2020 Program Report

RESOURCEFULNESS













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Solar One - Green Workforce Training Lab 29-76 Northern Blvd. Long Island City, NY 11101

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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Director's Letter

June 25, 2020

Dear Friends,

Every year when we produce a Program Report, it's eye-opening to review everything that Solar One accomplishes in a single year. But this past year has been exceptional in so many ways that I'm all the more eager to share this report with you.



At this time last year, the pandemic had begun disrupting lives around the world and Solar One was no exception. However, we were lucky to find ways to ensure the organization would survive in these difficult circumstances and managed to rally the energy, fortitude, and creative restructuring of many of our programs, allowing us to not only survive but thrive. I believe a big part of that is due to one of Solar One's greatest strengths: Resourcefulness, the theme of this Program Report. Our staff was able to harness our longstanding ability to be nimble, responsive, and innovative in the face of change to find ways to continue to serve the communities we work with, no matter what challenges are presented to us.

From the Fiscal team, who rapidly secured a PPP loan to ensure we'd be able to weather the storm with our whole staff intact, to the Green Design Lab K-12 educators and Green Workforce Training instructors who quickly and creatively adapted our lessons and trainings for remote learning, each team responded to the new environment with energy and ingenuity. The Here Comes Solar team relied heavily on Zoom meetings and webinars and the Park team returned to work a mere three months into the pandemic, hiring goats to handle the accumulated weeds when it was too dangerous to have human volunteers working in groups, even outside. Despite the severe budget cuts that the City was forced to impose, the Development staff found funders to help us bridge gaps that, at the very least, could have weakened our programs. I couldn't be more impressed and inspired by the dedication, work ethic and yes, resourcefulness, of absolutely every single person who works for Solar One at all levels of the organization. And I couldn't be more grateful to everyone who helped us keep our ship afloat and on course, whether a large foundation, our programmatic and governmental partners, or an individual donor who contributed to our Septemberfest virtual fundraising event.

It was Albert Einstein who said, "In the midst of every crisis, lies great opportunity." As you peruse this report, you will learn how we turned what has become the greatest crisis of our lifetime into an opportunity to expand the limits of what we thought was achievable without being physically together. In some instances, our abilities, as with our communication and online delivery skills of our resource-full programs, were sharpened and refined in new ways, enabling us to broaden our reach and strengthen our efforts to be more inclusive; in others, approaches that we had embraced for some time, like diversifying our funding sources, were validated.

As we all begin to emerge from our pandemic cocoons, some of the strategies we employed and lessons we learned in 2020 will continue to inform how we work, interact with our stakeholders and envision our future. Thank you for being part of our community and our journey. We couldn't do it without you!

Sincerely,

Christophy follows

Christopher J. Collins

By The Numbers

Green Workforce Training 400 Total Students Trained 644 Certificates Awarded

Here Comes Solar

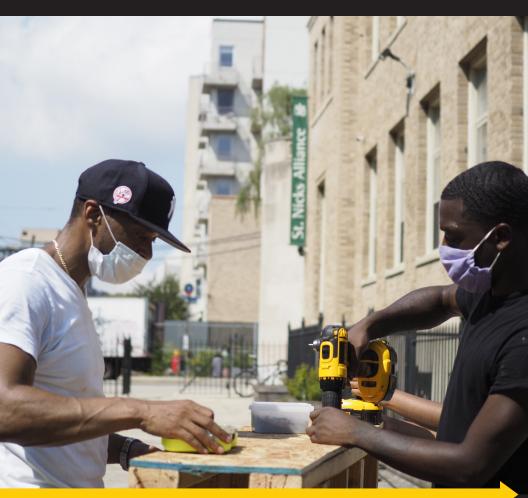
413 Solar Projects Installed to Date
674 Solar Projects Committed to Date
379 Affordable Housing Projects

Green Design Lab 4,300 Total Students Taught 133 Teachers Trained 120 Schools

Stuyvesant Cove Park

911 Volunteer Hours (Not Including Goats!)

Green Workforce Training



400 Total Students Trained 644 Certificates Awarded



or over ten years, the Green Workforce program has provided sustainabilityfocused education and training targeted to priority populations, including people with previous criminal justice involvement, those experiencing homelessness, people struggling with substance abuse issues, and young adults in search of alternative pathways. Trainees come from a broad set of



backgrounds and experience, ranging from incumbent building staff to folks within a year of release from Rikers Island.

