former MOX Services employees accepted employment with SRNS, and more are expected to follow, bringing their expertise and experience to SRNS’ continued delivery of results for DOE, NNSA and the nation.
welcoming new faces to SRNS places

We're hiring

HIRING FIRES UP AS NEW MISSIONS EVOLVE AND ‘BOOMERS’ RETIRE

Walk down nearly any hallway at SRNS, and you’re bound to meet a new employee. Since October 2014, SRNS has hired more than 3,000 employees and expects the recent increase in annual hiring to continue.

SRNS hired 552 employees last year, the most hired by the site management and operations contractor since the 1990s and has already hired more than 900 new employees in fiscal year 2019.

Newly-hired SRNS crane operators Aisha Martin and Nick Demko, both military veterans, work together to become familiar with SRS cranes as a part of their site orientation and job training.
“Our plans are to hire approximately 750 new employees a year for the next two years and quite possibly beyond that point,” said SRNS President and CEO Stuart MacVean. “We have enduring missions to perform involving nuclear materials management, environmental stewardship and the Savannah River National Laboratory, as examples. Performing these missions safely, securely and efficiently requires we maintain certain levels of staffing throughout our organization.”

Carol Barry, SRNS Senior Vice President, Workforce Services and Talent Management, explained that there are two primary reasons for this need to hire in such large numbers: an increased level in retirements and new missions.

“Like most companies across the U.S., the “Baby Boomer” generation has reached an age where retirement has become practical and attractive,” said Barry. “We have over 6,000 employees and will continue to see a significant percentage choose retirement. We expect that trend to continue for several years.”

SRNS is also in the process of obtaining the resources necessary to support the proposed Savannah River Plutonium Processing Facility. “Though still early in the development of this proposed new mission, we have a need at this time to fill openings in several key areas, such as design engineering and project management,” said Barry.

According to Barry, this has resulted in a situation where local colleges and universities are attracting students who are aware that their odds of being hired straight out of school into a stable, well-paid job are greatly increased because of this mutually beneficial arrangement.

“I think it’s important to keep in mind that we are not just filling job openings, we’re offering careers within our extended family,” said MacVean. “Which is why over the past five years, 80 percent of our new hires are local residents.

“One of our primary goals is to ensure SRNS has a diverse, agile and engaged workforce in place for the future that will positively impact SRS and the community we work and live in,” MacVean said.
SRNS was recently recognized as a recipient of a Best in Class 401(k) Plans by PLANSPONSOR. In addition, SRNS was honored by the International Magazine of Money Management, Pensions and Investments with a first place EDDY award for Conversion of the Defined Contribution SIP 401(k) Plan.

In August 2017, SRNS transferred its Defined Contribution Plan to Transamerica Retirement Solutions, which enhanced the current plan for the existing and future workforce. With this transition, SRNS provides broader financial wellness seminars, and participation in the plan has increased seven percent to 96 percent.

According to SRNS Retirement Services Manager Rebecca Ward, SRNS began preparations for the conversion of their 401(k) Plan from Mercer to TransAmerica Retirement Solutions in 2016.

“TransAmerica bought Mercer’s book of business for defined contribution plans which initiated the change to TransAmerica for 401(k) record keeping,” Ward said. “It was going to be a lot of change, so we thought we might as well add features and create improvements to the plan. It was very well received, and the conversion to the new recordkeeper TransAmerica went smoothly. We now have over 9,500 participants,” she concluded.

Pensions & Investments magazine recognized the 2019 EDDY Awards recipients on March 11 in an awards ceremony at the Pensions & Investments Defined Contribution Conference held in Fort Lauderdale, Fla. This award program recognized best practices in offering investment and financial education to defined contribution plan participants. SRNS was recognized for thoroughness in transition communications including mail, email, a website, an internal newsletter, a dedicated phone line and in-person conversations.

On March 23, PLANSPONSOR hosted a celebration to honor best in class companies providing a secure retirement for the American workforce. They recognized SRNS along with 33 other organizations demonstrating excellence in plan design, oversight and governance, and participant outcomes of their 401(k) plans.

Ward explained that as the SRNS workforce ages, the company is hiring more early- to mid-career professionals. “It is important to create a work environment that is engaging, stimulating and promotes workforce retention. Hopefully, this best-in-class retirement plan will be one of the key factors that makes SRNS the employer of choice.”
Annual live burn training keeps SRS responders cool under pressure

As the saying goes, “where there’s smoke, there’s fire.”

At the SRS annual live burn training exercise held at the Columbia County Fire Rescue Training Facility, a smoke-filled building allowed the SRS Fire, Emergency Management, Training, Radiological Protection, and Operations Departments to simulate emergency response to a fire in an SRS facility.

