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University of South Carolina Aiken Hosts American Society of Safety Professionals Safety Program

AIKEN, S.C., Sept. 2, 2020 – After years of planning with Savannah River Nuclear Solutions (SRNS), the University of South Carolina Aiken (USC Aiken) recently hosted the American Society of Safety Professionals (ASSP) Safety Management Certificate Program. Occupational safety and health professionals in the Central Savannah River Area (CSRA) who signed up for the program learned the fundamental skills necessary to successfully implement recognized approaches to safety management in their businesses.

Every year, thousands of preventable incidents (injuries, “close calls”, fatalities, etc.) occur in the workplace. With the proper safety management systems and processes in place, employees have more protection and these incidents can be drastically reduced. Additionally, the organization’s performance and profitability improve, their workforce becomes more engaged, and they gain a competitive advantage in their field.

Karen Edgington, Executive Director of the Office of External Programs, Continuing Education, and Conferences, has been pushing to introduce a safety program at USC Aiken for years.

“This program started with SRNS and I discussing the need for some sort of safety training in place on our campus. I put together a survey for different businesses asking what types of training they were looking for, and the response was that there is a significant demand for safety certificates and



Accredited ASSP safety professional Joel Tietjens taught the Safety Management Certificate Program at USC Aiken. Attendees were asked to wear a mask and socially distance to comply with COVID-19 protocols.

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degrees,” Edgington said. “I reached out to ASSP headquarters and the Augusta Chapter of the ASSP and they agreed to teach their Safety Management Certificate Program on our campus.”

SRNS Director of Safety and Health Mike Conaway, who has been an advocate of the training since the discussion with USC Aiken began, was one of the first to sign up.

“SRNS employs over 6,000 employees who rely on us to keep them safe, and we are dedicated to making sure they go home in the same condition they arrived at work,” said Conaway. “Safety management requires continuous improvement and flexibility, so I am always seeking new opportunities to enrich my safety education and enhance the existing safety programs we have in place.”

The program consists of three courses; Safety Management I, Safety Management II, and Corporate Safety Management. The first two courses were taught by Joel Tietjens, an accredited ASSP safety professional and management consultant who has extensive experience in safety and health management. The third course will be taught in September.

“We are so grateful that 20 people took time out of their week to attend this session of the program. Eight SRNS employees were in attendance, while the rest of class represented organizations such as Fort Gordon, the City of Aiken and Ambio Pharm,” said Continuing Education Coordinator Kim Steele. “Next semester, we’re excited to offer the complete program again with the addition of a course on Risk Assessment.”

For more information about the Safety Management Certificate Program at USC Aiken, contact Kim Steele (KimS@usca.edu).

Founded in 1911, ASSP is the oldest and largest professional safety organization. Its more than 32,000 members manage, supervise and consult on safety, health, and environmental issues in industry, insurance, government, and education.

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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