

SIUE School of Engineering hosts successful Energy Symposium

by Doug McIlhagga

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EDWARDSVILLE - The Southern Illinois University Edwardsville School of Engineering (SOE) successfully hosted its inaugural SIUE Energy Symposium on Tuesday, Nov. 27 in the Morris University Center's Mississippi-Illinois Room. The symposium focused upon energy topics, and awareness of alternative and clean energy sources.

“Our goal is to create an annual fall event and be the first institution that comes to mind when people talk about energy and sustainability topics in the Greater St. Louis area,” said Serdar Celik, PhD, associate professor of mechanical engineering in the SOE. “We hope to increase understanding of regional and global energy issues, and to promote awareness on various energy topics.”

The symposium began with a poster session as engineering students presented on various energy sources such as solar, wind, hydro, shale gas, biomass and nuclear. Celik followed by discussing how the symposium evolved into reality and his vision of becoming the lead regional institution on energy issues.

The featured afternoon event was the geothermal vs. wind debate. From an original pool of 14 teams debating alternative energy sources, two finalists emerged. Six SIUE senior mechanical engineering students squared off in the debate. Allen Bilbruck, of Carrolton, Pratik Lamsal, of Kathmandu, Nepal, and Tyler Schlecht, of South Roxana, presented the case for geothermal energy. Meanwhile, Lane Davis, of Mendon, Nathaniel Kirby and Kurtis Nemsky, of Edwardsville, presented the case for wind energy. With representatives from higher education, alternative energy, corporate leadership, public utilities, energy consultants and environmental agencies serving as judges, the geothermal team was judged the winner.

The debate was open to the public, and individuals from different fields including political offices, higher education administration, representatives from Chambers of Commerce, and energy professionals from the corporate world were invited to attend.

“I was extremely happy that we received such positive feedback from faculty, students, community members and industry professionals,” Celik said. “The networking hour was quite productive as many students said they were able to make some corporate sector contacts. It certainly was a valuable day for SIUE.”

For more information, contact Celik in the SIUE Department of Mechanical Engineering at scelik@siue.edu.

The [SIUE School of Engineering](#) offers one of the most comprehensive and affordable engineering programs in the St. Louis region with eight undergraduate degrees, five master's degrees and a cooperative doctoral program. Students learn from expert faculty, perform cutting-edge research, and participate in intercollegiate design competitions. Companies in the metropolitan St. Louis area provide students challenging internships and co-op opportunities, which often turn into permanent employment. Students gain hands-on experience in the School's state-of-the-art facilities, including the new Student Design Center.