

James Peery named chief scientist of the Global Security Directorate at Oak Ridge National Laboratory
Cybersecurity and defense leader will advance lab missions including protection of US critical infrastructure

OAK RIDGE, Tenn., August 7, 2017 – James Peery, who has led critical national security programs at Sandia National Laboratories and Los Alamos National Laboratory, has been selected as the chief scientist of the Global Security Directorate at Oak Ridge National Laboratory.

“James brings more than two decades of experience in creating successful national security initiatives for the U.S. Department of Energy,” said Brent Park, associate laboratory director of global security at ORNL. “In particular, his leadership in cybersecurity, data analytics and high-performance computing will enable him to lead the laboratory’s cybersecurity initiative for the electric grid and beyond.”

Next-generation cybersecurity for the electric grid is a multi-directorate, multi-program effort at ORNL that supports the DOE cybersecurity program for critical energy infrastructure. The initiative aims to enable electric utilities and other components of the nation’s energy supply to defend against emerging and previously unseen cyberattacks.

Peery also will help ORNL researchers draw on the lab’s distinctive capabilities to develop scientific and technological solutions aligned with national security policies and strategies.

“As the lab’s chief scientist for national security challenges, James will lead our talented and passionate staff—with their incredible breadth of capabilities from computing to materials to nuclear science and technology to neutron sciences—with the sense of purpose that comes from serving the country in the compelling mission of national security,” ORNL Director Thomas Zacharia said.

Peery, who is a member of the U.S. Air Force’s Scientific Advisory Board, began his career at Sandia in 1990, the year he graduated from Texas A&M University with a doctorate in nuclear engineering. In one of his first assignments at Sandia, he developed first-generation massively parallel algorithms and tools for use in high-energy physics applications in support of national security. He soon rose to be manager of computational physics and then manager of computational solid mechanics and structural dynamics.

In 2002, he accepted a position at Los Alamos, where he successfully led the lab’s advanced code and computing strategy that supported the highly successful Advanced Scientific Computing element in the National Nuclear Security Administration’s stockpile stewardship program, sustaining annual nuclear weapon certification through predictive simulation and above-ground tests. At Los Alamos, he also led the team that acquired funding for the world’s first petaflop computer.

In 2007, he returned to Sandia. Among his many successes over the next 10 years, he advanced the laboratories’ high-performance computing and research and development in computational sciences, including Sandia’s selection to host NNSA’s high-performance computing platform for sensitive compartmented information. He strengthened the labs’ cybersecurity portfolio and was instrumental in the creation of Sandia’s quantum information sciences program and its Counterfeit Detection Center.

One of his areas of focus also is the work environment of his staff. As vice president of defense systems and assessments at Sandia from 2015 through 2017, he was an integral part of the laboratories’ leadership team that created a work environment that led to Sandia National Laboratories being named

by Forbes as one of the nation's top 20 employers (ranking No. 1 in the aerospace and defense industry category). He also led Sandia's Wounded Warriors Career Development Program.

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Caption: James Peery has been selected as the chief scientist of the Global Security Directorate at Oak Ridge National Laboratory.