This month
Innovative infrastructure • Business opportunities • Fundraisers • Education Mini-Grants

Small town kids learn how to realize big dreams by Diggin’ STEM
Welcome to the May 2018 edition of SRNS Today

The work we do at Savannah River Nuclear Solutions is unique. No other company in the world does what we do. Because we are federal contractors whose work helps keep our nation safe along with being one-of-a-kind, what we do also comes with a number of responsibilities that very few other companies will ever face.

Our most important responsibility is the safety of our workers. We excel at performing high hazard work safely, and our Operations and Construction divisions were recently recognized by the S.C. Chamber of Commerce for safety performance excellence.

Our responsibilities also include our commitment to save taxpayer dollars. We do this through infrastructure innovation that will save more than $2.6 million by using a new method to construct and maintain tanks for water used for fire suppression. We also are using a new Collaborative Innovation, or COIN, pilot with SRNS to improve spent nuclear fuel processes in P-H Canyon, potentially saving $2 billion over the life of the canyon.

SRNS also promotes relationships with other businesses in our community. We recently hosted the Energy Technology and Environmental Business Association for the Federal Business Opportunities Forum, where we connected suppliers with procurement professionals and technical leaders from several federal agencies. And, we partnered with the Georgia Minority Supplier Development Council to demonstrate to local small business owners how to obtain contracts at SRS.

We appreciate the opportunity to complete our unique work and are proud to be a part of a mission so important to our nation.

SRNS infrastructure innovation poised to save millions

SRNS is poised to save more than $2.6 million by employing a new method to construct and maintain tanks for water used for fire suppression.

The improvements are part of a broader effort to upgrade the site’s infrastructure and reduce maintenance costs, and they could serve as a model for other sites across the DOE complex.

Since SRNS began operating more than 50 years ago, the site has built and maintained the tanks by welding steel plates together and applying a multipart coating to the interior and exterior of the tanks to prevent degradation.

In recent years, the coating on several tanks failed, leading to costly repairs and rework. When it came time to replace a tank last year, SRNS considered a wider variety of methods and coatings, ultimately selecting a bolted steel plate method that uses a glass fusion process to apply a coating designed to last the life of the tank, with no recoating required.

Our responsibilities also include our commitment to save taxpayer dollars. We do this from not recoating the tank is $1.6 million.

“We are always pushing for innovative solutions to make SRS more efficient, increase productivity and reduce costs—in this case, we hit all three objectives,” said SRNS President and CEO Stuart MacVean.

“We found an approach that is not only better in the shortterm, but dramatically reduces maintenance costs over the life of the tank.”

SRNS expects the new approach will be the prototype for replacement tanks. “There are currently no other fire water storage tanks onsite that need replacement; however, this technology provides the site a timely and cost-effective alternative for replacement as needs arise,” said Rick Sprague, SRNS Senior Vice President for Technical Services.

Annual SRS emergency drill

The 2018 Annual Site Emergency Exercise was conducted on May 16 and involved a simulated seismic event with impacts to the Savannah River Site. The emergency exercise focused on H Area and involved four facilities with simulated multiple injuries, equipment failures and subsequent incidents. Initial feedback reflected a positive response to the complicated emergency with over 700 Site and off-site personnel participating.

The savings is significant. The bolted steel tank costs roughly $1.6 million less than the planned $1.6 million replacement cost for a tank similar to the existing ones onsite. The life-cycle savings from not recoating the tank is $1.6 million.

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 803.952.9584 or visit our website.
SRNL, Clemson appoint joint faculty member for environmental remediation

SRNL and Clemson University have appointed Dr. Brian Powell to a joint faculty position to advance research on environmental remediation and radioactive waste disposal. In this position, Dr. Powell will use geochemical modeling as well as laboratory and field experiments to predict how radionuclides will behave in natural and engineered environments and build tools for remediation and waste disposal.

“We are pleased to welcome Dr. Powell to SRNL as a recognized expert in computer modeling for environmental remediation,” said Dr. Vahid Majidi, SRNS Executive Vice President and SRNL Director. “Not only does Dr. Powell’s joint appointment strengthen our partnership with Clemson, it gives us an opportunity to expand the impact of our research using the latest concepts in modeling.”

This joint faculty appointment between Clemson and SRNL also sets the stage for increased collaboration and opens the door to unique educational opportunities for students.

“This is an important milestone for Clemson,” said Dr. Tanju Karadil, Vice President for Research at Clemson University. “This collaboration will not only advance important environmental research, it will provide vital real-world experience for students who will lead this important industry into the future.”

