Clemson University and GE Vernova celebrate inaugural Next Engineers Academy class

- 49 students graduate from program designed to inspire the next generation of engineers

GREENVILLE, N.C. (June 5, 2024) - Next Engineers, a global college - and career - readiness program working to increase the diversity of young people in engineering, celebrated the graduation of its first-ever Engineering Academy students in Greenville, South Carolina.

The 49 students from 24 high schools across the Upstate South Carolina area who completed the program – many of whom plan to enroll as engineering students at Clemson University this fall – were joined by family and friends at The Owens Pavilion at the Clemson University Conference Center and Inn for a celebration to honor their achievements. Clemson University is the educational partner for the local Next Engineers program, which was established in 2021, and GE Vernova engineers and employees from Greenville, S.C. actively engage with the program through skill-based volunteering.

John Intile, Vice President, Engineering, GE Vernova, told the graduates that they carry the legacy of Next Engineers and that they are part of a lineage going back to GE's founder, Thomas Edison.

"Your canvas is broader, your tools more advanced," he said. "You'll build bridges that connect continents, design sustainable energy systems, and perhaps even send humans to Mars. As you step into this vast universe of possibilities, remember that you're not alone. The GE Vernova family stands with you. We believe in your potential, your audacity and your ability to change the trajectory of humanity."

Students who complete the Engineering Academy program and enroll in a qualified engineering or engineering-related degree program receive scholarships to support their education towards becoming engineers.

Serita Acker, the executive director of Clemson University's PEER & WISE, said that the skills and knowledge students have developed have laid a strong foundation.

"I extend my heartfelt congratulations to each and every graduate," she said. "Their commitment and hard work inspires us all, and I have every confidence they will continue to make a positive impact in the field of engineering and beyond.

"I also want to express my sincere gratitude to GE Vernova in Greenville for their unwavering support and partnership throughout this journey. Together, we have laid the groundwork for a brighter future in engineering, and I am excited to see the continued success of Next Engineers in empowering young minds."

The Next Engineers: Engineering Academy is a transformative learning experience designed for students aged 15 to 18. Through a rigorous curriculum, immersive design challenges, and career coaching, participants learn to think and act like engineers.

Key program highlights:

- **Dedication:** The Engineering Academy spans three years, with students dedicating 220 hours outside of regular school hours to participate.
- **Design challenges:** In small teams, students tackle increasingly complex design challenges, mastering the engineering design process.
- **Foundational skills:** Beyond technical knowledge, students develop essential skills such as communication, teamwork, persistence, time management, and presentation abilities.
- **Education and career exploration:** Workshops and activities prepare students for their next steps, including university campus tours and interactions with company volunteers.

- **Scholarships:** Students who complete the program and enroll in post-secondary engineering degree programs receive partial scholarships. Next Engineers anticipates granting at least $2 million in scholarships to the inaugural classes of Engineering Academy students worldwide.

Greenville, South Carolina was among the first four locations to launch Next Engineers, with a $5M investment from the GE Foundation in 2021. To date, Next Engineers, which also includes middle school programming, has reached more than 4,600 students across the Upstate.

Next Engineers is not the only way the Upstate community has committed to producing the next generation of STEM talent. The GE John Lammas Annual Scholarship, funded by GE Vernova, provides $8,000 scholarships to underrepresented students majoring in general engineering, chemical engineering, computer engineering, computer information systems, electrical engineering, industrial engineering, mechanical engineering and materials science and engineering.

For more information about Next Engineers and the Engineering Academy, visit NextEngineers.org.

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Caption for photograph
(Left to right) Brittany Fatima Sanders, Clemson University Program Manager, Next Engineers; Jennifer Edwards, GE Vernova Foundation Director; Clemson Tiger; John Intile, GE Vernova VP, Engineering; Serita Acker, Clemson University Executive Director, Peer and Wise

About Next Engineers
Next Engineers, a program originally funded by the GE Foundation in 2021, now known as the GE Aerospace Foundation, is a college and career readiness program dedicated to inspiring and preparing the next generation of engineers. Through innovative programs, mentorship, and community partnerships, we empower young minds to shape a better future through engineering.

About GE Vernova

GE Vernova Inc. (NYSE: GEV) is a purpose-built global energy company that includes Power, Wind, and Electrification segments and is supported by its accelerator businesses. Building on over 130 years of experience tackling the world's challenges, GE Vernova is uniquely positioned to help lead the energy transition by continuing to electrify the world while simultaneously working to decarbonize it. GE Vernova helps customers power economies and deliver electricity that is vital to health, safety, security, and improved quality of life. GE Vernova is headquartered in Cambridge, Massachusetts, U.S., with approximately 75,000 employees across 100+ countries around the world. Supported by the Company's purpose, The Energy to Change the World, GE Vernova technology helps deliver a more affordable, reliable, sustainable, and secure energy future. Learn more: GE Vernova and LinkedIn.

About Clemson University

One of the most productive public research universities in the nation, Clemson University attracts and powerfully unites students and faculty whose greatest desire is to make a difference in the lives of others. Ranked among the best national public universities by U.S. News & World Report, Clemson is dedicated to teaching, research and service. Our main campus, located in Upstate South Carolina, sits on 1,400 acres in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains, along the shores of Lake Hartwell. We have a presence in every South Carolina county through research facilities, economic development hubs and Innovation Campuses. Through the research, outreach and entrepreneurial projects led by our faculty and students, Clemson University is driving economic development and improving quality of life in South Carolina and beyond.

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