

News Savannah River Nuclear Solutions

SAVANNAH RIVER SITE • AIKEN • SC 29808

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SRS Education Outreach Goes Virtual, Impacting Thousands

AIKEN, S.C., August 18, 2021– In just one month alone this year, Savannah River Nuclear Solution (SRNS) at the Savannah River Site (SRS) provided education outreach to more than 25,000 students and 410 educators.

SRNS has been sharing its diverse science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) outreach program with local public and private schools since 2008, when it became the site's management and operations contractor.

"Elementary school through college, the statistics over the years validate SRNS support for quality education throughout the region," said Kim Mitchell, with SRNS Education Outreach Programs. "It's truly an honor to assist and serve these amazing teachers and wonderful students who are the lifeblood of our future."

To date, SRNS has provided more than \$5 million for education outreach, supporting more than 275,000 students and teachers throughout seven counties near SRS.

"We value the transformative community partnerships we have with organizations like Savannah River Nuclear Solutions, and the 12 outreach programs they provide that directly impact our faculty and students," said King Laurence, Aiken County Public Schools Superintendent. "Whether it's \$1,000 mini-grants for teachers or dozens of scientists and engineers visiting our schools, we look forward to years of continued success with SRNS."

The COVID-19 pandemic prompted SRNS to develop innovative methods and incorporate cutting-edge technology to reach students and educators, creating multiple virtual platforms for that audience.



Savannah River Nuclear Solutions (SRNS) is creating a series of videos and learning resources for classroom learning in place of traditional field trips to the Savannah River Site. Kimberly Fickling, left, and Beth Eberhard, far right, with the Ruth Patrick Science Education Center at the University of South Carolina Aiken, are shown working on the video "Wet Wonders" with SRNS employee Brad Bohr, center

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“We’re confident that virtual reality technology and web-based apps will strongly and positively impact students and teachers,” Mitchell said. “And in time, when we return to business as usual, these tools will continue to reach a much broader group throughout the region than we’ve documented in the past.”

SRS virtual field trips showcase science lessons about the site, targeting students with educational content specific to their grade levels. Some of the field trip lessons help participants determine the health of a pond, or assist endangered species, such as the red-cockaded woodpecker. Students

can also explore the inner workings of a mass spectrometer in a site laboratory. A highly sensitive piece of equipment allows laboratory personnel to separate individual components of a substance, resulting in the exact identification of each component and the amount present in the substance being tested.

“Feedback from educators and administrators affirm that the SRNS Education Outreach Program has been highly successful, significantly impacting school systems throughout South Carolina and the greater Augusta, Georgia area,” said Mitchell.

The SRNS STEM-intensive offerings include a traveling science demonstration program, workshops, tours, talks, demonstrations and other content.

Some programs test the depth of students’ knowledge and experience. They include the South Carolina Regional Science Fair, DOE Savannah River Regional Science Bowl and the Regional Future City Competition.

SRNS also offers annual mini-grants to area teachers through corporate funding. To date, SRNS has contributed more than \$700,000 to support educators in the region.

To reach local adults pursuing higher education degrees, SRNS has signed memorandums of understanding with local technical colleges, historically Black colleges and universities, and other four-year degree institutions such as the University of South Carolina Aiken.

Savannah River Nuclear Solutions, a Fluor-led company with Newport News Nuclear and Honeywell, is 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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SRNS-2021-1069



2020-2021 SRNS Education Outreach Programs Report Card Impact

Program/Event	Total
Science Technology Enrichment Program Virtual Field Trips/Science Lessons	24,155
SRNS Innovative Teaching Mini Grants - \$50,000	10,765
Traveling Science Program	3,812
SC Regional Future City	549
DOE Savannah River Regional Science Bowl	134
CSRA Regional Science and Engineering Fair	93
SRS Job Shadow	175
STEMulating Conversations with SRS Experts	5,055
Career Day/Fair	177
Educator Development/Enrichment	139
Student Development/Enrichment	410
Total number of students & educators impacted: 45,464	