



For immediate release

City, Non-profit Partnership Brings Solar Power and Job Training to East Baltimore's C.A.R.E. Community

Solar installation event kicks off community resiliency pilot that will benefit local residents

BALTIMORE, MD, June 18, 2015 - Today government officials and community leaders gathered at the home of Leonard Wills in East Baltimore's C.A.R.E Community to kick off a project that will bring the benefits of solar power to local residents and serve as a model for improving community sustainability and resiliency citywide. Led by nonprofit GRID Alternatives in partnership with the Baltimore Office of Sustainability and the Baltimore Energy Challenge, the project includes solar installations for 10 families and a community center, cool roofs for increased efficiency, and 1600 hours of hands-on solar training opportunities for local residents.

Made possible with support from the Abell Foundation, this will be the first Baltimore area project for GRID Alternatives, the nation's largest nonprofit solar installer. It comes at a time of tremendous growth for the solar industry and amid ongoing local, state and federal policy discussions around making solar power more accessible to underserved communities and improving their climate resilience.

"The City of Baltimore has made a long-term commitment to building sustainable and resilient communities," said Baltimore Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake. "We are proud to bring to our city this model of clean, affordable energy paired with job training opportunities for our residents."

Leonard Wills, a 74-year-old who has lived his whole life in the community, is excited to be part of the project. "I'll be able to use my savings to make some repairs to the house that I haven't been able to afford," he said.

Wills' solar electric system along with those of his neighbors will be installed by job trainees from Civic Works, who will be getting their first taste of solar installation after installing cool roofs on the homes.

"We're excited to offer our trainees this opportunity to participate in solar installation" said Earl Millett, Chief Operating Officer of Civic Works. "They have completed classroom training and received industry-recognized weatherization certifications. We know that this on-the-job training will help them secure full time employment and thrive in Baltimore's green economy."

"Every time we start working with a community like this one, we hear from residents that they need job opportunities, they want to live more affordably in their homes, and they want to do something positive for the environment," said Nicole Steele, Executive Director of GRID Alternatives Mid-Atlantic. "We hope to do many more projects like this city- and region-wide."

Constellation, an Exelon subsidiary, sponsored today's kick-off event. "Constellation and our parent company, Exelon, continue to be committed to advancing renewable energy initiatives in Baltimore and across Maryland," said Mark Huston, president of Constellation's national retail business. "We are

pleased to be part a program that is increasing solar energy in our state, and making it more accessible and affordable for city residents.”

Additional supporters include Baltimore Housing, Wells Fargo Foundation and GRID Alternatives’ national equipment partners SunEdison, SunPower Corp., Enphase Energy, IronRidge, SnapNRack and Quickmount PV.

Photos available after 11am at www.gridalternatives.org/baltimorepics

About GRID Alternatives

GRID Alternatives is a non-profit organization that makes renewable energy technology and job training accessible to underserved communities, bringing together community partners, volunteers and job trainees to implement solar power and energy efficiency for low-income families. More than 5400 families have benefited from GRID’s work to date, saving \$135 million in lifetime electricity costs, and over 21,000 people have received solar training. GRID Alternatives has ten regional offices and affiliates serving California, Colorado, the New York tri-state region, the mid-Atlantic region, and Tribal communities nationwide. For more information, visit www.gridalternatives.org.

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