MEDIA RELEASE

OFFICE OF COUNTY MAYOR GLENN JACOBS

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Mayor Jacobs to Highlight New ORNL Facemask Endeavor

KNOXVILLE, Tenn.— Oak Ridge National Laboratory doesn't typically make face masks, but the COVID-19 pandemic has changed a lot of what local business do nowadays.

Working Dr. Peter Tsai – the inventor of the N95 masks – ORNL workers began developing the masks inside the operation's carbon fiber technology facility.

"We're using the latest advancements in manufacturing to print the molds and then giving those molds to industries (so they can go) into mass production of these (N95) respirators," said Lonnie Love, who works in ORNL's manufacturing systems research.

The new endeavor is one of a number of business highlights Knox County Mayor Glenn Jacobs wants to focus on during these changing times.

"It's great to see Oak Ridge National Laboratory apply the expertise they have in advance materials and advance manufacturing techniques," Mayor Jacobs said. "They're one of the few places in the world that does that kind of work and they're applying that expertise to the fabrications of N95 masks."

The County and Mayor will feature ORNL on their various social media platforms. The media is welcome to use the videos. Today's is the first in what the county plans to be a series of vignettes during the coming month or so.

"These things are happening right here in east Tennessee and a lot of folks don't know what the lab does or how important ORNL really is," the Mayor added. "ORNL is leading the world when it comes to research and development of the advancement of materials and the advancement of manufacturing."

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