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***** PRESS RELEASE *****

**Nation's largest solar nonprofit launches new effort giving
low-income Sacramento families access to solar power, job training**

***GRID Alternatives kicks off program launch by installing solar for
Oak Park family with local YouthBuild trainees***

SACRAMENTO – Today, a long-time Oak Park resident is receiving a new solar energy system courtesy of GRID Alternatives, the nation's largest solar non-profit, as part of the organization's launch into Sacramento. Local youth from Sacramento Regional Conservation Corps will help mount the system, learning new skills in a rapidly growing industry.

State and local lawmakers, community partners and supporters came out for a morning ribbon cutting to help kick off GRID's effort to bring solar savings and solar job training to low-income families in Sacramento, an area not currently served by the state's low-income solar incentives. California is a national leader in making solar accessible in underserved communities, but its flagship programs, SASH and MASH, do not serve municipal utility customers.

Bob Gragson, Regional Director for GRID Alternatives North Valley, is at the helm of the effort. "GRID has a proven program model that we've used to serve thousands of families across the California and in several states across the nation," Gragson says. "Solar has the power to transform neighborhoods: to create wealth for families, and job opportunity for disadvantaged residents. We want to make sure that all communities have access."

In 2013, AB 217 passed which extended the existing low-income solar programs through 2021. And in 2014, California made its first round of investments from the State's Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund that included a smart investment to expand solar access to families in some of the most economically and environmentally disadvantaged communities, including parts of Sacramento. These funds will ensure that more families like Ms. Amadali's are able to participate in California's clean energy transition.

"The solar industry has grown by 40 percent over the last year, and solar jobs are growing by 20 percent. We want Sacramento to benefit from the growth of the booming clean energy economy, and our residents to have the ability to obtain skilled jobs in a high-growth industry," said Assemblymember Roger Dickinson (D-Sacramento), who was present for the ribbon-cutting ceremony. "Programs like GRID's will help residents right here in our community."

The opportunity this program gives to expand renewable energies is amazing," says homeowner Penelope Amadali, who is going solar this week. "Solar energy cannot be only for the elite. It's important that programs like these reach struggling neighborhoods like Oak Park."

The GRID Alternatives' program launch in Sacramento is sponsored by grants from the Honnold Foundation, and the Wells Fargo Housing Foundation with additional support from SunEdison, SunPower Corp., Enphase Energy, Rabobank, and Capital City Solar.

"Wells Fargo is a long-time supporter of GRID Alternatives' program, and have been invested in the revitalization of Oak Park for a number of years," said Haley Dewhurst, District Manager for Greater Sacramento at Wells Fargo. "We are pleased to not only fund a solar project, but to be actually install it with employee volunteers. It's very rewarding."

Other events in the week-long program launch include an all-women installation with leaders in energy and policy, a gala-style reception on Wednesday, October 15, and a Wells Fargo employee volunteer installation for another Oak Park homeowner on Saturday, October 18.

To learn more about their program, to qualify for solar services or training, or to sponsor an installation, readers can contact the North Valley office at (530) 217-6115.

GRID Alternatives is a nonprofit organization that makes renewable energy technology and job training accessible to low-income communities. We bring together community partners, volunteers and job trainees to implement solar power and energy efficiency for low-income families, providing energy cost savings, valuable hands-on experience, and a source of clean, local energy that benefits us all. More than 4,500 families have benefited from our work to date, saving \$113 million in lifetime electricity costs, and over 17,500 people have received solar training. GRID Alternatives has 10 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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