Sage sprouts new solar panels

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http://www.uwosh.edu/today/18440/sage-sprouts-new-solar-panels/

No, those aren't spaceships hovering over the parking lot at Sage Hall.

The University of Wisconsin Oshkosh's six-month-old, $48 million, sustainably designed and built academic building has sprouted three new solar arrays in its parking lot. The technology was installed April 27.

The photovoltaic solar panels, which resemble flower petals on stalks, will convert the sun's energy into electricity for the 191,000 square foot building complex.

"All of the power generated will provide energy for Sage Hall," UW Oshkosh Director of Facilities Steve Arndt said.

The solar system features three pole-mounted arrays in Sage's parking lot that involve a sun-tracker system, Arndt said. Each of the three poles contains equipment that allows the panels to adjust, following the direct course of the sun horizontally and vertically throughout the day, maximizing the harvest of solar energy.

Lake Michigan Wind and Solar produced the arrays. Each unit generates 2.5 kW of power, for a combined of total 7.5 kW. Arndt said. The estimated annual kilowatt-hour (kWh) production of the technology is 12,167 kWh, or approximately one-and-a-half times the average electricity consumption of a residential Wisconsin home in 2010, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration.

UW Oshkosh is no stranger to solar technology. The University remains Wisconsin's number one user of solar thermal panels, the type of panels that capture the sun's energy and use it to heat water and buildings.

Learn more from Arndt in this summer 2011 video profiling the University's reliance on solar energy:

httpv://youtu.be/Cv3-YzXhLNU