

Science Café

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A RELAXED ATMOSPHERE. WE ARE COMMITTED
TO PROMOTING ENGAGEMENT WITH SCIENTIFIC
TOPICS AND MAKING IT ACCESSIBLE TO ALL

Solar Power: Not a Far-Fetched Solution Dr. Amanda Smeigh and Professor Dick Co Argonne-Northwestern Solar Energy Research (ANSER)



“Solar Energy” has garnered a bad reputation in the public eye because of companies like Solyndra, a failed solar-panel maker that filed for bankruptcy. There is a strong sentiment in the media that solar energy was sold as a “silver bullet” and that this “magical fix” has fallen short of solving the world’s energy problems. Countering the doomsday media mentality towards solar power, the U.S. Department of Energy reports the solar industry has generated thousands of U.S. jobs and solar installations capable of generating more than 1,000 megawatts.

One major problem is the cost of installing solar panels versus the monetary return. Few people are swayed by the other benefits of solar electricity and see solar-panel installation as a bigger risk than reward. While it may seem that industrial efforts directed at solar energy implementation are floundering, research directed at more effective utilization of the Sun’s energy is progressing. Northwestern’s ANSER Center is working towards achieving efficient, less expensive photovoltaic devices and developing molecular systems that can efficiently store the Sun’s energy in the form of fuel. Smeigh and Co will discuss what is being done in your own “backyard” to help find a way to better utilize the Sun’s energy.

PLACE: The Firehouse Grill
750 Chicago Ave., Evanston
DATE: Wednesday, January 18
TIME: 6:30—8:00 pm



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