



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF **ENERGY**

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Road To Recovery Tour Helps Local Yarn Plant Workers Start Job Search

More than 100 attend tour stop after local plant announces closing

Aiken, SC (Oct. 29) – More than 120 people in search of a job stopped by yesterday's Road To Recovery Tour stop in the small town of Sylvania, Ga. The initiative by the Savannah River Site to offer assistance to those seeking work was especially important in an area where a local yarn plant is now faced with closure.

"I got a call from a Road To Recovery Tour representative last week telling me that the tour was making a stop in our town," said Heidi Jeffers, Executive Director of the Screven County Chamber of Commerce. "I told him that the tour was coming at the right time for us because one of our largest employers had announced that its plant was closing."

Sylvania Yarn Systems, Inc. has been a major employer in a town of 15,000 since 1969. This month the commercial carpet manufacturer announced that due to the recession it would close its doors by the end of the year – putting 150 employees out of work.

"It's regrettable that we will be forced to close our doors because we have so many honest, hard working people that have been with us so long," said company president Don Aaron. "The Road To Recovery Tour is a great help for our company and our town right now. We've alerted our employees of the opportunity to have some help in building a good resume and assistance in finding jobs in our area. I'm thankful and I know our employees appreciate the help. I know that a lot of our employees visited the tour yesterday."

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Tour workers worked past the scheduled time for the stop to accommodate first shift workers from the plant – assuring that they had ample time with tour representatives to help build their resumes and provide additional information.

“Two of the people we helped had gone to work at the plant straight from high school when the plant opened in 1969,” explained Jeff Baumgartner, spokesperson for the tour. “They had never held another job and really needed help in building a resume and learning how you go about searching for a job.”

The Road To Recovery Tour is a proactive effort by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) facility to help reduce unemployment in the region. “While the Recovery Act has created new jobs at SRS, we knew that much more could be done to help those who might not have a chance to be part of the Recovery Act at our site,” said Jeffrey Allison, Manager of the DOE’s Savannah River Operations Office.

The Road To Recovery stops are part of a 37-town tour in communities hardest hit by the recession – many with some of the highest unemployment rates in their state. Trained representatives spend time with each visitor to review and help them build a more effective resume and share with them ways to search for job opportunities through the Internet. For many, the new knowledge reveals a number of open jobs fitting their qualifications within driving distance of their homes.

“Our Sylvania, Ga. tour stop is exactly what the tour was designed to help provide,” said Garry Flowers, President and CEO of Savannah River Nuclear Solutions, the management and operations contractor for SRS. “We are making a positive difference in people’s lives every day on the tour and, doing our best to help people identify new job opportunities or free job training possibilities to help them build new careers.”

“We are going beyond the borders of our plant and our local community to bring help and hope to people who need it the most,” said Flowers.

For more information on the Road To Recovery Tour, including future planned stops that can provide job searchers with assistance, visit www.srs.gov/recovery. For additional information on the Department of Energy’s Office of Environmental Management and the Savannah River Site, can be found at <http://www.em.doe.gov> or <http://www.srs.gov>.

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Note to Editor: Photos of the SRS RTR visit to Sylvania, Ga., are available by contacting Paivi Nettamo, SRNS Public Affair, (803) 292-2484.