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For Immediate Release

SRS Apprenticeship School welcomes six youth apprentices to inaugural program



SRS Youth Apprentices gathered for a meet and greet with SRNS President and CEO, Dennis Carr.

AIKEN, S.C. – (September 12, 2024) – This year, the Savannah River Site (SRS) Apprenticeship School has welcomed six high school students from across the CSRA to participate in their inaugural Youth Apprenticeship program. With the success of the pilot program in 2022, the Youth Apprenticeship program has expanded, providing more students with opportunities to gain early professional development experience.

The twenty-four-month program enables rising high school juniors or seniors to complete on-the-job training within departments across the Site including IT, Fire Protection and Site Training. Upon completing the program, apprentices earn a certificate recognizing them as a Youth Apprentice from the Department of Labor and are allowed to continue through the program for up to a year after graduation. After this time, students are given the option to transfer to the adult Apprenticeship Program if they wish to continue.

“We are thrilled to announce a partnership between Aiken County Public School District's (ACPSD) Career and Technical Education (CTE) Department and Savannah River Nuclear Solutions to launch an IT and EMS Apprenticeship Program,” said Kenneth O. Lott, ACPSD CTE Director and Principal of Aiken County Career Center. “Students from North Augusta High School's Dell Tech Crew and Aiken County Career and Technology Center's EMS Pathway will gain hands-on training and the skills needed to excel in today's evolving workforce, bridging the gap between education and industry.”

“This program is a unique opportunity for students to gain professional work experience while still in school,” said BooBoo Roberts, SRS Apprenticeship School Program Manager. “We interview candidates from all over the CSRA, treating this just like any other job application process. Our hope is that this program provides an invaluable experience that prepares students earlier for the workforce while still focusing on their education.”

Considered Limited-Service Employees, youth apprentices are able to earn a wage and learn valuable professional skills while attending school. Students work part-time around their studies but can work full-time through school breaks. Depending on their high school, some students are also able to earn work-based learning credit to go towards their diploma.

Savannah River Nuclear Solutions' (SRNS) Executive Vice President and Chief Administrative Officer, Sean Alford, stated, “It is important for us to intersect the workforce pipeline at three strategic junctures; engaging the unemployed, engaging the underemployed and engaging those who enter the workforce for the first time. Youth Apprenticeships are measurable and highly productive avenues for companies to engage those who are entering the workforce for the first time.”



Youth Apprentices pose for a photo with their employers in IT, Site Training and the Savannah River Site Fire Department. Pictured from left to right: Jacob Lott and Alejandro Aguirre, Jr. IT Apprentices; Elisabeth Corley and Labria Jacobs, Records Management Clerk Apprentices; Reagan Plummer and Andrew Hill, Jr. EMTS Apprentices.

When asked about his time as a youth apprentice, pilot program graduate Drew Platts said, “It was an excellent experience that helped shape the career path I wanted to take after finishing high school. The apprenticeship training team taught me the process the Site uses to keep a steady pipeline of employees to fulfill the needs and keep the Site operating safely.”

Platts was hired on as a full-time Operator at the Savannah River National Laboratory upon graduating high school, where after eight months of training, he received his certificate in nuclear fundamentals and is in the process of obtaining his full facility qualifications.

Current Records Management Clerk Youth Apprentice Labria Jacobs discovered the program through LinkedIn and decided to apply to expand her horizons and learn about different career opportunities. “I am greatly enjoying my time here at SRNS,” said Jacobs. “Coming through the barricade, the vast size of the Site and number of employees who work here was very surprising to me. The safety culture is unlike anything I’ve ever seen before.”

In order to participate in the Youth Apprenticeship program, students must first obtain permission from a parent/guardian and consent to undergo a soft background check. Students are also not allowed to perform radiological work or handle sensitive nuclear information.

To qualify for the Youth Apprenticeship Program, students must meet the following criteria:

- 16 Years of age or older
- U.S. Citizen
- Junior or Senior in High School, on track to completing a diploma
- A valid state driver’s license
- Personal reliable transportation
- Ability to work part-time during the day from Monday-Thursday
- Must successfully complete Savannah River Site General Employee Training and substance abuse processing

For more information about programs offered through the SRS Apprenticeship School, visit: https://www.srs.gov/general/outreach/apprenticeship/apprenticeship_school.htm.

SRNS-2024 -1515