

Hillsdale High School

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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San Mateo, CA - Students at Hillsdale High School in San Mateo are getting serious about solar. An idea which began nearly a year ago has now sprouted into reality with their very own solar electric system. With a grant from the BP Solar A+ for Energy program and the partnership of a local solar integrator has the community seeing "GREEN" - Renewable Energy - electricity from the sun, enough to power a classroom and eventually the entire school.

On November 15th, a community solar celebration will be held from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m at Hillsdale High School. Students, parents, faculty and the community are invited to learn more about the Solar Our School program to help "solarize" Hillsdale. Attendees will hear from the students participating in the SOS sessions, a local energy consultant, BP Solar, Owens Electric and Solar, and San Mateo's sustainability consultant. There will be solar information tables, demonstrations, sign-ups for free estimates, and raffle prizes.

"It's important for people to start learning about solar," said 17-year-old senior Erin Fisher. "And if a high school starts a program; if we do it, and it works, maybe other people will use renewable energy."

It all began in early October, as a group of about 20 students were introduced to how electricity is produced from the sun and how solar panels are installed. As part of a five session lesson plan, students learn about energy conservation, solar system components, design criteria, solar economics, and installation procedures. These young solar pioneers will then end up assisting in the design, installation and monitoring of their solar system.

Under the direction of History teacher Dave Emanuel, the students meet after school on Wednesdays and are taught by Brian Quock of Owens Electric and Solar located in San Mateo.

The SOS program was the first chance Jimena Gutierrez had to learn about the renewable energy source. Gutierrez, who hopes to study engineering, became interested in solar power during the summer while studying at Santa Clara University. This year she chose to make solar power part of a larger project. Working on this project will teach her the hands-on aspect of solar energy.

The partnership also offers a way for Owens Electric and Solar, BP Solar and the Home Depot to help the greening of the school's neighborhoods while providing a fundraiser and solar system for Hillsdale. Those interested in installing a solar system and reducing their PG&E bills can participate in the Solar Our School program starting this month. A portion of each project will be donated back to the school to support expanding the solar program. The goal is to add more solar panels as funding becomes available until the school is totally solar powered. An SOS Scholarship Fund is also being setup to assist those students who want to pursue a future in renewable technology.

Not only are people going to realize immediate economic benefits, but they'll be helping fuel our future with the renewable generation while conserving our precious resources and eliminating the by-products of power generation plants.

“It is their future that we’re talking about. The kids are so excited about going solar. It’s a great way for them to put their thoughts and ideas into action,” said Brian Quock, Owens Solar and Electric Marketing Director, “we want to empower the students to further their interest and education in providing a better tomorrow”.

For more information about the Solar Our School program, contact Brian Quock, Owens Electric and Solar, at 650.373.2953 or email to: SOS@OwensElectricInc.com