“The benefits of this joint appointment extend beyond the two organizations,” said Dr. Jeff Griffin, the lab’s associate director for Environmental Stewardship. “Our collaboration with Dr. Powell promises to deliver real benefits to our nation. Through his knowledge of environmental issues and his expertise in computational modeling, we hope to accelerate the cleanup of our nation’s legacy nuclear waste while significantly reducing costs.”

Dr. Powell holds the Fjeld Professorship in Nuclear Environmental Engineering and Science at Clemson University, with dual appointments in the College of Engineering, Computing and Applied Sciences and the College of Science.

His research focuses on understanding and predicting the physical, chemical and biological processes that govern the mobility of radionuclides in natural and engineered systems. This work is important to evaluate risk posed by subsurface contamination, to design remediation strategies for contaminated sites and to facilitate the use of safe disposal practices.

Dr. Powell has a B.S. in Chemistry from the University of Montevallo, and an M.S. and Ph.D. in Environmental Engineering and Science from Clemson University.

Dr. Anand Gramopadhye, Dean of the College of Engineering, Computing and Applied Sciences, said Dr. Powell’s appointment will be mutually beneficial to both institutions. “This joint appointment will enable SRNL engineers and scientists and Brian to work closely on pressing scientific issues. It presents both organizations with the opportunity to work closely in the future,” he said.

The company was honored for achieving a commendable lost-day injury rate for 2017, which remained well below the national average.

Accepting the award for the SRNS Construction Division was Robin Howard, Local Safety Improvement Team (LSIT) Co-chair for the Project Management and Construction Services organization, and Jennifer Scott, LSIT Chair for SRS B Area employees.

SRNS has received 115 safety awards and commendations since becoming the SRS management and operations contractor in 2008.

The South Carolina Chamber of Commerce recently recognized SRNS Operations and Construction divisions for safety performance excellence, marking the ninth consecutive year the company has been acknowledged for their commitment to on-the-job safety.

“I congratulate all SRNS employees, who continuously strive to raise the bar on safety excellence, for their ninth consecutive recognition from the SC Chamber of Commerce,” said Stuart MacVean, SRNS President and CEO. “The SRS legacy is steeped in an unwavering commitment to employee, community and national safety. SRNS employees honor that history and their responsibility through their safety and operational performance.”

Forum offers guidance to subcontractors and vendors on federal business opportunities

SRS recently hosted the Energy Technology and Environmental Business Association (ETEBA) for the Federal Business Opportunities Forum at the University of South Carolina Aiken’s Convocation Center.

The event informed subcontractors and vendors of upcoming federal procurement opportunities in the region, including DOE, the National Nuclear Security Administration and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE).

“The event offered a great opportunity to connect suppliers with procurement professionals and technical leaders,” said Thomas Johnson, DOE Associate Deputy Manager, Savannah River. “This exchange of ideas and capabilities is vital to enabling DOE missions and demonstrates that SRS is a leader in small business advocacy.”

“This year’s Federal Business Opportunities Forum was a great success, due in great part to the proactive support of DOE-SRS, SRNS, and other prime contractors at the Savannah River Site,” ETEBA Executive Director Tim Griffin said. “The afternoon’s reverse tradeshow, with buyers from federal agencies and contractors, was a new event for us this year and the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. Having the support and active engagement of DOE-SRS and SRNS has allowed us to build on last year’s event and to offer a compelling and worthwhile program for this year’s participants. We hope to continue the success of the two forums we’ve hosted to date with an even bigger event in 2019.”

The fall day event featured panel discussions, with a variety of panelists speaking on procurement opportunities in various government agencies. Panelists included speakers from DOE Headquarters; DOE Savannah River Office; SRNS; Savannah River Remediation; Centers; SRNL; USACE Savannah and Charleston Districts; and the SRS Community Reuse Organization.

The panel sessions were followed by a reception and a reverse tradeshow. “Hosting a reverse tradeshow proved to be one of the highlights of the conference,” ETEBA Director of Procurement Jay Johnson said. “Engaging the subject matter experts as well as the procurement professionals provided unmatched value to our supplier partners.”

ETEBA is a nonprofit trade association representing approximately 170 companies and affiliate members that provide environmental, technology, energy, engineering, construction and related services to government and commercial clients.
Collaborative Innovation pilot to lead to increased spent nuclear fuel processing rates

SRNS has teamed with SRNL on a new initiative to improve spent nuclear fuel processes in SRNS’s H Canyon Chemical Separations Facility.