The pandemic posed a huge challenge to our hands-on Green Workforce program. Without missing a beat, our tenacious team adapted to virtual training, continuing to prepare un- and underemployed individuals who have encountered barriers to employment for today's job market. We were busier than ever keeping clients participating in New York City's workforce organization programs active and engaged at this critical time. In 2020, we trained over 400 students and students gained 644 industry certifications.

Once the team made the shift to virtual teaching due to Covid-19, it became quickly apparent that accessibility was an issue we needed to address. A large percentage of participants were unable to acquire a laptop or tablet or did not have reliable internet; many were using a smartphone to participate in online courses. Lack of access to the proper distance learning tools is one of the many inequities that has surfaced during the pandemic. Solar One's instructors were able to modify our training to ensure that all students, even those with limited technology, were able to participate in industry certifications.

Our team has also been integrating historical context into their training to make the connection for clients between green jobs and systemic and environmental justice issues. To bolster this, in 2020, we incorporated an Environmental Justice unit into our program.

Workforce instructors prepare students with the hard skills they need to enter or advance in high growth clean energy careers—energy efficiency, renewable energy, green construction, green building operations and maintenance, and solar PV installation. Solar One typically provides training onsite at our hands-on lab in Long Island City where trainees have the opportunity to work for example with mock demos for multifamily steam and hydronic heating systems and learn wiring through small scale solar and electrical installation projects. In the summer, when the weather was favorable and Covid positivity rates remained low in NYC, we moved outside to deliver sociallydistanced, hands-on programs in partnership with other workforce development, social enterprise and community-based organizations and partners. The Green Workforce team led a solar PV installation training program for students from our partner Green City Force. The cohort of students included NYCHA residents being taught transferable job skills in sustainable carpentry, electrical and solar PV installation. Twelve students were hired on as full-time solar installers for the Multiply Solar Project and will be given future opportunities for advancement and employment.

The energy generated from this community solar installation will provide a discounted electricity rate for approximately 470 New York City households. A portion of this power will be reserved for low- and moderate-income New Yorkers. Part of the profits will be dedicated to funding scholarship programs as well. This project model reflects the strides being made to simultaneously address both climate change and unemployment through clean energy jobs that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, while also increasing the inclusivity of sustainability projects within public housing.

In early fall, we conducted green construction trainings at Solar One's Stuyvesant Cove Park for Bedford Stuy Restoration Corporation clients and for St. Nicks Alliance at their location in Brooklyn.

Major investments in clean energy and climate resiliency at the Federal, State and City level are transforming NYC into a city on the cutting edge of sustainability. Building a green workforce is a critical move towards realizing this vision. The hard skills training and industry-recognized certifications Solar One staff provides for un- and underemployed individuals, gives them an advantage to finding local, livable wages and job security, critical to the post-Covid economic recovery.



Our Partners

Bed Stuy Restoration, Building Works, The Door, First Service Energy, Fortune Society, Green City Force, The HOPE Program, Housing Works, LaGuardia Community College, NYPA, NYSERDA, St. Nicks Alliance, STRIVE International.

Nationally Recognized Certification Courses We Offer GPRO Operations and Maintenance and GPRO Electrical, NABCEP Solar PV Associate, BPI Multifamily Building Operator, EPA Lead RRP, and OSHA 30.

Here Comes Solar



413 Solar Projects Installed to Date 674 Solar Projects Committed to Date 379 Affordable Housing Projects espite the challenges presented by the pandemic, during 2020 the Here Comes Solar team was able to continue its work to make solar power accessible and affordable for low-income and frontline communities most impacted by the economic and public health



impacts of pollution, climate change, and Covid-19. Here Comes Solar develops high-impact solar projects on multifamily affordable housing and community facilities, as well as community shared solar projects that directly reduce electricity bills for low-income households. These projects create workforce training and employment opportunities for community residents, deliver utility bill savings to those who need it most, and demonstrate models for low-income communities to drive our clean energy transition.