This annual training allows Radiation Protection personnel to gain a better understanding of how bunker gear is worn and receive hands-on training on how to remove a firefighter from their bunker gear in a safe manner. In turn, firefighters become familiar with the surveying process and movement through step-down decontamination zones. The knowledge transfer and experience gained through the drill is invaluable to emergency response at SRS.

More than 250 site employees participated in the four-day training held in March. The center’s “smoke house” simulated a real-world scenario, where firefighters dressed in full bunker gear entered a burn building, extinguished the fire and rescued a “victim” from the building. Radiological Protection Inspectors assisted firefighters in delivering the (manikin) victim safely from the contamination area to a clean area or “cold” zone for ambulance transport. The firefighters are directed to the decontamination line and inspectors are responsible for removing the firefighters from supplied air to negative pressure and assisting the firefighters out of their bunker gear.

“What you do in training, is what you do in a real-life situation,” said Steve Terry, SRNS Radiation Protection training instructor. “Our goal is to successfully remove the firefighters air supply and gear, while protecting them from internal contamination and minimizing the spread of contamination. There’s a process to ensure you are not contaminating each other. You must navigate through their protective equipment efficiently to make sure you keep them safe with a limited air supply,” said Terry.

For Aiken Technical College Nuclear Fundamentals Program graduate and SRNS Radiation Inspector Tracy Burke, the day-long training allowed her to learn from the industry’s best. “My nuclear fundamentals studies gave me a good head start in the classroom and facility drills, but today it all came together for me. Our instructors really know their jobs, and they tell us ‘why’ to help us understand,” Burke said.

Live burn training is a critical part of the instruction and certification process for firefighters. Giving firefighters instruction in a hands-on, live fire experience is an excellent means of training and constant skills updating is essential to efficient performance. SRS firefighters work with Operations and Emergency Management in the field doing daily work, but routinely in an emergency environment.

“Hands-on training is the best,” said SRS firefighter Dan Wilder. “It really sinks in when you’re wearing your Personal Protective Equipment,” Wilder said.
In partnership with the Society of Women Engineers and The Ruth Patrick Science Education Center, SRNS recently hosted middle school students from throughout the greater Aiken-Augusta area as a part of this year’s “Introduce a Girl to Engineering Day.”

Held at the Ruth Patrick Science and Education Center, on the University of South Carolina Aiken campus, each participating school selected three students who have shown an interest in a career involving engineering.

According to Gladys Moore, SRNS Education Outreach, the Introduce a Girl to Engineering program is designed to emphasize the DiscoverE Engineers Week message of encouraging students to consider careers in engineering, science and technology.

During the day-long event, the participants also had an opportunity to interact with women currently working in various fields of science and engineering, professionals from across SRS including representatives from local industry.

“This event exposes the girls to women engineers…role models for a career involving math, science and engineering,” said SRNS Engineer Jane Carter. “Since our careers in engineering have been interesting in many ways, we want to share that experience with these young students.”

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Introduce a Girl to Engineering Day activities included participating in a robotics demonstration, meteorological experiments, building “puff mobiles” made from hard candy and paper and racing to construct the tallest tower with only a single piece of newspaper.

Students attending this year’s event were from schools in Aiken, Allendale, Bamberg, Barnwell and Edgefield in South Carolina, and Columbia and Richmond Counties in Georgia.
Students from South Aiken High School recently traded their classrooms for the waterways of SRS as they participated in the SRNS Science Technology Enrichment Program, or STEP.

The students collected water samples and tiny aquatic creatures from the site’s Fire Water Pond. Using biodiversity as a measure, they evaluated the health of the water and the volume of insects and animals living there. “SRNS offers several educational programs to area students at no charge,” said Kim Mitchell, STEP Program Coordinator, SRNS Education Outreach. “However, this is the only program where the kids actually visit SRS. They get out into the woods and get their hands dirty enjoying environmental science projects.”

STEP is an SRS education outreach program which partners with the Ruth Patrick Science Education Center. In this program, students use techniques pioneered by the late Dr. Ruth Patrick, the first scientist to diagnose the health of a river or stream by studying plant and animal life. Students from local schools follow in the footsteps of Dr. Patrick to collect vertebrate and invertebrate creatures, using biodiversity as a health indicator for freshwater ecosystems at SRS.

Offered at SRS and at the Silver Bluff National Audubon Society, STEP provides hands-on opportunities through real-world, issue-oriented investigations. “For kids who are thinking about being a scientist, these experiments will help them truly understand what science is like out in the real world instead of just hearing about it in a classroom,” said South Aiken senior Maggie Volk. “I think it’s cool that the people putting all the effort into these activities really care about us and want to make this a good learning experience.”

