



GRID Alternatives eNewsletter

Issue 5
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Empowering communities in need by providing renewable energy and energy efficiency services, equipment, and training.

Letter from Erica Mackie, Executive Director and Co-Founder, GRID Alternatives

It's hard to believe, but somehow in the midst of all this rain the Bay Area has been having, we here at GRID Alternatives have been able to find some semi-dry days to help several families install solar electric systems on their homes.

Personally, I spent the last three months getting to know my new baby. However, even through sleep-deprived eyes, I can't help but be inspired by how amazing all of our volunteers are. The last time I was out on the job site it was with the most faithful of you. I was 9 months pregnant, the weather was cold and wet, and yet you bundled up on a weekday to hang inverters in a freezing garage so nine low-income homeowners wouldn't have to split an exorbitant electricity bill any longer. It's because of all of you that I couldn't think of a better job in the world to come back to. I'm glad to be back and am excited for spring. Here's to the end of this rain and to lots of sunny days installing solar. We're working in a lot of new neighborhoods this year and we'll be doing even more installations than last year, so throw off that rain jacket and dust off your tool belt, it's bound to be a ton of fun.



**GRID Alternatives' newest
volunteer**

Support GRID Alternatives with your groceries!

On Tuesday, April 18th, Whole Foods is hosting a Community Support Day for GRID Alternatives at its [San Francisco South of Market store](#). **5% of all purchases made that day will go directly to support GRID Alternatives!** The store is open from 8am to 9pm, and is located at the corner of 4th and Harrison. [Click here for directions](#). There's a ramp to free parking on the Harrison St. side. This is a great opportunity to shop for the stuff you need anyhow and support renewable energy for communities in need. Bring the family and tell your friends! You can even [download a flyer](#) to post at your workplace. We'll be there, so come by our table and say hi!



Solar Affordable Housing Installations

Since our last newsletter, GRID Alternatives' volunteers have installed solar electric systems in Pacifica, San Bruno, Pleasanton, and San Francisco. Combined, these systems will save the low-income homeowners approximately \$68,000 in energy costs and will reduce greenhouse gas emissions by over 400,000 pounds over the course of the systems' lives. [Check out the 5-minute video](#) highlighting our most recent Pleasanton installation, which was produced by one of our volunteers.

We plan to install over 30 systems this year, so be on the lookout for emails announcing future volunteer solar installation opportunities. Many of our recent installations have been filling up, so make sure to reply to emails quickly to reserve a spot on the installation crew.



Volunteers performing a tilt-up solar installation in Pleasanton in February.

Volunteer Opportunity - Energy Efficiency Team in San Francisco

On Saturday, April 29th, GRID Alternatives will be partnering with Rebuilding Together San Francisco to implement energy efficiency and water conservation measures for low-income seniors and disabled homeowners. We are looking for approximately 30-40 volunteers to help out on this project. Send an email to info@gridalternatives.org to sign up for this volunteer opportunity.



Solarthon Summer Fundraiser

GRID Alternatives is planning an exciting fundraiser this August - Solarthon! We will be installing 6 solar electric systems in one day, at an upcoming Habitat for Humanity development in Oakland, while we raise money to support our programs. More information to come. [Email us](#) if you're interested in volunteering to help plan and promote this event.



New Staff, Construction Manager Position Available

GRID Alternatives is happy to introduce our new Development Director, Zach Franklin. Zach brings a strong background in fundraising and affordable housing, and he will be heading up our fundraising efforts. We also have a new Construction Assistant, Taulafo Laulu. Lafo received training in solar installation through the ACE program, and our volunteers will get an opportunity to work with him on future volunteer solar installations.

Also, GRID Alternatives is looking to hire a full-time construction manager to help plan and oversee solar electric installations. [Click here for the full announcement and job description.](#)

Thank You!

Volunteers are the driving force behind GRID Alternatives. We would particularly like to thank both our current intern, Derrick Leung, and our past intern, Natalie Chi, for providing invaluable assistance in the office. We also want to thank Jon Bice, who has [produced a 5-minute video](#) about GRID

Alternatives installation featuring our recent solar installation in Pleasanton. We would like to give a special thanks to Marlyn Tadros from [Virtual Activism](#) who has provided us with website design and hosting services for the last 3 years. Thanks to [ClifBar](#), who will again be supplying volunteers for our [Energy Efficiency Team Program](#) in Oakland this year (as well as bars for our volunteers). And of course, we want to thank all the volunteers who continue to make our [Solar Affordable Housing Program](#) possible.

Thanks also to the following corporate and foundation funders who have supported GRID Alternatives since our last newsletter, in addition to the over 100 individuals who have made personal donations to GRID Alternatives.

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The support of our donors allows us to continue providing renewable energy to communities in need. [Click here to make a tax-deductible donation online.](#) In addition to financial support, you can also support GRID Alternatives through in-kind contributions of tools, equipment, supplies, or professional services. [Visit our website for our current "Wish List".](#)

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