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TTU Engineering Students Selected for Internships at Oak Ridge

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by Jerry Renshaw

Cookeville natives Shane Watson and Nicholas Leak, Tennessee Tech University manufacturing and engineering technology majors, were selected for the U.S. Department of Energy's energy efficiency and renewable energy scholarships at Oak Ridge National Laboratory.

The program is designed to introduce promising students to advances in engineering technology such as parametric modeling, composite materials and structures, technical communication and additive manufacturing.

"During the 'crawl' phase, instruction on concepts and basic applications were provided by Pellissippi State professors," said Leak. "During

the 'walk' phase, interns are assigned to mentors on a rotating basis, exposing us to all modern advanced manufacturing processes. The 'run' phase brings teams of interns together in the development of special interests in advanced manufacturing. Phase 2 is a year-long internship opportunity, including further partnership with PSCC and further research and development at ORNL's Manufacturing Demonstration Facility."

Leak was selected for the program partly due to his military record; he served from 2007-2013 in the Army and National Guard. The DOE program is aimed at training veterans in emerging technologies; Oak Ridge Associated Universities recruited students from across the country, including 14 veterans, three active-duty military personnel, two reservists and five civilians. The regimen includes three weeks of classes at PSCC, two weeks of hands-on work at ORNL and one week of carbon fiber composites training at ORNL's Science and Technology Park.

ORNL and TTU are considering possible partnerships, including the opportunity to earn credits at PSCC and TTU.

"There are literally thousands of veterans entering the civilian workforce each month," said Lonnie Love, a staff engineer at Oak

Ridge. "I've been so impressed with this inaugural class, and I love to work with our veterans. Our industry partners are looking for a highly skilled workforce, and the veterans already bring to the table the discipline, teamwork and commitment needed to develop these very specialized skills."

At an Aug. 15 event at Oak Ridge, more than a dozen recruiters met job-ready interns, several of whom had job offers in hand. Deputy Secretary of Energy Daniel Poneman also attended the event.