“I’ve known for a while that I’ve wanted to be involved in marine biology and environmental science. This experience has really cemented that decision,” said Melanie Fischer, a South Aiken senior. “I’ve really enjoyed what we’ve been doing here today.”
SRNS wins five awards at DOE Small Business Forum

SRNS was recently presented five awards at the 18th annual DOE Small Business Forum & Expo. The awards recognized SRNS management of its Small Business programs and supplier development initiatives. In addition, DOE-SR and SRNS protégé supplier UDR Consulting were presented awards. Overall, SRS brought home seven of the 25 awards given at this year’s DOE Small Business Forum & Expo, held in Pittsburgh, PA.

“All credit is given to our diverse, talented workforce who make these achievements possible through their steady, exceptional performance. These multi-year awards provide evidence that SRNS is a leader in the DOE Complex in small business advocacy and supplier development. With continued solid performance, we expect continued success in this part of our business,” said SRNS President and CEO Stuart MacVean.

SRNS Procurement Director Jay Johnson received the Facility Management Contractor (FMC) Procurement Director of the Year Award for his commitment to maximizing small business utilization through policies, procedures and outreach. Johnson has created an atmosphere with a “small business first” mindset in the organization.

J. Alex Agyemang, SRNS Manager of Small Business Programs and Supplier Partnering, received the FMC Small Business Program Manager of the Year for his efforts developing and managing a best-in-class small business program. In September 2018, SRNS launched their Mentor-Protégé Center of Excellence as the next phase in the SRS plan to enhance small business capabilities and skillsets to perform various scopes of work across all DOE sites. This phase incorporates a unique approach to DOE’s program and is a first-of-its-kind across the DOE complex.

Agyemang and Cheryl Hartfield, SRNS Small Business Specialist, were recipients of the Office of Small & Disadvantaged Business Utilization Director’s Excellence Award. DOE Savannah River Operations Office Small Business Manager Paradio Math also received the Director’s Excellence Award. In addition, SRNS was recognized as Mentor of the Year and SRNS Protégé, UDR Consulting, received the Protégé of the Year award.

“SRNS is committed to the development of our partners. The Protégé Center of Excellence team strives to lead the way in small business advocacy and we believe that our program can make a true difference in how small businesses are developed across the DOE Complex,” said Agyemang.

SRNS also received recognition with SRNL Director Dr. Vahid Majidi being named Laboratory Director of the Year.

SRNS helps those in need during Project SERVE

SRNS employees recently worked on several cleanup and repair projects helping those in need during SRS’s annual Project SERVE campaign. Pictured at the Family Counseling Center in Augusta, Ga., is Keith McGuire of SRNS Emergency Management. More than 100 SRNS employees donated their day off to help with projects that will improve the living conditions of disadvantaged children, low-income senior citizens, the disabled, single-parent homeowners or specific United Way partner agencies. Team projects typically include painting, repairing flooring, putting up drywall, building fences and wheelchair ramps, replacing rotting boards, fixing faulty plumbing and performing yard work.
SRNS receives awards from local United Way agencies

SRNS employees were recently recognized for their 2018 United Way Campaign accomplishments at two events held in the Aiken-Augusta area.

During the United Way of Aiken County’s annual meeting on March 14, SRNS employees received seven achievement awards recognizing the impact they have made to Aiken County.

SRNS won the “Highest Employee Achievement Award” for contributing over $1.2 million, and the “Highest Corporate Achievement Award” for the $225,000 corporate match. In addition, SRNS received the Aiken Cup for the highest overall campaign.

In addition, three SRNS employees were presented with awards for volunteering with United Way. Caroline Reppert, Senior Emergency Preparedness Specialist, received the distinction of “Campaign Leader of the Year” and “Young Philanthropist of the Year” awards. A.D. Bollig, Security Awareness Program Manager, received the “Light Up Aiken County” award for her efforts in the 2018 United Way campaign. Dawn Moore, SRNS Loaned Professional, was recognized for assisting business, schools, state agencies, and county and city governments with their campaigns.

The United Way of Aiken County supports 35 partner agencies, striving to help give the people of Aiken County access to the building blocks of life, which include education, access to healthcare and financial stability.

At the United Way of the CSRA’s celebration on Feb. 26, SRNS was presented with the top honor, the Pinnacle Award, for the largest employee giving donation during the 2018 campaign. SRNS Loaned Professional Angela Martin was also recognized for assisting with the development and implementation of workplace campaigns across the CSRA.

The United Way of the CSRA funds over 45 partner agencies that provide vital health and human services programs.

In 2018, SRNS employees raised over $1.2 million, which includes the campaign and corporate match, benefitting nine United Way agencies: United Way of Aiken County; United Way of the CSRA; United Way of the Midlands; Barnwell and Allendale County United Way; United Way of Edgefield County; United Way of McDuffie and Warren Counties; Screven United Way; United Way of the Lowcountry; and Anderson County United Way.
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NONPROLIFERATION • ENVIRONMENT

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