2020 was the Here Comes Solar program's busiest year yet! Major 2020 accomplishments included:

- Finalizing a lease and securing financing for Community Power, our 1.2-megawatt community solar project on NYCHA developments in East Harlem and Central Brooklyn. Construction began at the end of 2020 and the systems will be fully installed by the summer of 2021. Community Power created jobs for 12 NYCHA residents during construction, and 400 low-income households will subscribe to the project to receive clean energy and utility bill savings.
- Securing approval to interconnect Sunset Park Solar with the grid. Sunset Park Solar is a 700-kilowatt community solar project on the roof of the Brooklyn Army Terminal that we are co-developing with UPROSE and Co-op Power. The project, which will be installed in 2021, will create jobs for six workforce trainees and provide utility bill savings to more than 150 families in Sunset Park.
- Completing predevelopment and procurement for the Brooklyn Megabundle solar project, a large cluster of NYCHA developments in Brooklyn which will host more than a megawatt of solar by the end of 2021.



In 2020 we provided pro bono solar consulting to hundreds of affordable housing properties and procured solar for 68 buildings that will host 2.4-megawatts of new solar capacity. We continue to work closely with the Joint Ownership Entity of New York City (JOE NYC) to develop and execute a new model to bring the benefits of solar tax incentives to nonprofit affordable housing. We also worked with the NYC Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) to launch a "cost-effective solar mandate" for NYC affordable housing providers' adoption of cost-effective solar. We are continuing our work with the Governor's Office of Storm Recovery to bring solar + energy storage systems to community facilities in Superstorm Sandy-affected areas to serve as resilience hubs for residents. These resilience hubs will be installed in 2021.

Here Comes Solar engages with policymakers, utilities, and public agency staff to advocate for and inform New York's clean energy policy and programs to ensure that they support future low-income solar projects. As one of the fastest growing sectors in the nation, the solar industry has the potential to transform the energy grid to clean power, protect the environment for future generations, and create stable, local jobs that support sustainable and resilient communities. In the year ahead we plan to build on our work in NYC and explore opportunities for growth beyond the five boroughs.





Green Design Lab



4,300 Total Students Taught 133 Teachers Trained 120 Schools

ne of the strengths of Solar One's Green Design Lab. our K-12 environmental STEM education program, is that we cater to the many different needs of our various school communities. So when the NYC schools closed to onsite learning in Spring 2020 due to the pandemic, our education team guickly and creatively began to transition to distance learning. Our programs reached schools in all five boroughs of NYC and Newark. NJ hardest hit by the impacts of Covid-19 where the pandemic is deepening the learning gap. We were determined to support the NYC Department of Education's efforts and respond to teachers striving to provide



meaningful, interactive virtual lessons for their students. By modifying or developing turnkey curriculum, video resources, live PowerPoint presentations, project-based activities, and integrating materials and lessons on web-based platforms, we reached over 4,300 students and 133 teachers through remote delivery. 122 teachers signed up for and downloaded the distance learning curriculum we offered free of charge, indicating they would reach almost 10,000 students.

Solar One is recognized as a leader in environmental STEM education in NYC. For 10+ years, our educators have been delivering hands-on lessons and activities fostering sustainable behaviors and student-led solutions to real-world issues focused on Energy, Air, Water, Materials, and Food, as well as 21st Century career skills. Solar One's longestrunning and perhaps most popular Green Design Lab program is NYC Solar Schools. The program has been expanded to provide advanced technical solar training for Career and Technical Education (CTE) high school students. With the growth in the clean energy industry, there is a gap in qualified entry-level workers and a shortage of training opportunities for youth who want to join the renewable energy trades. Our Solar CTE program creates a bridge while providing youth with valuable work experience that builds their STEM skills and better prepares them for future green career opportunities. Students participate in activities such as electrical wiring, solar system design, solar site assessment, and racking and mounting. They work in groups to install a 500-watt solar energy system. To further support teachers, Solar One trains both teachers and students in the nationally recognized North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners (NABCEP) solar associate certification course

