



*For immediate release*

## **GRID Alternatives announces national solar workforce development program for America's military veterans**

*Wells Fargo provides major grant to support "Troops to Solar" initiative*

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**San Diego, CA November 10, 2015** – GRID Alternatives, America's largest non-profit solar installer, today announced a major grant from Wells Fargo to support a national solar training initiative for America's military veterans. The Troops to Solar initiative will provide solar industry workforce training to over 1,000 U.S. military veterans and active service members across the country. The three-year, \$750,000 grant was announced at a four-home solar installation project for wounded San Diego veterans living in Habitat for Humanity homes.

Under the initiative, GRID Alternatives will provide training and hands-on solar installation experience to veterans and service members, and will work with its solar industry partners to connect participants with job openings. The national partnership expands GRID Alternatives' existing work with veterans at several of its California locations.

With this new grant, Wells Fargo will have invested over \$3.8 million since 2007 in GRID Alternatives' work to install solar systems for low-income families and provide solar industry workforce development in disadvantaged communities.

"GRID Alternatives has been instrumental in our efforts to provide environmental solutions to diverse communities across the country," said Mary Wenzel, head of environmental affairs for Wells Fargo. "GRID's new workforce development initiative is perfectly aligned with Wells Fargo's ongoing commitment to veterans and goal to advance environmental sustainability. We are excited about our continued partnership."

Troops to Solar is part of a larger national effort by the Solar Energy Industries Association (SEIA) [to employ 50,000 veterans](#) in the solar industry by 2020. America's solar industry already employs more veterans than the average U.S. business, and provides economic empowerment through good wages (\$20-\$24 per hour) in high-growth jobs, many of which do not require advanced degrees.

"Solar companies hire veterans because they come trained, ready, and passionate. The solar industry is filled with people who are passionate about the job and who work together to help people, the environment, and national security," said Nat Kremer, an Afghan war veteran and Chairman of the Solar Energy Industries Association. "Solar, like the military, is not just about the paycheck; it's also about working for something larger than oneself. Veterans working in solar get to serve our nation twice."

GRID Alternatives will provide solar installation trainings for military and veterans groups, "Vets helping Vets" events to provide solar systems for low-income veterans, an online resume bank connecting trainees with industry job openings, and solar job fairs.

“Solar is a high-growth career that speaks to so many of the skills our Veterans bring -- leadership, teamwork, problem-solving, innovation,” said Anna Bautista, Vice President for Construction and Workforce Development at GRID Alternatives. “Together we can build a stronger clean energy future for our country.”

Troops to Solar also includes a new Native American Veterans Initiative to install solar with veteran job trainees in extremely high-need communities in the Navajo Nation and other tribal reservations. According to the U.S. Veterans Administration, Native Americans serve in the military at a higher per-capita rate than any other ethnic group but suffer from higher rates of unemployment, poverty, and lack of access to health insurance.

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### **About GRID Alternatives**

GRID Alternatives is America’s largest non-profit solar installer bringing clean energy technology and job training to low-income families and underserved communities through a network of community partners, volunteers, and philanthropic supporters. GRID has installed nearly 6000 rooftop solar systems with a combined installed capacity of over 20MW, saving \$155 million in lifetime electricity costs, preventing 450,000 tons of greenhouse gas emissions, and providing over 22,000 people with solar training. GRID has eleven regional offices and affiliates serving California, Colorado, the Mid-Atlantic, the New York tri-state area, Tribal communities nationwide, and Nicaragua. For more information, visit [www.gridalternatives.org](http://www.gridalternatives.org)

### **About Wells Fargo**

Wells Fargo & Company (NYSE: WFC) is a nationwide, diversified, community-based financial services company with \$1.8 trillion in assets. Founded in 1852 and headquartered in San Francisco, Wells Fargo provides banking, insurance, investments, mortgage, and consumer and commercial finance through 8,700 locations, 12,800 ATMs, the internet ([wellsfargo.com](http://wellsfargo.com)) and mobile banking, and has offices in 36 countries to support customers who conduct business in the global economy. With approximately 265,000 team members, Wells Fargo serves one in three households in the United States. Wells Fargo & Company was ranked No. 30 on Fortune’s 2015 rankings of America’s largest corporations. Wells Fargo’s vision is to satisfy our customers’ financial needs and help them succeed financially. Wells Fargo perspectives are also available at [Wells Fargo Blogs](#) and [Wells Fargo Stories](#).