



****UPDATE:** In response to the rapidly spreading COVID-19 virus, GRID is canceling volunteer opportunities, including any remaining Solar Spring Break trips, on installations indefinitely beginning March 16 and moving student engagement online. Learn more about [GRID's pandemic response](#).**

For immediate release

College Students Connect with Hands-on Climate Solutions through National “Solar Spring Break”

GRID Alternatives hosts 15 teams in national alternative break program. Over 160 students traveling to install no-cost solar benefiting low-income families.

OAKLAND, CA; March 2, 2020 – Today through May 8, 2020, over 160 students, representing 16 colleges and universities from nine states, will get hands-on with renewable energy and spend their school break installing no-cost solar for low-income families. Through GRID Alternatives’ [Solar Spring Break](#) program, students get hands-on with climate solutions and connect with solar careers.

GRID Alternatives, a national non-profit leader in making renewable energy technology and job training accessible to underserved communities, will lead the teams of students in solar installations across California and on the Navajo Nation. Since 2014, the alternative break program has been an immersive, service-learning opportunity for students to learn about the energy and environmental issues facing low-income and tribal communities in the United States.

Throughout the spring, student teams from across the United States will travel to project sites in California, from San Diego to Sacramento, and in tribal communities including with the Chemehuevi Tribe, on the Campo Reservation, and with the Ojo Encino Chapter of Navajo Nation. Students spend the week on a combination of solar installations, neighborhood outreach, renewable energy educational activities, and recreation.

Now in its seventh year, Solar Spring Break has grown from six schools and teams in 2014 to 16 schools in 2020. This year’s program includes teams from:

- California State University, East Bay
- Duke University
- Fort Lewis College
- George Mason University
- Georgia Tech
- Miami Dade College
- Michigan State University
- North Carolina State University
- University of Arizona
- University of California, Berkeley (two teams)
- University of California, Santa Cruz
- Villanova University
- Intercollegiate Team (students from Appalachian State, UNC Chapel Hill, Virginia Tech)

“It’s been truly wonderful mostly because it’s one thing to be learning about renewable energy technologies in the classroom, but it’s another to be doing hands-on work and installing this type of technology,” [said Tamar](#)



[Saunders](#), UC Berkeley student and member of the 2019 intercollegiate team, about last year's Solar Spring Break experience.

This year the intercollegiate team will be returning to Southern California and will be installing solar on the Campo Reservation with GRID Alternatives San Diego.

"Renewable energy and sustainability is super important to me and it's one of the key things we should be focusing on if we plan to move forward in a positive way," [said Isabella Arellano, a political science and environmental studies student from Fort Lewis College](#). Fort Lewis College students will be traveling to Navajo Nation from Durango, Colorado again this year for Solar Spring Break with GRID's national Tribal Program.

"Students are more engaged than ever in shaping today's environmental and climate change solutions," said GRID Alternatives CEO and co-founder Erica Mackie. "Solar Spring Break gives students who are passionate about renewable energy the chance to see how solar power technology's real-world benefits make more resilient communities."

The Solar Spring Break effort is sponsored by the Wells Fargo Foundation, which has underwritten the program's expansion with a focus on schools serving diverse populations.

Best-of [Solar Spring Break photos](#) (courtesy of GRID Alternatives) and b-roll available upon request.

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ABOUT GRID ALTERNATIVES

GRID Alternatives is a national leader in making renewable energy technology and jobs accessible to low-income communities and communities of color. Using a unique, people-first model, GRID develops and implements solar projects that serve qualifying households and affordable housing providers, while providing hands-on job training. GRID has installed solar for more than 15,000 families to-date and helped households and housing providers save \$386 million in lifetime electricity costs, while engaging more than 40,000 people in solar education and training. GRID Alternatives has eight regional offices and affiliates serving California, Colorado, the mid-Atlantic region, and Tribal communities nationwide, and serves communities in Nicaragua, Nepal, and Mexico. For more information, visit www.gridalternatives.org.

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