CareerCLUE (Community, Learning, Understanding, Experience), our summer career readiness, work-based learning program, was our next Covid hurdle. Despite the challenge, we ultimately delivered a wellreceived unique remote summer experience for 229 student interns from six city high schools. Participating youth explored sustainability, environmental justice, energy efficiency, renewable energy, food and water systems, climate resilience, and green careers through interactive games, lessons, and projects.

Citywide budget cuts as a result of the pandemic initially put CareerCLUE in jeopardy. Solar One worked with a coalition of nonprofit organizations, the NYC Department of Education, and the NYC Department of Youth and Community Development to support summer programs and maintain the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP). Stipends provided by SYEP are a critical component of the program, helping to reduce barriers to student participation and increase accessibility. For economically disadvantaged families, wages from this work-based learning program offer some financial assistance and were greatly needed during the pandemic.

Aligned with the wave of social and racial justice movements across the country, we are mindful of the inextricable link between climate justice, environmental justice, and racial justice and are committed to working towards real change within the environmental education sector. During Spring 2020,



Solar One developed a curriculum for CareerCLUE with the intention of creating an interdisciplinary and culturally responsive program that is more explicit in connecting environmental issues to other issues students are facing in their communities. The updated curriculum also has an increased emphasis on civic engagement. A major component of this programming is our webinar series that centers on BIPOC and underrepresented voices in the environmental field. Topics have included Solar Energy in NYC (in Spanish), Indigenous Youth Environmental Activism, Women in Energy Careers, Black Youth Environmentalists, Fostering Equitable and Sustainable Food Systems, and more. Not only has it been invaluable for students to be introduced to industry professionals who they would not typically have access to, but the series is impactful for youth who see themselves reflected in the panelists.

Click Here to View Our Webinar Series on YouTube

Stuyvesant Cove Park



911 Volunteer Hours (Not Including Goats!)

or over 17 years, Solar One has been a partner to the city of New York in operating and maintaining Stuyvesant Cove Park, an eco park green space on Manhattan's East River where we present programs centered around climate education and the sustainable stewardship of urban land.

During the NYC PAUSE, safety rules required that our park staff stay home, which meant that when we returned to the site in June 2020 we found a landscape overrun with weeds and trash. To get back on track, we hired 20 goats to help us 'goatscape' our Education Garden beds back into shape. Not only were we able to model traditional techniques that were not dependent on herbicides, but we also offered up some much-needed joy for the community as well.

The leftover brush and woody material from goatscaping was then folded back into the ecosystem to create two hugelkultur beds built in collaboration with community volunteers, our fall interns, and the UN International School's Stuy Cove Stewards Club. Hugelkultur is a traditional European land building technique in which soil is placed overtop decomposing wood to create raised beds that retain water and provide good habitat for fungal and microbial plant allies. These beds also provide an extended growing season as they generate internal heat during their ongoing decomposition. As a reward for our volunteers' hard work, we hosted a wild food event, serving up acorn muffins, beach plum jam, linden tea, and chaga coffee.

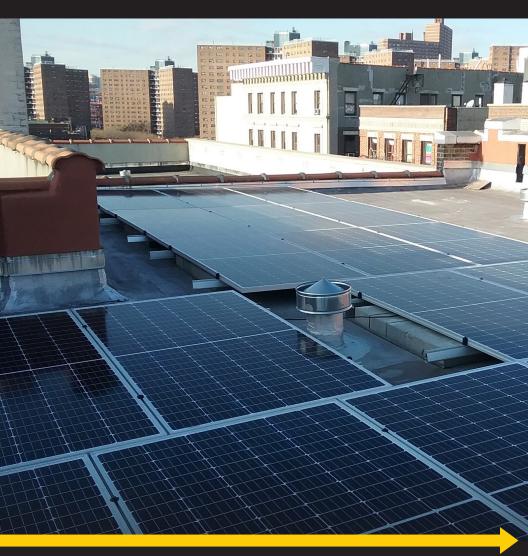


This was the launch of a summer and fall filled with managing the landscape, while also welcoming back visitors and volunteers. 112 volunteers helped plant and maintain this productive natural ecosystem. Thousands of local residents also used the park for active and passive recreation throughout the year; the outdoor relief and restoration it provided during the lockdown was greatly appreciated.