In 2016, SRNL developed a charter for a process of Collaborative Innovation (COIN) to seek ways for technology to be developed and deployed to make “game-changing” improvements in production rates, safety and quality. The COIN pilot was designed to investigate improvements that could increase spent nuclear fuel processing rates by 50 percent. H Canyon is the only operating, production-scale, radiologically shielded chemical separations facility in the U.S. Uranium is recovered from spent nuclear fuel through a complex chemical process, in which fuels are dissolved and run through extraction cycles that remove impurities present in the fuel. During this process, nuclear regulations require samples of the uranium solution be tested periodically to ensure the proper concentration of uranium. One of the ways the COIN team has identified improvement is to use online monitors (OLMs) rather than manual sampling.

“Phase I will include designing and installing OLMs at eight locations where the infrastructure to support them is already in place; completing the design and installing the OLMs; and designing and fabricating a mock sampler and analyzer,” said Dr. Ed Sadowski, an SRNL/CORR team member. “These measure the solution real-time instead of an operator having to physically pull a sample and take it to the Analytical Laboratory for testing. This will save both time and money.”

Another COIN recommendation was to reduce the number of samples submitted to the SRNL Analytical Laboratory during normal process operations by taking advantage of the inherent H Canyon chemical process, physics and chemistry. For example, uranium isotopes only need to be measured after mixing solutions of varying isotopes and not in every tank (as they once were), since H Canyon’s chemical processes cannot alter the uranium isotopes.

In addition to the COIN recommendations, another initiative is to find alternative methods to the currently used thermal ionization mass spectrometer (TIMS), which provides uranium concentration and isotopic measurements. TIMS is nearing the end of its service life and is very expensive to replace. The COIN implementation team identified several alternative methods that will provide concentration and isotopic measurements with enough accuracy for H Canyon’s needs.

“This initiative will cost $13 million in initial investment to install the online monitoring capabilities, but could result in approximately $2 billion in savings over the life of the Canyon,” Sadowski said. “The COIN team will continue to engage in the implementation of the recommendations to evaluate opportunities for efficiency improvement.”

The initiative will be implemented in three stages:

**Phase I** will include evaluating the use of online monitors (OLMs) at five locations where the infrastructure to support them is already in place; completing the design and installing the OLMs; and designing and fabricating a mock sampler and analyzer.

**Phase II** will include completing the design and installing OLMs at eight locations that do not have existing infrastructure support and manufacturing and implementing the use of sample pulse height analyzers, an instrument used to sort electrical pulses generated by photons, which then routes the different energy pulses to the correct scaler where a count is recorded.

**Phase III** will include designing and installing OLMs at eight additional locations without existing infrastructure, and designing, installing and implementing the use of sample pulse height analyzers, an instrument used to sort electrical pulses generated by photons, which then routes the different energy pulses to the correct scaler where a count is recorded.

The first stage is estimated to be complete by the end of fiscal year 2018, with the entire initiative implemented by 2021.

More than 30 organizations came together recently to provide a day of hands-on experimenting and learning at the third annual DIG (Dreams, Imagination & Gift) STEM Festival in Williston, S.C. Hundreds of area students spent hours browsing through high tech machines and other intriguing devices found at dozens of exhibits and interactive demonstrations in this science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) wonderland.

Steven Brown, President and Founder of DIG, sees the success of a STEM festival in a rural area like Barnwell County as the proof that his vision is now reality. “It’s all about exposing small town kids and teenagers to STEM,” said Brown. “This festival gives them the opportunity to get excited and motivated about potential STEMasylum degrees and careers. We want them to believe in themselves, and participating in this festival can be a catalyst, an important step in that direction.”

In addition to SRNS, the list of exhibitors featured many well-known companies and organizations including Boeing, GE Power, Ruth Patrick Science Center, SC EEG and the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division.

One clever demonstration featured a large plexiglass box filled with several rows of set mouse traps, each with one ping pong ball balanced on top. On the count of three, five students each dropped one ping pong ball through holes in the clear plastic top, setting off a rapid and impressive spray of ping pong balls flying in all directions. The process provided an easy to understand example of what happens inside a nuclear power reactor when it’s operating.

SRNS structural engineer and former Williston resident Shawn Carey said, “It’s great to see the kinds of people I grew up with out here learning about the benefits of STEM, academically and as a part of potential future careers with local companies like those found at the Savannah River Site.”

