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[Newsroom Home](#)

[News Release](#)

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[Science](#)  
[People](#)  
[Business](#)

[News Archive](#)

[Story Tips](#)

[Technical Calendar](#)

[ORNL in the News](#)

[ORNL Review](#)

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## ORNL, sister DOE lab technologies making a difference in North Carolina

OAK RIDGE, Tenn., July 29, 2004 — After just two months, a partnership between Oak Ridge National Laboratory and the Institute at Biltmore has hit full stride in support of entrepreneurs and economic development in Western North Carolina.

The Western North Carolina Office of Technology Commercialization, made possible by a Department of Energy award of \$340,000, makes available more than 500 energy efficiency technologies developed at ORNL, Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, National Renewable Energy Laboratory and Clemson University. The goal is to license some of the technologies to start-up companies in the region and then make easily available financial, legal and other resources.

"These entrepreneurs will be getting some of the best technologies in the nation, plus the support they need to increase the chances of success," said Bob Quinn, ORNL's director of technology commercialization. "We're especially interested in opportunities to bundle these technologies into packages and take advantage of their synergistic value."

Ultimately, the goal is to develop marketable products, jobs and wealth to help offset the more than 5,000 manufacturing jobs that have been lost since early 2003 in Western North Carolina. Battelle Ventures, Blue Ridge Angel Investor Network and Blue Ridge Entrepreneurial Council are among the organizations providing capital and other resources to entrepreneurs hoping to make Western North Carolina famous for more than mountains, forests and national parks.

Technologies ready to license range from an advanced heat pump that uses less energy to a device that uses microwave signals transmitted through wood to measure the moisture content. This results in improved scheduling and efficiency of kiln drying.

Also as part of the effort, ORNL and Technology 2020's Center for Entrepreneurial Growth are working with the not-for-profit Institute at Biltmore and the Education and Research Consortium of the Western Carolinas to define the office's mission and strategic plan.

One of the first major events is a conference scheduled for Sept. 16-17 in Asheville, N.C., and involves the Institute of Biltmore and ORNL's Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Program.

Organizers expect the conference to attract more than 200 people who will have a chance to learn about resources, networks and tools vital to entrepreneurs. Speakers will include successful entrepreneurs, attorneys, venture capitalists and experts in topics of business creation. The conference will provide a plenary session followed by concurrent workshops.

Education at the K-12 level and beyond is another element of the partnership and involves the Institute at Biltmore, ORNL, the Education & Research Consortium of the Western Carolinas, the University of North Carolina at Asheville, Clemson

University and Western Carolina University. The idea is to educate upcoming and existing entrepreneurs about starting companies and forming a network of resources to offer technical and other assistance.

Playing a major role in securing funding for the technology transfer office was U.S. Rep. Charles Taylor (R-Brevard), who said, "This project is a vehicle for connecting ideas with businesses and people who can turn those ideas into jobs."

ORNL, which is managed by UT-Battelle, employs 1,500 scientists and engineers and is the Department of Energy's largest multipurpose science and energy lab. Funding for this effort was provided by DOE's Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy.

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