

Students gather in Calgary to tackle energy issues

BY DINA O'MEARA, CALGARY HERALD JUNE 11, 2009



Peter Tertzakian, chief energy economist for ARC Financial Corp., will be one of the speakers at the International Student Energy Summit in Calgary this week.

Photograph by: Grant Black/Calgary Herald, Canwest News Service

CALGARY - University students from around the world are congregating in Calgary today to hear about and discuss one of the hottest topics of the century --the outlook for energy and sustainable resource management.

The International Student Energy Summit, running from today through Saturday, is the first of its kind -- a conference on a critical subject, boasting renowned experts in their field, but focused for a postsecondary audience.

It boasts an impressive roster of speakers, including Pierce Riemer, secretary general of the World Petroleum Council, Gustav Grob, executive secretary of the International Sustainable Energy Organization, Calgary petroleum economist Peter Tertzakian, as well as environmental activist and author Andrew Nikiforuk.

"Energy is very important and one of the biggest problems for our generation," University of Calgary organizer Janice Tran said. "We need global co-operation right now, but when we looked at all the conferences, nothing was geared just to students."

About 350 students from 30 countries will be attending the industry and Alberta government-sponsored summit, attending plenaries on subjects such as the geopolitics of energy, the effects of climate change on business strategies and the role of alternative energy in the future supply mix.

Many students who want to know more about energy issues feel intimidated at conferences held by experts for people in the field, she noted. Organizers of this week's summit deliberately kept it closed to the public to allow students from all fields to participate without being made to feel ignorant, she said.

The summit program focuses on finances, regulatory issues and sustainability of energy resources, as well as global co-operation, technology and innovation.

"The renewable energy technology is out there to be implemented, but the issue is the willingness to adopt a new lifestyle isn't there," Tran said. "To transition to a renewable system, we need to re-examine how we live."

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