The day also featured a STEM competition, play equipment, live music and the Roper Mountain Science Show from Greenville, S.C.

“It’s a lot of fun here,” said Jordan McDonald, a sixth-grade student from Aiken’s Tall Pines Academy. “There’s so many things to play with and make, lots of hands-on stuff. Though the slime was my favorite activity. It’s so much fun to make, but really messy.”

According to Brown, DIG is a tax exempt, nonprofit organization whose goal is to motivate, mentor, encourage and enable rural children and youth to excel and make their dreams and imaginations a reality. “DIG seeks to provide a service to the community to aid in social and economic growth and development,” said Brown. “DIG aims to establish a sense of community pride and ownership by providing an organization that gives residents an opportunity to play a major role in developing their own youth. Statistics show that when a community is improved by volunteering, residents feel secure, personally invested and tend to do more for the well-being of the community.”

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EFCOG at SRS

Energy Facility contractors gather at SRS to discuss common goals

SRS recently hosted two focus groups from the Energy Facility Contractors Group (EFCOG) for their annual spring meeting. The EFCOG is comprised of leaders from DOE contractors from across the nation. The group promotes excellence in all aspects of operations by integrating members from all DOE facilities and allowing them an opportunity to exchange information on lessons learned that may benefit members at other DOE sites. Their working groups focus on project delivery, safeguards and security, safety, training and waste management.

The group’s recent visit to SRS included the Worker Safety and Health Subgroup and the Quality Assurance Subgroup. The EFCOG was established in 1991 to promote excellence in all aspects of DOE and NNSA facilities in a safe, environmentally sound, efficient and cost-effective manner.

According to Mary Flora, SRNS Environmental Stewardship and Health Subgroup and the Quality Assurance Subgroup. The EFCOG Quality Assurance Subgroup, which focuses on Contractor Assurance, Safety Culture, Human Performance Improvement and Operating Experiences.

Delivering excellence in all aspects of our work to support our important national missions is the overriding priority for all DOE contractors—by working together, and in partnership with DOE, we are better positioned to address potential challenges before they arise, resulting in successful continuity of operations,” said Darlene Murdoch, SRNS Director of Operational Excellence and Chair of the EFCOG Quality Assurance Subgroup.

During their visits to SRS, the subgroups focused on a diverse range of nuclear safety topics, which combine to deliver a rigorous business model that serves as the foundation for safe and secure nuclear operations at all DOE facilities.

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Supplier Conference offers big opportunities to small businesses

SRNS, partnering with the Georgia Minority Supplier Development Council (GMSDC), recently demonstrated to local small business owners how to obtain contracts at SRS that would lead to the purchase of goods and services by SRNS personnel. According to SRNS Procurement Director Jay Johnson, the decision to pursue contracts at SRS can be imposing. To help remove potential barriers, SRNS Procurement officials have a process in place to coach and lead small businesses to a potentially long-term, successful relationship with buyers at SRS.

During the half-day conference, attendees were also offered one-on-one time with SRNS buyers to obtain answers to questions and gather advice directly related to each vendor’s specific needs.

“Today’s event has been exceptional,” said Carla Doleman, Chief Executive Officer, DJS Chemical, Inc. “I’ve been impressed with the depth of information provided because it really takes a lot of time, money and vested interest to grow small businesses. We received a detailed roadmap as to what they are looking for now and in the future, and that’s a rare thing.”

For SRNS Procurement, being an advocate for the small business community included holding 11 conferences, fairs and expos last year. “We’re on pace to offer even more this year,” said Johnson.

“As anyone knows, particularly in construction, contracting with the government is a very detailed process,” said Teresa Bright, Managing Partner, GPK, LLC, a construction services firm based in Augusta, Ga. “Just in terms of actually meeting with the buyers, getting to these decision makers has been extremely beneficial.”

“I’d also like to offer my thanks to the GMSDC for working with a South Carolina company to help Georgia minority business enterprises. They really try to ensure small businesses are successful,” added Bright.

LEAP Management Social

Dr. Vadid Majid, SRNS Executive Vice President and SRNL Director, talks to LEAP members Joshua Bowles (left), Amanda Bressingham, Ira Stewart and Johneatha Irby during the annual LEAP Management Social on May 10 at West Lake Country Club in Augusta, Ga. The event was geared to allow SRNS LEAP (Leaders Emerging Among Professionals) members to meet SRNS managers and senior executives.

