



CICV Solar Updates

March 2016

Presentation by Tyler on Basecamp

On January 20, Tyler Espinoza presented a detailed update on our project, particularly focusing on the Request for Proposals, for members of the Basecamp Colleges and Universities Affinity group. A recording of the presentation was also distributed to all members of the group and posted on the Basecamp website. The presentation can be found at the following link:

<https://vimeo.com/153034344>.

RFP Update

The CICV Solar RFP process is well underway. Over the past several weeks, the CICV Selection Committee has been hard at work reviewing and evaluating the numerous proposals that were received from a wide-range of solar developers from across Virginia, and the country. We appreciate the dedication of the colleges that have contributed resources to this effort. As of March, the Selection Committee had short-listed two vendors and discussions are ongoing. It is expected that a vendor award will be announced in early April.

Next steps in the RFP process will consist of contract negotiations between the awarded vendor and individual colleges. The decision to install solar will then rest with the decision making bodies at each college. For those colleges that decide to install solar, final system design and permitting will take place followed by construction throughout the summer and into the fall. Final system testing and interconnection to the grid will all take place in late-2016/early-2017 depending on how quickly the college approve the projects.

Ultimately, the projects will be either rooftop, carport, or ground-mounted systems. Bidders have proposed a suite of student involvement and curriculum enhancement options, including real-time energy generation displays to be located on campus to track energy and environmental benefits. Stay tuned for the vendor selection announcement coming soon!

Getting to Know...



Lora Toothman
Project Manager
CICV

Welcome to Lora Toothman, the new Project Manager for the CICV solar project. Lora comes to us with numerous credentials and lots of experience managing large scale projects.

Lora has her LEED Green Associate credential, Facility Management Professional credential, and Environmental Management System Implementation Institute certificate as well as a Master's degree in Urban and Regional Planning.

Her experience while working for the Campus Community Partnership of Metro Richmond relates directly to our focus for the remainder of the project on building a learning network, providing opportunities for staff and student involvement in the project, and expanding outreach to community stakeholders.

We look forward to introducing Lora to everyone at the CICV Spring Workshop at Randolph-Macon College on April 18.



Thomas Yurysta
Senior Project Manager
Optony

Welcome to Thomas Yurysta, Senior Project Manager and Engineering Manager at Optony, overseeing the company's technical services and working on large scale solar procurements.

His experience also includes working with the Department of Energy as a Principle Investigator on the Rooftop Solar Challenge where he recruited over 300 public agencies to join the program and commit to taking action.

While Thomas is not new to the solar industry, he is new to the CICV project and has taken over for Tyler who moved to the west coast in March.

He has been working closely with Tyler over the last couple of months to join the program and take action to promote solar development in Virginia communities.

April 18 Workshop

Our Solar Market Pathways project will be holding its first semi-annual workshop of 2016 on April 18 at Randolph-Macon College in Ashland, held jointly with Dominion Virginia Power’s Solar Market Pathways project. RMC’s Robert Patterson has graciously agreed to chair our planning efforts. The draft agenda has our two projects holding our individual discussions in the morning, with CICV’s college representatives and advisory panel discussing ways to involve the community and students in our project’s efforts, to further education and training on solar in the Commonwealth and involve our students in the learning experiences that are inherent in this project. Dominion has been kind enough to sponsor lunch for all attendees. The planned afternoon agenda will include presentations on battery storage and solar and a tour of the two battery arrays that Randolph-Macon hosts for Dominion.





Three CICV Reps to Attend Solar Market Pathways Sustainable Communities Leadership Academy



The second Solar Market Pathways Sustainable Communities Leadership Academy will be held in Boston this year, on June 7 and 8. The Council of Independent Colleges in Virginia will be represented by Robert Lambeth, Thomas Yurysta, and our new Project Manager, Lora Toothman, who will also serve as our team captain for this event. This workshop is designed to accelerate the project's work and help our team, and other SMP teams, develop new strategies and approaches to reduce the cost of solar energy. Our representatives will work with others in plenary and workshop sessions, team "huddles," and networking activities. Connecting with other teams will help all teams benefit from the experiences of other projects. Attendees will also discover cross-cutting solutions to pressing problems. At the workshop, teams will identify specific follow-up action steps for when they return home, including follow-on opportunities for technical assistance. Topics will include strategies for marketing and education/outreach, stakeholder engagement, collaborating with utilities, financing, and accelerating deployment on college and university campuses, all of which are directly related to our project's efforts. Partners for this event include the Institute for Sustainable Communities, the Interstate Renewable Energy Council, National Renewable Energy Lab, and Regulatory Assistance Project.