Click Here to enjoy this literally low-hanging fruit recipe for Beach Plum Jam!

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Clean Energy Communities





n 2020, Solar One continued to support NYC's municipal clean energy initiatives through the NYSERDA Clean Energy Communities Program. Our staff worked with the Mayor's Office of Sustainability and the Department of Citywide Administrative Services Division of Energy Management to implement emissions reduction initiatives and to adapt programs to meet the City's needs and priorities in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic.



In addition to the Clean Energy Coordinators' planned work on public and private sector carbon emissions reduction, in 2020 our staff worked hand-in-hand with the Mayor's Office of Sustainability and their publicsector colleagues to implement Get Cool NYC, an emergency airconditioner distribution program that provided 74,000 air conditioners to low-income seniors who were at higher risk for indoor heat exposure due to staying inside for social distancing. In 2020, our staff implemented electrification initiatives, helped lay the groundwork for NYC's PACE financing program, and completed advanced analysis to develop public agency emissions reduction pathways. We are particularly proud of our Clean Energy Communities Program staff for stepping up to play an important role in the City's life-saving initiative to get emergency airconditioners to our vulnerable neighbors.

Resiliency Education Center





OVERVIEW AND BENEFITS OF THE SOLAR ONE RESILIENCY EDUCATION CENTER

The Solar One Resiliency Education Center will be a net-zero building in Stuyvesant Cove Park on the East River, operating as an interactive learning center, an innovative events venue, and a thriving community space. During 2020, Solar One and project partners continued the planning phase for the building, step-by-step within the confines of the COVID pandemic shutdown. We anticipate continued planning into 2022, with construction to follow, towards a target open date at the end of 2023.

The building will be the first fully resilient facility of its kind in any major American city. Located along the waterfront, it will be a model of resiliency for hurricanes, storm surges, and other potential emergency conditions, and it will feature advanced sustainable building engineering and design components.



Energy generation: 38-kilowatt array alongside the FDR Drive, visible to tens of thousands of New Yorkers every day. It will generate off the grid solar electricity allowing the building to serve as a community disaster relief center in the event of future storms. Energy storage will enable the building to be fully resilient.

Resiliency features: Due to its location in a V-Zone (the most hazardous of the Special Flood Hazard Areas defined by FEMA), the building will be elevated 10-feet, include elevated mechanicals, a steel structure, and foundation that are hurricane, tornado, and seismic resistant.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND RELATED PROGRAMMING

The Center will encourage New Yorkers to make energy efficiency and renewable investments in their buildings and businesses. The building will also be an education destination for the thousands of NYC public school children who participate in Solar One's Green Design Lab and CleanTech programs each year. It will provide indoor and outdoor experiences for learning about sustainability, climate change, and resiliency as they engage in high-tech hands-on activities and demonstrations in our state-of-the art classrooms. The beautiful setting of Stuyvesant Cove Park, the Center's backyard, will support a myriad of learning, recreation, and arts opportunities. An outdoor Green Theater will host solar-powered, environmental oriented theater, dance, and film events. In the open space under the building, we will have storage and reception, plus visitors will cool off with refreshments in the cafe.