LEAP is a developmental program for professionals in the early stages of their career. With a focus of business awareness specific to SRNS, LEAP provides early-career professionals with networking, professional development and community outreach events, as well as increased visibility with management. The organization, established in October 2010, is led by a steering committee that coordinates monthly events for its 450 members.

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AMP gathers for fifth annual Leadercast event

On May 4, more than 150 SRNS executives, senior leaders, work group managers and Aspiring Mid-Career Professionals (AMP) members gathered at Cedar Creek Church in Aiken, S.C., for the fifth annual Leadercast live streaming event. “The focus of this year’s event was to equip us with the tools and knowledge necessary to lead change in our careers, our company and our community,” said Katie Heroux, AMP President and Fellow Program Manager at SRNL. “Before leading others effectively, you must first learn how to lead yourself. You must walk the walk. It’s like flight attendants stating, ‘Please remember to secure your own oxygen mask before helping others.’”

Each table was sponsored by a senior manager who led discussions about the Leadercast content, which was themed “Lead Yourself.” This format encouraged attendees to identify their own core values and recognize limiting beliefs that may hinder success. The leadership event was broadcast live from Atlanta, Ga., to hundreds of off-site locations around the world. Leadercast is the largest one-day leadership event in the world and brings together some of the most recognized and respected global leaders to create a leadership experience unlike any other. The local viewing was organized and hosted by AMP. Sponsors of Leadercast include: SRNS, AMP serves SRNS full-time employees who have at least seven years of work experience, offering professional development, networking and community outreach opportunities.

Annual mini-grants event like ‘Christmas morning’ for area educators

More than 100 educators from the greater Aiken-Augusta area recently gathered to be honored and receive SRNS Innovative Teaching Mini Grants ranging from $500 to $1,000. Since 2009, SRNS has donated more than $500,000 to enhance local education through this annual event. Funding for the grants is provided through the parent companies of SRNS (Fluor Federal Services, Newport News Nuclear and Honeywell).

The program recognizes and supports projects that enhance elementary and middle school science, mathematics and technology programs. More than 200 grant proposals were submitted by teachers from schools located in the counties of Aiken, Barnwell, Richmond and Columbia. “The grant proposals we receive annually meet important needs within our schools where funding sometimes falls short,” said Stuart MacVean, SRNS President and CEO. “It’s not unusual for these passionate and highly dedicated teachers to use their own resources to purchase supplies and educational tools. Where we can, we want to help, working in partnership with local school administrators.”

Typically, the grants are used to purchase materials and hands-on kits such as: Making a Splash in Learning with Underwater Robotics; Fundamental Fractions; Limitless Learning in 3-D; Raising Awareness of Our Environment; and Creating “Tasty Treats” with Math and Science. “I think this is a great service that SRNS offers to the community,” said Emily Hopkins, Meriwether Elementary, North Augusta, S.C. “I know that teachers really appreciate it. MiniGrants provide so many opportunities for the students, cultivating that love and passion for learning and science.”

“This is always a special event for us,” said Gladys Moore, SRNS Education Outreach. “Rewarding these hardworking, selfless teachers is important to us. It’s almost like Christmas morning for them.”

Celebrity Waiter raises $30K

SRNS “celebrities” served over 200 employees and guests at the annual Celebrity Waiter Night on May 7. The event raised $30,000 for Children’s Place Inc., a United Way of Aiken County agency that provides therapeutic intervention, bus transportation and daycare for over 200 children in need as well as support groups and parenting classes to caregivers. Pictured above: Eloy Saldivar, SRNS Environmental Management Operations Programs, (left) and Freddie Grimm, Director of SRNS Business Planning and Integration, pose for a photo during the event.

$32K raised by SS golf tourney

SRNS Site Services (SSI) can claim another successful year for their 15th annual United Way Golf Tournament, which achieved a record $32,422 for local United Way agencies. This year’s tournament, held May 11 at Mount Vintage Golf Club in North Augusta, S.C., featured 168 players on 42 teams from SRNS, Savannah River Remediation LLC, DOE-Savannah River and CenterGroup, LLC, as well as local businesses. According to Kevin Heath, manager of SS Fleet and Fuel and annual United Way Golf Tournament Chair, the tournament has raised over $275,000 over the past 15 years. “This is our biggest tournament yet, and it’s only possible through the generosity of our 50 plus sponsors and our dedicated players and volunteers,” said Heath.
INNOVATION • DEFENSE
NONPROLIFERATION • ENVIRONMENT

SRNS

Savannah River Nuclear Solutions
We make the world safer.