"[to] develop new strategies and approaches to reduce the cost of solar energy"





February 1 Solar Lunch



On February 1, students and faculty from a number of CICV schools gathered at the CICV Richmond office for lunch and a panel discussion on jobs in solar and government relations and on solar-related bills being considered by the General Assembly. It was a successful, educational event in the midst of the General Assembly tumult. The panel was composed of lobbyists from a variety of organizations with different perspectives on the issues, specifically: Larry Jackson from Appalachian Power Company, Katharine Bond from Dominion Virginia Power, Omar Terrie from Maryland/DC/Virginia Solar Energy Industries Association (MDV-SEIA), Corrina Beall from the Sierra Club, and Tony Smith from the Virginia Renewable Energy Alliance (VA-REA). The speakers each discussed their background and how they found their way to their current roles. Many did not set out to be lobbyists, and they come from a variety of academic and professional backgrounds. They talked about what bills before the General Assembly were important to their organizations. Students were invited to speak up and ask questions, as well as to introduce themselves. The students represented a wide variety of majors and interests, and may have been encouraged to hear that Tony Smith has done very well with his joint English and Philosophy majors. The panelists provided excellent insight into their careers and valuable information for the students as well as the rest of us. Perhaps most valuable of all was the great respect that these individuals and organizations have for each other, despite their policy disagreements, and they are all working towards a common goal of expanding solar energy in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

“The panelists provided excellent insight into their careers and valuable information for the students.”



Doug Seidler

APCo Rate Case

The Virginia State Corporation Commission continues to deliberate in the case of an Application of Appalachian Power Company for approval of its “Renewable Generation Purchase Program.” The Council of Independent Colleges in Virginia participated in this case pro se. Optony’s Tyler Espinoza and Ferrum’s Chris Burnley both testified. We will keep you apprised of developments.



Marymount University

Internships

Associate Professor Doug Seidler of Marymount University continues to explore internship opportunities for students of CICV member colleges and universities. We encourage members of our advisory panel to alert us and Doug at dseidler@marymount.edu of any opportunities that might be relevant to our project and of interest to our students.

Reminder: Material from Previous Workshops Available Online

Material from the most recent workshop, held at Marymount University on September 11 can be found at <http://commons.marymount.edu/cicv/mu-round-table/>. The Optony maintained website contains the slideshows from the May 22 workshop, held at Eastern Mennonite University, <http://my.solarroadmap.com/ahj/smp-icv>.



Basecamp is an excellent collection of resources regarding solar energy and our sister Solar Market Pathways projects. Resources are divided into three groups, pertaining to particular topics:

- Community Solar,
- Resilient Solar, and
- Solar for Colleges and Universities.

Organizers often post useful resources in these groups that might be of benefit to faculty and students at our schools. One of the most beneficial resources is the frequent webinars, some recent topics have included:

- Harnessing Collective Buying Power to Procure Solar,
- Renewable Energy Certificates and Universities, and
- Solar and Storage Fire Safety.

Basecamp is maintained by the Institute for Sustainable Communities on behalf of the Department of Energy. If faculty or students at any CICV school interested in solar power would like to have viewing capabilities on Basecamp, please email Anita at anita@cicv.org.

From our Principle Investigator...

We are approaching the half-way point of the second year of our CICV Solar Market Pathways project funded by the US Department of Energy. I am pleased with the progress we have made and the way our solar work is progressing.

The work we have done over the past months has provided each of the participating CICV colleges with a detailed analysis of the potential for implementing solar on each of the campuses. Our consultant, Optony, Inc., has done an excellent job of providing detailed data to each campus concerning the possibilities of solar. This data should be very helpful to the colleges in the years to come.

I have been very pleased with the RFP process, which will soon be concluded. We received an excellent response from vendors all over the country. Vendors who have never been involved with solar projects in Virginia have come forward with interesting and competitive proposals. The CICV solar RFP is one of the largest ever done in Virginia and has the potential to change the solar landscape in the Commonwealth. We will soon announce the selected vendor, and each college will then need to decide if they will move forward with solar installations. Based on my recent conversations with presidents of the participating institutions and other college officials, I am optimistic that there will be multiple CICV institutions moving ahead with solar installations.

There are many benefits that can be achieved by solar installations. It all starts with our colleges' commitment to sustainability. However, there are equally important educational benefits. The solar installations, and the processes we have used to evaluate our campuses, will be an excellent educational tool for use by faculty and students. I continue to be impressed with the fact that young people are very interested in sustainability and find these projects appealing. Our colleges have an excellent opportunity to establish a brand of higher educational institutions committed to sustainability and to educational opportunities for their students in the field of solar energy.

During the upcoming months, our grant work will focus on promoting educational opportunities for our students and making the massive amount of data we are producing available to students and faculty. We will also provide more information about job opportunities in the solar field. There will be many exciting job possibilities for our graduates related to solar and other sustainability fields.

I appreciate the hard work of many people on our campuses in helping us produce the excellent results we have achieved to date. I look forward to continuing our work together.

The staffing of our grant is going through a transition. Our first Project Manager, Carol Wampler, did excellent work to get the project off the ground and on sound footing. I am very pleased that Lora Toothman has accepted our offer to become the next Project Manager. I am sure that Lora will do an excellent job in helping us implement the upcoming objectives of the project.

Likewise, Tyler Espinoza recently left Optony and moved back to his home state of Oregon. We are pleased that Optony has assigned Thomas Yurysta to be our primary contact. Thomas has extensive and valuable experience related to solar energy.

If you ever have any questions about the solar project, please feel free to contact me.

Robert Lambeth
President, CICV

