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**For Immediate Release**

## **Introduce a Girl to Engineering Day, March 27**

Middle-School students learn that engineering can be exciting

AIKEN, S.C., (March 22, 2010) – On Saturday, March 27, Savannah River Site engineers will continue to take small steps toward easing the shortage of workers skilled in the engineering disciplines at the tenth annual Introduce a Girl to Engineering Day.

During this day-long event, to be held at USC-Aiken's Ruth Patrick Science Center, approximately 69 girls selected by officials from 23 middle schools in the Central Savannah River Area will interact with SRS professionals who will teach them more about careers in engineering.

According to Barbara Smoak, Manager, Savannah River Nuclear Solutions Education Outreach Programs, the focus on female middle-school students is by design. "Our goal is to provide programs that will generate student interest in careers such as engineering that are critical to the success of SRS and local industries. We have a particular interest in providing this information to female students because traditionally, females are underrepresented in career fields that are science and technology oriented."

Statistics support Smoak's concerns. Ten percent of engineers are female, although women make up 46 percent of the country's workforce. Twenty percent of college engineering students are women, although women make up more than half of the college population.

Introduce a Girl To Engineering Day will include games to help girls discover where their interests lie, as well as interactive, hands-on activities to show them how their natural problem-solving abilities form the basis for many engineering skills.

Originally, Introduce a Girl to Engineering Day was founded ten years ago by a national coalition of engineering groups. Their annual goal is to reach a million girls. This event is also an offshoot of National Engineers Week, which is traditionally celebrated across the country each year in late February.

Last year about 39 girls from CSRA middle schools participated in the Introduce a Girl to Engineering Day.

The CSRA Society of Women Engineers is helping to sponsor the local event, with support from Savannah River Nuclear Solutions, LLC; USC Aiken - Ruth Patrick Science Education Center; and CSRA – American Society for Engineering Management.

More information about Introduce a Girl to Engineering Day can be found at: <http://www.eweek.org/EngineersWeek/Introduce.aspx>

SRNS-10-15