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Technology Expo Brings Businesses Together by Ellen Rogers

Around 30 companies were a part of the seventh annual East Tennessee Technology Expo, sponsored by the Oak Ridge Chapter of American Society for Metals International, Thursday evening in Oak Ridge Mall's Crown Center Conference Room.

"Our goal is to bring industry together and grow business," said Vinod Sikka, Oak Ridge National Laboratory corporate fellow and coordinator of the expo. "What we've found in the past is someone will say to someone else [at the expo], 'I've been wanting to use your services but I didn't know you existed!'"

Lisa Delp's small Columbus, Ohio-based business Delp & Associates develops laboratory mixers for various scientific fields, including pharmaceuticals, life sciences and nanotechnology. The trip to Oak Ridge for the expo was definitely worth taking, Delp said. "The Delp Mixer allows researchers to work in a safer, more efficient way," she explained. "We're trying to change the culture in labs, so it takes a lot of education on our part. We try to spend a lot of time with people who use these mixers. We can't just go into their labs - they have to come to us."

Donna Mullaly, Technology for Energy Corporation sales manager, has been coming to the expo since its first year. She says it's a great chance to network with others and introduce TEC's new products, such as this year's MAX, a miniature advanced X-ray diffraction system. The model is easier to use and transport, Mullaly said.

BWXT Y-12's Steve Dekanich and Duane Bias were on hand to promote the Large Chamber Scanning Electron Microscope. Manufactured by Visitec, the LC-SEM has the largest chamber in the world. At magnifications from 10X to 200,000X, the instrument can examine specimens measuring up to 1 meter high by 1 meter in diameter and weighing 300 kilograms. "The expo gives us the opportunity to provide information to the public on what our capabilities are, and that for a limited time, those capabilities will be available for free," said Dekanich, LC-SEM project leader. To demonstrate LC-SEM's capabilities, Y-12 is offering the public the opportunity to research solutions at no cost from February to May at Technology 2020.

"ICMAS has come to the expo for the last several years," said Nancy Crouch, sales representative for International Contract Marketing and Sales. The Alcoa-based ICMAS has several customers who are members of the Oak Ridge Chapter of ASM, Crouch said, and the company's participation is a way to reap benefits for business while also showing support. "It's also nice not to have to travel far," she added.