



For immediate release

## 31 Homes in Baltimore Receive Solar through Partnership

*The celebration marks the completion of the projects with the turning on of a solar system*

**BALTIMORE, MD; August 22, 2017** – Thirty-one homes in the Morgan Community Mile of Baltimore, Maryland, are receiving the benefits of solar power thanks to a partnership between the [City of Baltimore](#), the [US Department of Energy](#), [Civic Works](#), [GRID Alternatives Mid-Atlantic](#), [Baltimore Energy Challenge](#), and [Morgan State University](#). GRID Alternatives Mid-Atlantic, a nonprofit organization that makes solar power and job training accessible to underserved communities, managed the installation of the solar systems after the homes received weatherization services from Baltimore City's Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP).

The celebration marks the completion of the projects, and is taking place at one of the recipients' homes. The 31 solar systems have a combined capacity of 104 kilowatts, and will result in a total lifetime savings of over \$500,000 for the homeowners. "I'm excited. I tell everyone that I have solar now," said Wade Watkins, Morgan Community Mile solar recipient. "One, I know I can save some decent money. And two, I'm helping the environment." Watkins' 3.43 kW system will save the Baltimore homeowner approximately \$600 annually, and will prevent 89 tons of greenhouse gas emissions over the system's lifetime. Two of Watkins' neighbors have also received solar through this partnership.

"This successful solar installation program proves that public-private partnerships can deliver real results for our communities," said Congressman John Sarbanes. "By weatherizing homes and installing rooftop solar panels, we can help Baltimoreans lower their energy bills and reduce their carbon footprints. Importantly, this program also provides hands-on job training for Baltimore residents seeking employment in the solar industry – one of the fastest-growing industries in America."

Baltimore City's Weatherization Program provides insulation and other upgrades to help make low-income households safe and affordable. Over 1,000 weatherization clients received energy efficiency installations and education through the Baltimore Energy Challenge. Through a partnership with various organizations, funding from the City of Baltimore, and third party financing provided through GRID Alternatives, 31 of these weatherized homes also received solar panels. Civic Works' Baltimore Energy Challenge utilized its strong relationship with many of these homes and focused its outreach in the Morgan Community Mile and the area surrounding Coppin State University. The energy efficiency upgrades, combined with the solar panels, will allow the homeowners to benefit from significant savings on their electricity bills.

"Over 1,000 Weatherization clients have received further energy efficiency installations and education through the Baltimore Energy Challenge's Energy Efficiency Program. 31 of these clients were able to take this huge next step in receiving solar through this partnership," said Tom Caponiti the Heat Island Project Coordinator of Baltimore Energy Challenge.

"Once city residents have seen the power they can have over their own energy bills through energy conservation and education, it becomes the next logical step that they want to control where the reduced energy they do need comes from. We were happy to be part of the team that could connect these green conscious residents to solar, while also connecting trainees to a great job field," said Earl Millett of Civic Works.

The solar installations were also used to provide hands-on job training opportunities for 110 Baltimore Energy Challenge AmeriCorps members and other community volunteers. “GRID Alternatives uses a job training model to do our installations,” said Nicole Steele, Executive Director of GRID Alternatives Mid-Atlantic. “Hands-on experience is key to providing necessary skills for individuals to enter the fast growing solar industry.”

These thirty-one Morgan Community Mile homes demonstrates the success of bringing together strengths of various organizations and non-profits, and marks the beginning of the City’s efforts to make solar energy affordable and accessible to all.

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**About GRID Alternatives Mid-Atlantic**

GRID Alternatives Mid-Atlantic is an affiliate of GRID Alternatives, America’s largest nonprofit solar installer, bringing clean energy technology and job training to underserved communities. GRID Mid-Atlantic has installed 121 solar electric systems for low-income households to date, with a combined installed capacity of 498 kW, saving \$2.5 million in lifetime electricity costs and preventing 13,000 tons of greenhouse gas emissions. 595 people have also received training through the program. For more information, visit

[www.gridalternatives.org/midatlantic](http://www.gridalternatives.org/midatlantic).

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