On July 26th and 27th, Drs. Ervin and Claggett were in Annapolis where they were asked to testify before the Maryland Public Service Commission during its recent Planning Conference on Maryland’s Energy Future.

Dr. Claggett testified during the sixth panel, “Electric Generation Panel No. 2,” on 07/27. A summary of Dr. Claggett’s testimony follows: He testified in favor of and advocated the state-wide use of residential solar energy.

It (residential solar energy) is potentially the most fruitful and realistic endeavor to significantly reduce the electrical and fossil fuel demands from the residential sector. Unfortunately, many non-financial and non-technical barriers to the wide-spread use of residential solar energy devices still remain.

Many people seem to think solar panels of all types are aesthetically unappealing. This has resulted in many zoning rulings and ordinances that prohibit the installation of solar collectors in residential communities and neighborhoods. Regulation should make it impossible for local special interest groups and authorities to prevent solar installations that are well planned and that make good energy sense. If every other home had installed solar panels, they would be accepted like shutters and chimneys on traditional homes. Furthermore, with such solar saturation within communities, solar equipment and solar installation prices would, in all likelihood, fall significantly.

Residential solar installations require special skill sets of those doing the actual installation to ensure the homeowner gets a good installation for his or her hard earned money. During the 1980s, the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) implemented a solar installer certification program. The program required certified installers to receive and to maintain appropriate solar installation training. In return, the TVA referred solar interested citizens to these installers. A similar certification program could be implemented in Maryland to protect both consumers and their local communities from unscrupulous and/or inept solar vendors.

A state-wide solar installation application approval process should be in place and it should be user friendly. The process should provide the consumer with a “one-stop-shop” application approval that addresses the technical and economic as well as the aesthetic aspects of the project. It is not in the best interest of the homeowner, reputable installer, surrounding community, government or society for faulty solar design and equipment to be installed. One bad solar installation creates more bad will than the good will from twenty excellent solar installations.

In addition to the above, a successful effort to harness solar energy in Maryland will require a vigorous education initiative. For example, many people in Maryland do not even know the state now has a very viable solar resource; due in large part, to significant improvements in solar application technology and the current energy tax credit laws at the state and national levels. Furthermore, a highly visible solar effort would do much to create overall energy awareness within Maryland’s citizenry.

Finally, in China, many areas feature a majority of apartment buildings and single family homes with solar collection equipment. In Beijing and Shanghai, it is not uncommon to see prefabricated, competitively priced, solar water heaters for sale in local appliance stores and shops. If a developing country has embraced residential solar energy to the degree that China has, should we in Maryland not take a good look to see how we can benefit from a focused effort in this direction?

Dean’s Office Student Workers

The Dean’s Office currently has two student workers. Selwa Fayyad came to work for the office 3 years ago. She is a Junior majoring in Business Administration. Selwa is from Silver Spring, MD. Ariel Bilyeu just recently joined the Dean’s office. She is a Freshman majoring in Philosophy. Ariel is from Springfield, IL.

Ariel Bilyeu

Selwa Fayyad
Kathie Wright and Jeff Kottemann’s paper High-Level Factors Affecting Global Availability of Online Government Services has been accepted for publication in the Proceedings of the 41st Hawaiian International Conference on the System Sciences special track on e-government, 2008. They are working on an extension for journal submission.

Danny Ervin presented his research paper entitled “REITS and Diversification in a Retirement Withdrawal Portfolio” on Friday, September 21st as part of Econ/Finance department’s Fall Brown Bag seminar series.

Faculty Senate Elections results are in: Library Committee, Eugene Hahn Promotions Committee, Steve Adams University Curriculum Committee, Cathy Beise.

Ni-Hao from Shanghai, China

How things change in a week! As I write this typhoon Wipha is dumping rain over Shanghai with the worst yet to come. Renae and I are now enrolled in intensive Mandarin classes at East China Normal University. We get up at 6 a.m. or earlier to answer emails, pay U.S. bills online, and prepare the kids for school. We take them to the school bus at 7 a.m. We then walk about 2 miles to East China Normal and attend class from 8:30 to 11:45 a.m. Monday thru Friday.

We are in a class with Japanese and Korean students who are used to reading characters so they have a solid foundation. Not so for us. The classroom atmosphere is very positive and students support each other. My two teachers are very good and the classes move incredibly fast.

Being back as a student has helped me to think about my teaching and how I can do a better job both here and back at SU. The role switch is something that I recommend for all.

Today we had the welcome luncheon for foreign law professors at my home university, East China University of Political Science and Law (“ECUPL”). There are about 8 foreign professors. It turns out two of them are acquaintances of friends of mine in the States.

While classes have yet to begin, I have already spent considerable time working with a student on his law school application and essay. I guess you can’t escape advising.

I start teaching in two weeks with a Tuesday/Thursday afternoon teaching schedule. Teaching in China includes “technical” English in one’s discipline so I am developing new strategies based on the excellent quality of language instruction at East China Normal.

My kids love school; they have friends from around the world. I coach Little League baseball on Sundays. To get to practice we take the clean and efficient subway across the city to the expatriate new area of Shanghai (Pudong). Cell phones work underground so while I am riding under Shanghai I get a kick out of calling my friends in the U.S. on their Saturday night. For some of them who asked if people had televisions in China it is a fun way to highlight the reality of modern day Eastern China.

On the 30th of September we are attending the Women’s World Cup game and closing ceremonies. We hope our women will be there as World Champions.

In October I visit our “sister” school Dongbei University of Finance and Economics (“DUFE”) where I will be delivering two lectures as part of the Fulbright Lecturer Series. I basically have carte blanche to travel China and deliver lectures through this program.

I continue to make academic and professional contacts that should help us in years to come. I know the school is in good hands with our fine faculty and remind you to let me know if I can help in any way.

I would be remiss in not thanking Dr. Hong Yao for her efforts in developing Perdue School opportunities in China and for teaching me so much about Chinese culture. Xie Xie Ni, Dr. Yao!

In The Spotlight ...

- Kathie Wright and Jeff Kottemann’s paper High-Level Factors Affecting Global Availability of Online Government Services has been accepted for publication in the Proceedings of the 41st Hawaiian International Conference on the System Sciences special track on e-government, 2008. They are working on an extension for journal submission.

- M. Patrick Tracy, Director in the Regulatory Audit Group of RSM McGladrey, will be giving a lecture on using the Z-score and Affordable Growth Model to evaluate firm performance at the September 25th Beta Alpha Psi meeting in CH122 at 3:30PM. Numerous recent SU alums will be in attendance and Mr. Tracy will be making a special presentation to the Department of Accounting & Legal Studies at that time. Interested faculty are invited to attend.

- Danny Ervin presented his research paper entitled "REITS and Diversification in a Retirement Withdrawal Portfolio" on Friday, September 21st as part of Econ/Finance department’s Fall Brown Bag seminar series.

- The Maryland Small Business Development Center Network recently held its annual fall conference in Ocean City. Two members of the Eastern Regional office located at Salisbury University / Perdue School of Business were recognized for their years of service in the SBDC Network. Those recognized were: Sumathy Chandrashekar for 12 years as a Business Consultant, and the Office Manager Francesca Hedrick for 10 years of service.

- Faculty Senate Elections results are in: Library Committee, Eugene Hahn Promotions Committee, Steve Adams University Curriculum Committee, Cathy Beise.