

Expert advocates using solar panels in structures

The activist will speak on campus about a shift in architecture

By Amy Jennaro
Oregon Daily Emerald

Solar Design Agency President Steven J. Strong had tried for years to get people to start using solar energy panels. In the late 1970s, the solar energy activist came across a new form of technology called photovoltaics that would enable architects to integrate solar energy panels into the actual design of the house.

"This technology is very significant because in the past architects viewed solar energy panels as a necessary evil," Strong said. "But a reverse in the industry has made the panels a part of the building structure and that is exciting."

Strong will be at the University today in 177 Lawrence Hall at 7 p.m. to discuss his findings. The lecture is free and is open to the public.

Billy Nachman of the Solar Information Center, which is hosting Strong's speech, said he is excited about Strong's visit.

"Any time you can get someone to speak about something that could be the way of the future, it is a special event," he said.

Nachman said Strong was named an environmental hero by Time magazine, and his knowledge on the subject of photovoltaics makes him an authority figure on the topic.

Roger Ebbage, director of the Northwest Energy Education Institute, which is hosting a one-day seminar by Strong in Portland on Friday, said he became interested in Strong because of his dedica-

tion to photovoltaics.

"Steve's message grabbed me," he said.

The Solar Information Center has been working with Strong for a month on the details of the lecture after Strong contacted the group about the possibility of doing a speech at the University.

"The opportunity [of Strong's lecture] just dropped into our laps," Nachman said.

Strong said he pursued giving a lecture at the University because he wants to reach as many students as possible with information about photovoltaics.

"I think it is very important to get the message out to students and encourage them because students will be at the center of the profession," he said.

Strong said it is particularly important to reach student architects because he said he believes photovoltaics are the way of the future.

"There is a subtle transition that is occurring in the field of architecture," he said.

Many other alternative energy activists also see that transition.

"Although it is happening at a slower pace, it is going to be expensive for all utilities to use more common forms of energy," Ebbage said. "Then you will see more people looking at the alternative."

Ebbage said he sees this trend already happening as more conventional forms of energy, such as gasoline have become more expensive.

Strong said he agrees that the price of oil will be a factor, but he said he thinks that the availability of it will play a larger role in the shift to alternative energy in the future.

Peace Corps experience develops career skills

Program participants say the two-year jobs can change lives

By G. Jaros
Oregon Daily Emerald

Drinking green water and having to scoop handfuls of bugs off the bed every morning sounds less like a career step than it does a misstep.

But the Peace Corps calls it "the toughest job you'll ever love," and its campus representative says the experience will enhance job skills no matter what career path students decide to take.

"The skills that are inherent in the job — being flexible, adaptable, finding strength in autonomy — are all skills that employers look for," said Fred Jarman, the University's Peace Corps' representative.

Jarman said he got involved in the Corps because he was impressed by returning Peace Corps' volunteers who were doing "quite well" professionally. He ended up serving three years in West Africa before coming to the University to earn a master's degree in community and regional planning.

"The Peace Corps is very in tune with careers and continuing education, and they are committed to help volunteers enter the work force," Jarman said.

The University is No. 9 on the Peace Corps' 1999 list of the top 25 volunteer producing universities and colleges, with a total of 58 people currently serving the Corps' mandatory two year stint. Volunteers are chosen and then trained in a specific field of interest, such as agriculture, sanitation or health and nutrition.

"I'll be doing rural community development, working with at risk youth, women's issues and people with disabilities," said Lana Lervick a senior in art history who is leaving for Benin in West Africa this September.

She hopes to someday find a career working with youth.

"In preparing me for a specific career, the Peace Corps will be less helpful than it will be in providing the broad skills you need for a career and life in general," Lervick said.

University anthropologist Bonnie Manheim served two years with the Peace Corps in Jamaica. It was she who faced the handfuls of bedbugs and green tap water.

"My landlady looked at the water and said 'It's good and it's good for you, drink it,'" Manheim said. She did drink it, but only after some boiling and straining, she said.

The Peace Corps is a stepping stone for students targeting any multinational corporation, Manheim said. She said the Corps is a help to anyone who is interested in international business or a career abroad because of the connections that are made around the world, learning inter-cultural communication and being able to work in varied atmospheres.

Manheim said the Peace Corps does more than that; it's a "metamorphosis."

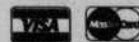
"Everything is at its most basic," Manheim said. "You learn about your likes and dislikes. So many superficialities in life do not matter anymore and you cross many barriers. That is the most beautiful part of the Peace Corps experience."



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