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A New Solar Array Comes to Life at Vermont Tech

Vermont Technical College has flipped the switch on a new solar farm that is projected to produce nearly 1 million kWh of clean, Vermont renewable energy each year. The array of 100 locally manufactured solar trackers by AllEarth Renew-

ables, Inc. of Williston, Vt., has been in operation since February 29 on the northeastern edge of the Randolph campus.

The project is having a multifaceted impact: It helps the college move toward renewable energy sources, it saves money



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on power, and it serves as an educational tool for students in the college's renewable energy and engineering technology programs. Students were on hand to learn about the installation of the project, and will have ongoing access to the project as an on-campus learning renewable energy laboratory.

The 500kW project includes one hundred 5kW AllEarth Series 20 dual-axis solar trackers, which rotate during the day to follow the sun, producing more solar power. By feeding the campus-generated solar power to the grid, Vermont Tech receives net metered energy credits and the college cuts its monthly power bill.

Today the college reports that the homegrown power created by its renewable energy operations is adding up. These campus operations displace an equivalent quantity of electricity to its normal usage.

Students have access to the solar array as part of some of Vermont Tech's academic programs. The college offers an innovative bachelor's degree in Renewable Energy, and a Continuing Education division that delivers a variety of courses and workshops focused on the renewable energy industry and solar installation. Vermont Tech is the only solar training provider in Vermont acknowledged by Interstate Renewable Energy Council, which provides nationally-recognized training and credential programs.

Vermont has one of the highest-rates of solar jobs per capita in the nation," said Andrew Savage, Chief Strategy Officer at AllEarth Renewables. "The career opportunities in the industry continue to grow year after year, and to work on the forefront with Vermont Tech makes for a great partnership."

"I am excited about this project and the future of this college as a hub for teaching and learning the vital skills connected to clean energy in Vermont," said Vermont Tech President Dan Smith. "We have integrated renewable Continued on page 28





energy and sustainable land use practices into our curriculum, and have installed renewable energy projects on campus. This solar project is part of that larger vision and it's an important asset for the practical education we deliver."

Vermont Tech's solar array follows the creation of another large renewable project on-campus: the farm and community anaerobic digester nicknamed "Big Bertha." It transforms farm manure and clean food residuals into renewable electricity for Green Mountain Power, renewable heat for the college, and recycled nutrients for area farms. Through the project, students also gain exposure to the local Vermont labor and suppliers from around the state of the solar trackers, such as major manufacturers like NSA Industries in Lyndon and St. Johnsbury, which fabricates metalwork components.

About Vermont Tech: Vermont Tech is a leading public college with a mission of applied education. One of the five Vermont State Colleges, Vermont Tech serves students from throughout Vermont, New England, and beyond at its two residential campuses in Williston and Randolph Center, regional campuses in Brattleboro and Bennington, and at six nursing campuses located throughout the state. Vermont Tech takes an optimistic, rooted and personal approach to education to support students in gaining the confidence and practical skills necessary to not only see their potential, but to experience it. The college's academic programs encompass a wide range of engineering technology, agricultural, health,

and business fields that are vital to producing the knowledgeable workers needed most by employers in the state and in the region. www.vtc.edu.

About AllEarth Renewables / AllEarth Solar Trackers: AllEarth Renewables, headquartered in Williston, Vt., manufactures the AllEarth Solar Tracker, a dual-axis solar tracker that uses innovative GPS and wireless technology to follow the sun throughout the day, producing up to 45 percent more energy than rooftop solar. The company has manufactured and installed over 3,800 solar tracker systems to date. Among its product awards, the dual axis tracker was named a "Top-10 Green Product" by BuildingGreen magazine and "Top Product of the Year" by Solar Power World. The company's ground-mounted, pre-engineered solar trackers are designed for residential and commercial-scale installations. The company is a 4-time "Best Places to Work in Vermont" recipient. For more visit, www.allearthrenewables.com



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