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## Solar One's Green Design Lab Helps NYC STEM Teachers Transition to Virtual Learning During the Pandemic

*Nearly 100 New York City Schoolteachers have been able to continue offering quality STEM education to over 6,000 students through innovative virtual learning resources created by the Green Design Lab (GDL), a program of NYC nonprofit Solar One.*

**New York City, NY (May 14)** – Since the closure of New York City schools on March 16<sup>th</sup>, teachers have been struggling to adapt their classes and lesson plans to the online environment. Working fifteen-hour days has not been uncommon, and teachers themselves have had to learn new technology and how to deliver STEM instruction, often very hands on and experiential, in the new virtual classroom.

New York City has been devastated by the COVID-19 crisis, and research has clearly shown that the virus is hitting low-income and underserved communities extraordinarily hard. These are the exact communities that Solar One's education programs are designed to serve. The city has also implemented massive cuts to in-school and after-school education programs for the remainder of this school year and for the 2020-2021 school year as well. Solar One has responded by offering its educational programs remotely and stands ready to offer its programs in the future once in- person delivery is permitted.

At the start of the pandemic, GDL quickly realized it had to shift focus from in-school delivery of hands-on programming to a virtual format that provides critical support for NYC Department of Education (DOE) and Newark public school teachers. GDL's distance learning programs include video resources, PowerPoint presentations, interactive and real-time mapping activities, assessments and more. All resources were made available for free to NYC and Newark teachers.

In addition, our GDL team recently created a hands-on environmental STEM curriculum to accompany the documentary *Point of No Return* – the story of the first solar powered flight around the world. The curriculum was created through a partnership with Far West Films and is

a separate curriculum that is not part of existing GDL offerings. Title 1 schools can access the film + curriculum for free.

Solar One and the Green Design Lab are committed to adapting and innovating through this crisis and into the economic and social changes that are sure to follow.

*Solar One is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization whose mission is to design and deliver innovative education, training, and technical assistance that fosters sustainability and resiliency in diverse urban environments. We empower learning that changes the way people think about energy, sustainability, and resilience by engaging and educating a diverse set of stakeholders and beneficiaries. Our programs help individuals and communities explore new ways of living and working that are more adaptive to a changing world.*

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