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RVA Solar Fund launches \$200,000 grant program to advance solar energy in Greater Richmond Region

New fund of The Community Foundation will support public schools and local governments

Richmond, VA – October 25, 2017 -- The [Community Foundation Serving Richmond and Central Virginia](#) (TCF) and solar power company [Secure Futures](#) have partnered to support local governments and K-12 public school systems seeking to transition to solar energy. TCF donors established the RVA Solar Fund out of their common interest in advancing solar energy in the Richmond region. The fund will provide grants of up to \$100,000 to support administrative costs, education and training, and related sustainability initiatives for public entities going solar.

Each grant recipient will engage in a solar power purchase agreement with Secure Futures to finance, install, own, and operate an estimated 15,000 solar panels at their sites, for a total local investment of approximately \$12 million. The public entities will pay no capital or maintenance costs for the equipment and will enjoy reduced total electricity costs by using the power generated by the panels. Together, this initiative represents an innovative public-private collaboration to build five megawatts of clean solar power – enough to power 700 homes — and avoid the equivalent CO2 emissions from burning 5 million pounds of coal per year.

“The Community Foundation is delighted to help local donors achieve their charitable goals by facilitating meaningful investments in clean energy,” said Sherrie Armstrong, President and Chief Executive Officer, The Community Foundation. “We believe solar energy will bring positive, long-term benefit to our community, our environment, and local taxpayers.”

The [RVA Solar Fund](#) provides a unique opportunity for public agencies in the 13-county, 4-city Richmond region to generate solar power on-site and save money at the same time.

All area K-12 public school systems and local governments are urged to apply as soon as possible. The \$200,000 fund will be distributed among multiple grantees, with a maximum single grant amount of \$100,000. Interested applicants must submit a non-binding Notice of Interest through The Community Foundation’s [website](#) by November 17, 2017.

“The Richmond region is well-positioned to become a national leader in sustainability and innovation, and the cost of clean energy is no longer an obstacle,” says Anthony Smith, PhD, President and Chief Executive Officer, Secure Futures, a Virginia-based Certified B Corp recognized for its commitment to exacting standards for social and environmental performance, transparency, and accountability. “Solar’s time has come. And with this initiative, we can jump start local schools’ and governments’ transition to clean solar power while saving them money for decades to come.”

To assist with outreach throughout the Greater Richmond region, Charlottesville-based non-profit organization [Generation 180](#) is collaborating on the project.

“We are dedicated to supporting a cultural shift in energy awareness and advancing the transition to clean energy,” says Tish Tablan, National Organizer, Generation 180. “And there is nothing more powerful for shifting mindsets in the future than children seeing solar energy being used in their own schools. We hope to see this partnership in the Richmond region spread to communities around the country who are dedicated to a healthier, cleaner future with a workforce prepared for the 21st century economy.”

Two additional non-profit organizations are supporting this effort: The Richmond Region Energy Alliance (RREA) and the National Energy Education Development Project (NEED). They are helping with outreach to prospective grant recipients and curriculum and training for schools, respectively.

About [The Community Foundation](#)

The Community Foundation is a public charity that serves its donors and community in Richmond and Central Virginia. Since 1968, TCF has been solving problems, preserving legacies and building permanent endowments. In the intervening years, TCF has granted more than \$800 million to hundreds of local nonprofits with more than 900 funds of all sizes.

About [Secure Futures, LLC](#)

As a market and policy leader, Secure Futures builds, owns, manages and funds affordable US made *Resilient Solar Solutions*[®] for public purpose entities. Headquartered in Staunton, Va., the Company combines state-of-the-art solar technology with an innovative business model to make commercial scale solar readily affordable in Virginia, helping customers to realize the economic, environmental, and community benefits of solar energy. In 2017, Secure Futures became a Certified B Corporation[®], having met the exacting standards for social and environmental performance, transparency and accountability established by the nonprofit B Lab[®].

About [Generation 180](#)

Generation 180 is a non-profit committed to advancing the transition to clean energy and supporting a cultural shift in energy awareness through original content, digitally enabled campaigns, and an empowered volunteer network. We help people understand the trends that are moving us toward a more energy aware lifestyle, and the specific actions we can take to advance clean energy in our homes, schools, businesses and communities. Generation 180 helps schools across the country take advantage of the benefits of going solar with current research, resources and community volunteers.

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