



HARC, PISD and Ignite Solar Celebrate Startup of Largest Solar Rooftop Project in Texas Public Schools

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(PASADENA, TX – February 14, 2011) The [Houston Advanced Research Center](#) (HARC), in partnership with the [Pasadena Independent School District](#) (PISD) and [Ignite Solar, LLC](#), today announced that construction is complete for the installation of three solar installations totaling approximately 145 kilowatts (kW) of energy at Sam Rayburn and South Houston High Schools. Leadership from the partnering institutions and invited guests will participate in a ribbon cutting ceremony tomorrow morning at Sam Rayburn High School. The installed systems are expected to save the district approximately \$15,000 annually in energy usage and will serve as a real-world laboratory showcasing solar energy for students.

The [Pasadena ISD Solar Initiative](#), formerly the 'East Harris County Solar Pilot Program', began as a two-year project managed by HARC, demonstrating the viability and efficiency of solar electric systems used to produce electricity in the Houston area. As part of the initiative, students at the two high schools will work alongside engineers and scientists, gaining first-hand knowledge about the function and benefits of three unique, innovative solar technologies. Funding for the solar initiative was made pursuant to the settlement of a Clean Air Act enforcement suit brought by Environment Texas and the Sierra Club. Sam Rayburn High School later received funding from the State Energy Conservation Office (SECO) to demonstrate two additional solar technologies.

To celebrate the construction completion of the first Phase of the project, HARC, PISD and Ignite Solar are hosting a ribbon cutting ceremony and press conference at 10 a.m. tomorrow, February 15, at Sam Rayburn High School located at 2121 Cherrybrook Lane in Pasadena. Speakers will include Dr. Richard Haut, Senior Research Scientist at HARC; Dr. Kirk Lewis, PISD Superintendent; and Peter Mathey, CEO and President of Ignite Solar. Guest speakers from the funding organizations include Luke Metzger, Director of Environment Texas, and Ken Kramer, Director of the Lone Star Chapter of the Sierra Club.

Guests will be invited to view a short solar project highlights video and visit information booths about the technologies, education and outreach, project partners, and sponsors. The event will conclude with tours of the solar awning, inverter room, and education kiosk.

"We are excited to be part of this multi-faceted project and look forward to sharing all aspects with the community as we continue to develop educational and outreach activities," said Lizabeth Price, Research Associate at HARC and project manager for the installation.

HARC contracted with [Ignite Solar, LLC](#), a Houston-based company that specializes in the design of commercial

and large-scale solar photovoltaic projects, to provide the comprehensive turnkey solar system and [Broaddus & Associates](#) to provide construction-site management services.

Ignite Solar subcontracted with Houston-based [American Electric Technologies, Inc.](#) (NASDAQ: AETI) for power distribution, converter systems and coordination and implementation of the web-based interaction for students, as well as [Tecta](#) Solar and CEI Roofing for the solar module and racking installation.

"We designed the system with students in mind, maximizing learning opportunities, and providing meaningful examples to assist in the promotion of solar development in the Houston environment," Mathey said. "This project is unmatched in terms of technological diversity, reporting capabilities, and deployment complexity."

The Moser Baer multi-crystalline, Uni-Solar amorphous (a-Si) thin-film, and Solyndra[®] cylindrical tube solar technologies that comprise the system will introduce students and the community to technologies installed for the first time in this region. Kiosks and portable demonstration units at each campus will further strengthen the system's educational value. In addition to providing solar expertise, Ignite Solar and the project team of subcontractor and module partners have donated approximately \$30,000 in materials and services to PISD.

PISD administration and staff are incorporating the solar technology education into their curriculum. Dr. Lewis noted that "the knowledge and skills students will gain through these experiences will lead to more career pathways and provide more advanced learning opportunities. These lessons will help them succeed in today's global society."

Grace Blasingame, Science Content Specialist, said, "This project allows our students and community to learn about solar energy and how it can be used to sustain our fragile environment. Our students will perform real-world experiments with the data that we collect from the solar arrays. I know of no other district that is providing this type of experience."

About HARC

Founded in 1983, the Houston Advanced Research Center (HARC) is a 501(c)3 non-profit institution located in The Woodlands, Texas. HARC's founder George P. Mitchell has been a leading advocate of sustainable development, the philosophy that seeks balance between human well-being and the preservation of earth's natural systems for the future.

About PISD

With a growing enrollment of more than 52,000 students, Pasadena ISD is an exceptional district with 18 schools receiving exemplary ratings from the Texas Education Agency and 17 attaining recognized status for their performance on the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills test. Since the first classes began in 1898, PISD's vision has been to create an environment that fosters learning to prepare students for future success.

About Ignite Solar

Ignite Solar, LLC (Ignite Solar) develops medium- to large-scale solar photovoltaic (PV) projects and manufactures tracking and fixed mounting systems. Ignite Solar is based in Houston and promotes PV

educational outreach and sustainability through dynamic, technology forward projects and initiatives.

Note to Editors: *For further information and high resolution photos of installation of the solar technologies discussed in this release, visit <http://pisd.harc.edu/>.*

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