Dear Friends,

I am overjoyed to write to you all in my role as the new CEO of Solar One. First, I would like to thank Chris Collins for his amazing 17 years as Executive Director of Solar One, building the organization up from just a few staff members to a thriving nonprofit on the vanguard of the monumental fight against climate change. In short, Chris, along with the dedicated Board of Directors and passionate staff, have created an organization that is resilient, dynamic and will be instrumental as we collectively meet the greatest challenge of our lifetimes. From educating the next generation of environmental leaders, to training the green workforce of the future, to ensuring renewable energy is getting to low income communities across NYC and beyond, Solar One is meeting the moment.

There is so much to be excited about at Solar One. We are continuing to expand our programming, embarking on new partnerships, and we have just opened up our new Green Workforce Training Center and Administrative HQ in Long Island City. The opportunities and possibilities ahead are very bright at Solar One, and I am thrilled to be part of this next chapter. Thank you all for your ongoing partnership and support as we continue our journey.

Sincerely,

Stephen Levin

From Our CEO

From Our Board of Directors

Dear Friends,

What an energizing time to be part of Solar One! Through impactful programming and a creative, caring staff, Solar One has grown into a leader in NYC’s sustainability movement and serves as a model for efforts around the country. The Board of Directors is proud to support Solar One's critical work and welcomes new partners to join us as we aim to create more just, sustainable, resilient, and equitable communities.

Sincerely,

Sara Queen
Solar One’s Green Design Lab™ (GDL) is an award-winning K-12 environmental education program that explores urban environmental sustainability and climate change through hands-on and interactive activities. Using a creative approach to problem solving, GDL uses the urban environment to inspire students in STEM, emerging green technology, stewardship, and green careers.

Since 2009, GDL has reached nearly 40,000 students, 1,000s of teachers, and 1,000+ schools with classroom programs and teacher training, fostering sustainable behaviors and student-led solutions to real-world issues focused on Energy, Air, Water, Materials, & Food. In 2021, we delivered the majority of our programming remotely, reaching 5,031 students and 541 teachers.

A major highlight of 2021 has been the expansion of three career readiness programs for older youth- the Solar Career & Technical Education (CTE) program, delivered in partnership with NYC Department of Education Office of Sustainability, and our summer and school year “Out of School Time” (OST) programs – CareerCLUE and CareerSTEP. During the Solar CTE program, we train hundreds of NYC students in electrical, engineering, or construction programs for careers in the solar industry. During the summer, Solar One’s CareerCLUE (Community, Learning, Understanding, Experience) program, provides youth with a unique experience blending STEM learning, leadership development, field trips, and engagement in environmental sustainability through career exploration and service learning. Our newest work-based learning program, CareerSTEP (Skills, Training, Experience, Power) is a paid OST opportunity that prepares young people for climate and sustainability career pathways. During CareerSTEP, participants work on team projects that build soft skills, and work on capstones designed to reflect real world projects in fields such as environmental policy, solar, education, or energy technology. Solar One educators serve as mentors and work 1:1 with participants throughout the school year. Since September 2021, 22 student interns from DOE high schools and CUNY schools have begun to explore a variety of environmental job types and activities through the CareerSTEP program, and we are working to identify and match them to internships aligned with their interests for the summer.
Solar One’s Here Comes Solar (HCS) program seeks to expand access to the benefits of solar power to all New Yorkers. We achieve this goal by providing solar and energy storage consultation and assistance to affordable housing providers, low-income homeowners/renters, and community-based organizations. Through a combination of solar expertise, an effective technical assistance model, and strong partnerships, Solar One has developed more than 750 solar projects in New York’s underserved market segments, primarily on multifamily affordable housing.

To date, Here Comes Solar has facilitated 26.7 megawatts of solar, including 447 affordable housing properties. This represents a $80 million investment in local solar power, primarily benefiting low-income communities. Our resilient solar projects provide clean energy and emergency blackout power to community facilities in neighborhoods at high-risk of coastal and extreme storm flooding. The HCS team also supports Community Power, an ambitious project through which we trained/employed NYCHA residents to build New York’s first and only community solar project that is exclusively serving low-income renters.

In addition to providing direct services to facilitate high-impact solar projects, HCS staff works with City and State agencies and environmental justice partners to help inform New York’s decision-makers so they better serve low-income communities. Throughout 2021, HCS worked with NYSERDA to expand their affordable housing solar incentive; partnered with the NYC Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) to launch “Solar Where Feasible,” which is the nation’s first cost-effective solar mandate for affordable housing; and built a coalition to emphasize the importance of continuing NYC’s community solar program.
Green Workforce Program

Solar One’s Green Workforce Training Program (GWF), educates both entry-level and incumbent workforce in energy efficiency, green building operations and maintenance, and renewable energy. Since its inception in 2009, the program has successfully trained over 4,000 individuals in a wide array of hard-skills training courses and industry recognized certifications.

The GWF team works closely with established New York and New Jersey workforce agencies and our trainee demographics include criminal justice system-involved individuals, disconnected youth, veterans, individuals struggling with addiction, people experiencing homelessness, and residents of public housing.

