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\$75,000 Donation for Radiation Protection Program Raises SRNS Support of Aiken Technical College to \$500,000

AIKEN, S.C., Sept. 10, 2019 – Savannah River Nuclear Solutions (SRNS) continues to recognize the value Aiken Technical College (ATC) offers the Savannah River Site (SRS), local industry and area students. A recent donation of \$75,000 reinforces the partnership established between the two organizations 10 years ago.

The funding will be used to purchase hardware and software for two simulator systems involving the detection of and proper response to potential radioactive contamination of workers or equipment, all part of the ATC radiation protection technology program.

“Radiation protection personnel are without a doubt the frontline for nuclear safety,” said David Deal, ATC Instructor, Radiological Protection Technology. “There’s an old adage that says you need to practice like you play. If I can make it real to them through simulation, they’re going to be better technicians.”

Training simulators reveal deficiencies in each student and strongly reinforce the correct response to routine, as well as potentially hazardous situations. “Working within real world conditions creates learned behavior that will automatically trigger the proper response later, when they are on the job,” Deal explained. “That’s in the best interest of the students, and that’s what employers greatly value.”



SRNS President & CEO Stuart MacVean (left, center) presents \$75,000 to ATC President Dr. Forest Mahan to purchase additional high-tech equipment for the college's Radiological Protection Technology (RPT) Program. RPT students Heyden Bradley (left) and Lance Rey assist.

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One of the systems uses a mannequin and a software controlled visual display. The instructor can demonstrate proper technique and then allow students to practice on the mannequin, performing proper surveys of personnel for contamination. The results of both the practice and evaluation sessions are provided to the student and the instructor.

“We understand the need for Radiation Protection Technology graduates to help fill the employment pipeline at the Savannah River Site,” said Dr. Forest E. Mahan, ATC President. “To fill that pipeline, we need to train our students on equipment that is being used out in the field and with this donation we can more effectively meet this goal.”

According to SRNS President & CEO Stuart MacVean, a significant percentage of the classes and degrees offered by ATC intentionally coincide with the skills and knowledge needed by the SRS workforce. Both organizations worked collaboratively to develop the programs. “We share a vision with ATC to help develop highly qualified graduates who will arrive on the job site having met the majority of the nuclear industry’s fundamental training requirements.”

SRNS has donated more than \$500,000 to ATC with the addition of the \$75,000 donation.

“We greatly appreciate the generosity that Savannah River Nuclear Solutions has provided Aiken Technical College over the years,” said Mahan. “It is partnerships with corporations like SRNS that help keep ATC at the forefront of providing a highly skilled workforce in our region. For 47 years, Aiken Technical College has provided thousands of area residents with the opportunity to pursue higher education.”

For more information about the Associate Degree in Applied Science with a Major in Radiation Protection Technology at ATC: <https://www.atc.edu/Study/Programs-of-Study/Technical-Education/Radiation-Protection-and-Control>

YouTube video: “A Day in the Life of a RadCon Inspector” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M2VzEBGdRHQ>

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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