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Friday January 30, 2009

129th year, No. 69

THE LANTERN

THE STUDENT VOICE OF THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

Newsroom 292.5721

www.thelantern.com

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A better home: Students explore sustainability

By Vicki Bouttavong
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The Ohio State Solar Decathlon Team hosted a kick-off celebration for their solar-powered house that will be entered in the International Solar Decathlon competition in Washington, D.C.

OSU was one of 20 universities to be chosen to participate in the competition. It challenges universities to develop the best solar-powered house with focuses on 10 different categories: architecture, market viability, engineering, lighting, design, communications, comfort zone, hot water, appliances, home entertainment, energy and balance.

The house is named Solar

House 1. This is the first time Ohio State has entered the competition.

"It is a collaborative project between the Knowlton School of Architecture and the College of Engineering, with additional participation from a large number of disciplines on campus," said Lisa Tilder, an associate professor of architecture in the Knowlton School of Architecture and adviser on the project, in an e-mail.

The team is comprised of approximately 60 students from more than 20 majors ranging from mechanical engineering to political science, all with a passion for sustainability, said Kara Shell, a project leader on the team. They want to succeed in the competition but are more

focused on a holistic and sustainable lifestyle.

With Solar House 1 they want to improve the quality of life of the inhabitants and have a positive impact on the environment by using sustainable features such as waste reduction materials and water management.

One of the focuses of the house is solar powered heating.

"We need to change how we are heating our homes," said Nifty Ovuworie, a fourth-year studying mechanical engineering. "It is possible to use no fossil fuels and heat your home by the sun."

To do this, Solar House 1 will include double-sided solar panels. The ambient light from the sun hitting the solar panel will be absorbed

by the underside. This will increase energy production by 15 percent.

In 2007 the average yearly energy consumption was 11,232 kilowatt-hours, according to the Energy Information Administration Web site. Solar House 1 is expected to produce 8,300 kWh of energy in a year solely from power from the sun. With the average price of 8.5 cents per kilowatt-hour, a homeowner can save about \$705 a year.

Insulated tubes, or evacuated tube arrays, will heat and distribute water to sinks, showers and appliances. They will be located on the south side of the house and heated by the sun's rays.



ABIGAIL MINER/THE LANTERN
Nifty Ovuworie, a senior in mechanical engineering and member of the 2009 Ohio State Solar Decathlon Team, explains the model solar house to attendees at the kick-off event in the Physical Activities and Education Services Building on Tuesday.

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ICY LANDING



AP
A red Robin lands on a tree branch along Wentworth Avenue in Clifton, Ohio on Wednesday. A winter storm spread a glaze of ice and snow from the southern Plains to the East Coast, leaving blackouts, hundreds of school closings and treacherous travel conditions in its wake. At least 19 deaths are blamed on the storm.

New housing officer replaces controversial Kochendoerfer

By Garren Cabral
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After an eight-month search, Ohio State named Fred Fotis as the university's chief housing officer Sunday. He steps in place of Ronald Kochendoerfer, who resigned in May after police arrested him for the possession of crystal methamphetamine.

Fotis, serving as an assistant vice president for Student Life, will provide administrative direction and leadership for all of university housing, according to a media release. He will also oversee the development of current and future residence halls.

With a master's degree in education from Indiana University, Fotis brings 33 years of student housing experience to OSU. He has worked

at six colleges and universities, including the University of British Columbia, where he was senior director of student services.

In an e-mail, Javaune Adams-Gaston, vice president of student life, said that she looks forward to working with Fotis.

"University Housing is a key part of the student experience, and Fred's experience and management background will be a strong asset," Adams-Gaston said.

Fotis said he is glad to be back in the Big Ten and closer to family and friends.

"My hope is to get oriented, to get to know the staff and buildings, to spend time with the residence government, and to fully understand the existing housing plans," Fotis said in an e-mail. He said he is also excited to work with

President E. Gordon Gee and Gaston-Adams.

"I'm excited to get to know students, and being able to get around without a campus map," Fotis said.

Ruth Gerstner, director of communications for Student Life, said the search for a new vice president of Student Life slowed the search for a new chief housing officer. Gerstner said that the university waited for Gaston-Adams to be appointed, so that she could also participate in the search process for the housing position.

Since Kochendoerfer's resignation, Cheryl Lyons and Toni Greenslade-Smith have directed University Housing. Lyons and Greenslade-Smith will serve under Fotis and continue to focus on education and administration in housing.

Exploring Exploration

- The numbers behind the largest major in the country -

- > Research indicates up to **80%** of students entering college admit they are **not certain** what they want to major in, even if they have initially declared a major!
- > Approximately **1,200** new OSU students **enroll in exploration** each Autumn Quarter.
- > Up to **50%** of college students **change majors** at least once before graduation, and some change several times.

Source: Exploration Program

GRAPHIC LISA FOUSEK/THE LANTERN

Spanish or art? Students find niche in exploration program

By Richard Oviatt
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Most people would not expect 18-year-olds to choose a spouse, a house or even their own cars. So why should they be expected to choose a major that could dictate what they do for the rest of their lives? The Exploration Program at Ohio State seeks to help students who may not be ready to make such a decision.

Louis Boucher, a junior in history, said he wishes he would have taken advantage of the program when he was a freshman.

"I've switched majors a couple of times. It's difficult to graduate in four years anyway, and if you change majors, forget about it," he said.

Boucher is not alone. According to the Exploration Program's Web site, research indicates that up to

80 percent of students entering college admit they are not certain what they want to major in, even if they have declared an initial major. Additionally, up to half of all students will change majors at least once before graduation.

Christin Petrosino, coordinator of academic advising for the Exploration Program, encourages students to avoid the trap that Boucher and many others have fallen into.

"Students who aren't sure about their majors are encouraged to enter OSU through the Exploration Program," she said. "Many students hold a misconception that entering OSU as an undecided student will put them 'behind' on the road to graduation. While there are some majors that are lockstep, the vast majority of OSU's majors are flexible and will accommodate

students who enter their programs during their first or second year."

Many OSU students remember having to take a survey course during freshman year. These courses are intended to help students find the right major for them and, in turn, graduate on time.

"The success of our program depends on our students taking proactive steps in the process of exploring majors," Petrosino said. "The first step is our University Survey course. This is the foundation of the exploration process and it introduces students to decision-making as well as how to link this to OSU majors."

If Boucher could give advice to undecided students, what would it be?

"Just explore your options; you've got plenty of time to

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