Solar One courses cover topics in green construction (including carpentry, electrical and plumbing), green building operations and maintenance, solar PV installation and numerous nationally recognized certification courses, such as:

• GPRO Operations + Maintenance
• GPRO Electrical
• NABCEP Solar PV Associate
• BPI Multifamily Building Operator
• EPA Lead RRP
• OSHA 30
• NYC Dept. of Buildings Site Safety Training

Within the Green Workforce Training Program, we trained 409 un- and under-employed adults, and as some students earned more than one certification, they ended the year with 564 certifications.
Facilitating High Impact Community Based Clean Energy Programs

The Clean Energy Communities Program (CECP) is a program funded by the New York State Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA).

This program provides grants, direct technical support to communities, and recognition to local governments across New York State that demonstrate leadership in the area of clean energy. The program focuses on fourteen high-impact actions that local governments can take to save money, foster a vibrant economy, and improve the environment: Benchmarking, Clean Energy Upgrades, Clean Fleets, Clean Heating and Cooling Demo, Climate Smart Communities Certification, Community Campaigns, Community Choice Aggregation, County Hosted Trainings, LED Streetlights, NYStretch Energy Code, PACE Financing, Unified Solar Permit, and 100% Renewables for Municipal Operations.

Solar One is NYSERDA’s implementation partner for CECP in New York City and Long Island. In New York City, we currently have three embedded staff at the NYC Mayor’s Office of Climate & Environmental Justice (MOC&EJ) and the Department of Citywide Administrative Services Division of Energy Management (DCAS DEM) to support emissions reduction initiatives by embedding full-time Clean Energy Communities Coordinators within the City to work on high impact efforts, including: expanded benchmarking and energy efficiency solutions for private buildings; developing and launching equitable electrification policies and programs; and working with NYC’s public agencies to implement plans for public sector emissions reduction.

Additionally, Solar One hired a Community Campaigns Coordinator under the CECP who works closely with neighborhood-based organizations, borough presidents, and community boards to launch clean energy campaigns.
At Stuyvesant Cove Park, over the course of the 2021 season our original slate of 11 events expanded to 15, and touched on everything from queer identity to soil science, while remaining firmly grounded in Stuy Cove’s mission as a living laboratory for agroecology, public foraging and food justice. We reached almost 2,000 people through in-person events, zoom forums, and Instagram livestreams. This is in addition to the tens of thousands of people who visit the Park every year for rest or recreation, and over 1,907 volunteer hours in 2021.

The East Side Coastal Resiliency Project (ESCR) – a citywide climate adaptation project– broke ground in our park at the beginning of the year, with the northern section of the park closing to the public in the fall of 2021. This project has resulted in the demolition of the existing ecosystem and establishment of a floodwall with landscape redesign to be implemented by Matthews Nielsen Landscape Architects in 2022. With demolition forthcoming, we spent 2021 giving away thousands of native plants from the “old Stuy Cove” to 30+ community organizations across the five boroughs, even working with ESCR contractors to give felled oaks to community gardens for shiitake mushroom cultivation. We felt that this was an important step for modeling how climate adaptation projects could also be climate mitigation projects in a more carbon conscious future.

Coming Soon: The Solar One Environmental Education Center

Plans are underway for a beautiful new Environmental Education Center to be built in the park, right alongside the East River. The Center will be a free standing, resilient, solar powered community hub for events, green energy education, park management and so much more.
Board and Staff

Events and Stuyvesant Cove Park
Dina Elkan
Director, Events & Park
Candace Thompson
Park Manager

Green Workforce Training
Max Levitke
Director, Green Workforce
James Kinianjui
Program Manager, Green Workforce
Gary Smith
Green Workforce Instructor
Josh Vedder
Green Workforce Instructor
Matthew Dean
Green Workforce Instructor

Here Comes Solar
Noah Ginsburg
Co-Program Director; Director, HCS
Angelica Ramdhari
Director, Resilient Solar
Anika Wistar-Jones
Director, Affordable Solar
José Tullo Galvez Contreras
Senior Program Manager, Affordable Solar
Gretchen Bradley
Senior Program Manager, Community Solar
Cyra Copeland
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Bruno Estrada
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Program Manager, Affordable Solar Program
Patrick Ouwens
Program Manager, Affordable Solar Program
Michele Chung
Program Manager, Resilient Solar
Michael Weiss
Solar Site Assessor
Richard Bundy
Technical Design Consultant
Maxwell Barnett
Carbon Emissions Consultant

Clean Energy Communities Program
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Director, Clean Energy Communities Program
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Manager, Bually Electrification Programs and Policy
Kathryn Charpin
Emissions Reduction Analyst
Isabela Brown
Community Emissions Specialist
Jeanette Castillo
Community Campaigns Coordinator

Government
Domitory 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
NYS Assemblyman – Hon. Harvey Epstein
NY Power Authority
New York State Energy Research and Development Authority

Foundations
11th Hour Project of the Schmidt Family Foundation
Citi Foundation
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FJC – A Foundation of Philanthropic Funds
Honda USA Foundation
Lily Auchincloss Foundation
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Director of K-12 Education
Isabel Avina
Education Program Associate
Geovanni Caldero
Program Manager for Career & Technical Education
Amy Colorado
Program Manager for Curriculum & Instruction
Vera Figueiredo
K-12 Environmental Educator/Workforce Instructor, NJ
Alex Nathanson
Solar Educator
Michaela Ritz
K-12 Environmental Educator

ANNUAL REPORT 2021
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.