

Suter Science Seminars 2017-18

Overcoming the Barriers to Solar Energy Adoption: Cost and Storage

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In one and a half hours enough sunlight hits the earth's surface to power human civilization for a year. However, there are remaining technological barriers to its wide-spread adoption. The first is cost. The DOE projects that we will need to reduce the cost of solar energy from the current benchmark of 10 cents/ kWh to 3 cents/kWh to make solar competitive with conventional energy sources by 2020. Second, the intermittent nature of the sun necessitates technology capable of harnessing the energy when the sun is shining and storing it for later use. In this talk, I will discuss methods undertaken in my laboratory to address both of these scientific challenges.

Amanda Morris is currently an Assistant Professor of Inorganic and Energy Chemistry at Virginia Tech University. Her research education conducted at Penn State University (B.S.), Johns Hopkins University (PhD), and Princeton University (Postdoctoral) has been focused on addressing critical environmental issues with fundamental science including water remediation, solar energy harvesting and storage, and carbon dioxide conversion. Her independent research group's current focus is on two aspects of solar energy conversion: solar energy storage through artificial photosynthesis and next generation solar cells. Morris has received numerous awards in recognition of her work including a Sloan Fellowship, Dreyfus Teacher-Scholar Award, and the InterAmerican Photochemical Society Young Investigator Award. In her spare time she enjoys reading, time with her family, and working on house projects.



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