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***NETL* REPORTS:**

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Jeffrey Atkinson, a sophomore at the Franklin W. Olin College of Engineering in Needham, Mass., was selected as a research associate at the National Energy Technology Laboratory (NETL) under the U.S. Department of Energy's Oak Ridge Institute for Science & Education (ORISE) program. Atkinson is completing the 10-week summer appointment at NETL's Morgantown, W.Va., research site. NETL also has major research facilities in Pittsburgh, Pa., and Albany, Ore.

A native of Morgantown, W.Va., Atkinson is pursuing a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering. He is working with his mentor, NETL researcher Dushyant Shekhawat, on a project employing a Dielectric Barrier Discharge (DBD) plasma reactor for fossil energy related applications such as hydrogen production from coal and CO₂ conversion to value-added chemicals. The work has potential to improve production of alternative fuels and mitigate atmospheric CO₂ emissions.

The ORISE program offers summer appointments to undergraduate students, post-graduates, graduate students, post-doctoral researchers, and university professors to work part-time or full-time at NETL. Mentored by scientists and researchers, the research associates are assigned specific projects intended to teach them how to use their skills and qualifications to solve energy-related problems. The appointment provides research associates the opportunity to develop their professional, technical, leadership and communication skills, while promoting careers in energy, particularly in fossil fuel research and development.

NETL is one of the U.S. Department of Energy's national laboratories. NETL – “the ENERGY lab” – focuses on America's economic prosperity, which requires secure, reliable energy supplies at sustainable prices. Three overarching issues characterize the energy situation in the United States. They are energy affordability, supply security, and environmental quality. The Department of Energy's only government-owned, government-operated national lab, NETL is a research and technology center where these energy challenges converge and energy solutions emerge. NETL implements a broad spectrum of energy and environmental research and development programs through its own research staff and through funded research at other labs, universities, and industry that will return benefits for generations to come.