Board and Staff

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Green Workforce

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Here Comes Solar

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NYSERDA Clean Energy Communities Program

Max Barnett Emissions Reductions Analyst Nicole Joseph NYC Clean Energy Communities Coordinator Elissa Knight NYC Clean Energy Communities Coordinator

Stuyvesant Cove Park

Candace Thompson Park Manager Ceasar Nash Groundskeeper

Major Supporters

Government

Dormitory Authority of the State of New York Governor's Office of Storm Recovery – NY Rising Manhattan Borough President's Office – Hon. Gale Brewer NYC Council – Speaker Corey Johnson NYC Council – Hon. Keith Powers NYC Council Greener NYC Initiative NYC Department of Education NYC Economic Development Corporation NY Power Authority NYS Assemblyman – Hon. Harvey Epstein New York State Energy Research and Development Authority Foundations

11th Hour Project/Schmidt Family Foundation American Honda Foundation Dr. Robert C. & Tina Sohn Foundation FJC Foundation, A Foundation of Philanthropic Funds Green City Challenge LuEsther T. Mertz Charitable Trust Marietta & Andrew Romay Foundation Inc., Evi Blaikie & Peter Frev MUFG Union Bank Foundation National Grid Foundation New York Community Trust NYC Green Relief & Recovery Fund Posner Foundation of Pittsburgh Steven & Alexandra Cohen Foundation The City Gardens Club of NYC The JPB Foundation Victoria Foundation Viragh Family Foundation

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A special thank you goes out to all who contributed to our GoatFundMe in 2020

Partners

Accord Power ADAPT Community Network Alliance for Climate Education Andromeda ArcheWild Ascendant Neighborhood Development Association for Neighborhood and Housing Development Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation BlocPower Building Works/NYC District Council of Carpenters Brooklyn Borough President - Renewable Energy and Sustainability Taskforce Brooklyn Movement Center Brooklyn North STEAM Collaborative Brooklyn Public Library Cameron Engineering City-As-School City of Newark, Office of Sustainability Consolidated Edison Co-op Power Cooper Square Committee The DOOR Earth Celebrations Environmental Education Advisory Council NYC EnergeiaWorks **Enterprise Community Partners** Environmental Defense Fund ExpandED Farm School NYC Fifth Avenue Committee First Service Energy The Fortune Society FX Collaborative Girl Scouts of America Gilbane Bjarke Ingels Group Green City Force Grid City / 770 Electric Corp Greenwood Energy Habitat for Humanity NYC Housing Works The HOPE Program Horace Mann School ICE **IPPSOLAR** Ironbound Community Corporation Johns Mansville Joint Ownership Entity NYC LaGuardia Community College Lawyers Alliance for New York Local Initiatives Support Corporation NYC Math for America Manhattan Comprehensive Night and Day High School Natural Resources Defense Council New York Botanical Garden New York City Community Energy Cooperative New York City Department of Citywide Administrative Services New York City Department of Education NYCDOE Offices: Office of Community Schools

Office of Curriculum, Instruction, and Professional Learning, STEM Office of Career and Technical Education Office of Sustainability New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development New York City Department of Parks and Recreation New York City Department of Youth and Community Development New York City Energy Efficiency Corp. New York City Ferry New York City Mayor's Office Center for Youth Employment New York City Mayor's Office of Environmental Remediation New York City Mayor's Office of Climate & Sustainability New York Power Authority New York Public Library New York Governor's Office of Storm Recovery New York Lawyers for the Public Interest New York League of Conservation Voters New York Solar Energy Industries Association New York State Energy Research and **Development Authority** New York Sunworks New York City STEM Education Network New York University Nontraditional Employment for Women North American Association of Environmental Educators Partnership for Afterschool Education **PVilion** The POINT Community Development Corporation Queens Public Library Quixotic Systems Resilient Redhook Resonant Energy **RETI** Center **Riseboro Community Partnership** Safari Energy School of Visual Arts Solar Energy Industries Association Solstice St. Nicks Alliance STRIVE International STEM Teachers NYC Stuyvesant Cove Park Association StuyTown Property Services Sustainable CUNY The Trust for Public Land United Nations International School UPROSE Urban Future Lab / NYU Tandon Incubators Urban Homesteading Assistance Board Variety Boys & Girls Club of LIC Volunteers of America Vote Solar Wavestone WE ACT for Environmental Justice WILD CenterWNET- New York Public Media

Solarone

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