



Community
Power
Network

2015 ANNUAL REPORT



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A LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Dear Friends,

It has been an incredible year of growth for Community Power Network. We have demonstrated the solar co-op model's ability to build a broad network of solar supporters. We're now scaling up our deployment of solar co-ops across all of the states in which we work. To-date, we've facilitated six megawatts of solar across all of our state programs. We're not only helping families go solar, but giving citizens the tools to advocate for stronger solar policies and become part of a diverse, growing movement of solar supporters.

As an organization, too, we're continuing to grow. We now have a staff of ten full-time employees, with the goal of continuing to build our energetic and talented team. We're also working hard to cultivate and empower local leaders wherever we develop community-led projects.

Throughout our growth we've remained committed to our vision of creating a democratic and distributed energy system where everyone can benefit from clean, local, affordable, and equitable renewable energy. It isn't always an easy process building a citizen-driven movement, but the results have been incredible. We're looking forward to all that 2016 has to bring!

All the best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anya Schoolman'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Anya Schoolman
Executive Director
Community Power Network

WHAT WE ACCOMPLISH

Our Mission

We are building a broad new constituency of people who have a financial stake in a clean energy economy and are willing to fight for their right to produce clean power.

We connect people with the tools and resources they need to start renewable energy projects in their communities.

Our Vision

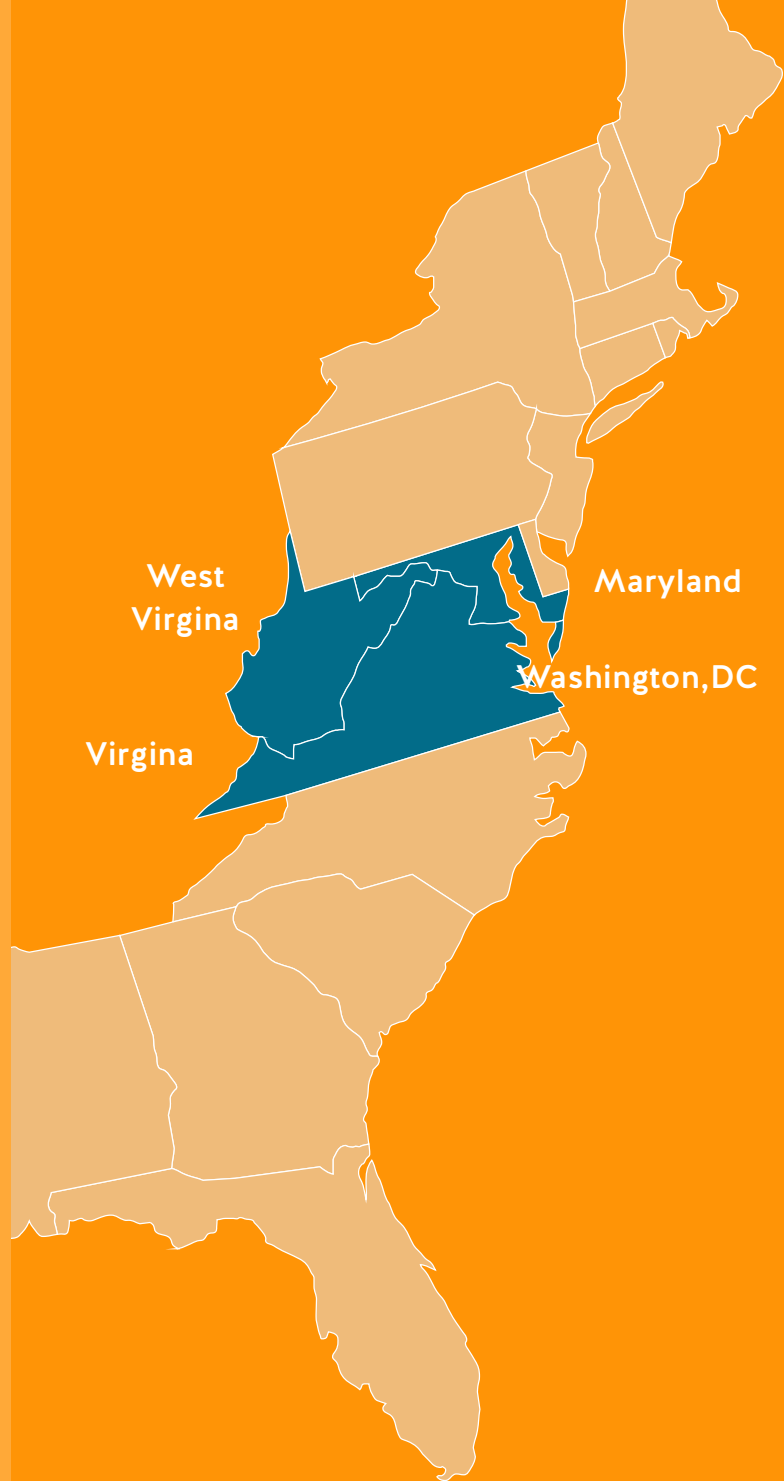
We envision a future when energy is clean, local, equitable, affordable, and reliable for everyone. All citizens will be able to generate their own wealth and power from clean, renewable sources.



Community Power Network is a national network of advocates building local renewable energy projects. We are a clearinghouse for innovative ideas and project models from across the country.

We connect people with the tools and resources they need to start community-based renewable energy projects in their communities.

We also implement on-the-ground programs in four states. We help citizens go solar and advocate for strong solar policies.



We help our members become a new force for clean energy policy in the state.

AN AWARD WINNING ORGANIZATION

CPN was honored by the Metro Washington Council of Governments with their **2015 Climate and Energy Leadership Award** in the Nonprofit Category for grassroots solar co-op initiatives across the District of Columbia, Maryland, Virginia, and West Virginia.

We've developed a unique solar co-op approach that unleashes the power of solar supporters. We help them become a force for clean energy policy in the state.

This ideologically diverse group of supporters are working together to ensure they have the right to produce their own power. They are also invested in their state's solar future.



Anya Schoolman, CPN's Executive Director, was also chosen as the Interstate Renewable Energy Council 2015 Action Hero for her outstanding work on solar policy issues.



CPN was selected to serve on the **National Community Solar Partnership** based on our extensive work on community solar in Washington, D.C. and Maryland.

EDUCATING THE PUBLIC

Across the country there are hundreds of citizen groups working to create locally-owned renewable energy. These groups are truly grassroots: neighbors putting solar on a local school, farmers using wind turbines to generate extra income, or community groups advocating for the right to generate their own power.



We serve as a clearinghouse for groups and community partners, providing technical assistance and a variety of technical resources. In the process of providing this support we've developed specialized expertise on topics including: low-income solar, community or shared-solar, net metering, and a variety of unique project models. Some of our resource pages, such as our low-income solar guide, provide unique content not available anywhere else on the web.

The community of solar supporters we are cultivating is able to change the narrative around clean energy. Too often, solar is seen as something of the future, marginal, or of limited interest to environmentalists. Our network of community-based solar advocates make clean energy a mainstream, realistic option for consumers.

SOME OF OUR RECENT ORIGINAL COMMUNICATIONS CONTENT INCLUDES:



REVising the power paradigm: New York State embraces energy reform



Effort seeks to make Ypsilanti a 'Solar Destination'



"Solar Assistance" offers long-term LIHEAP alternative



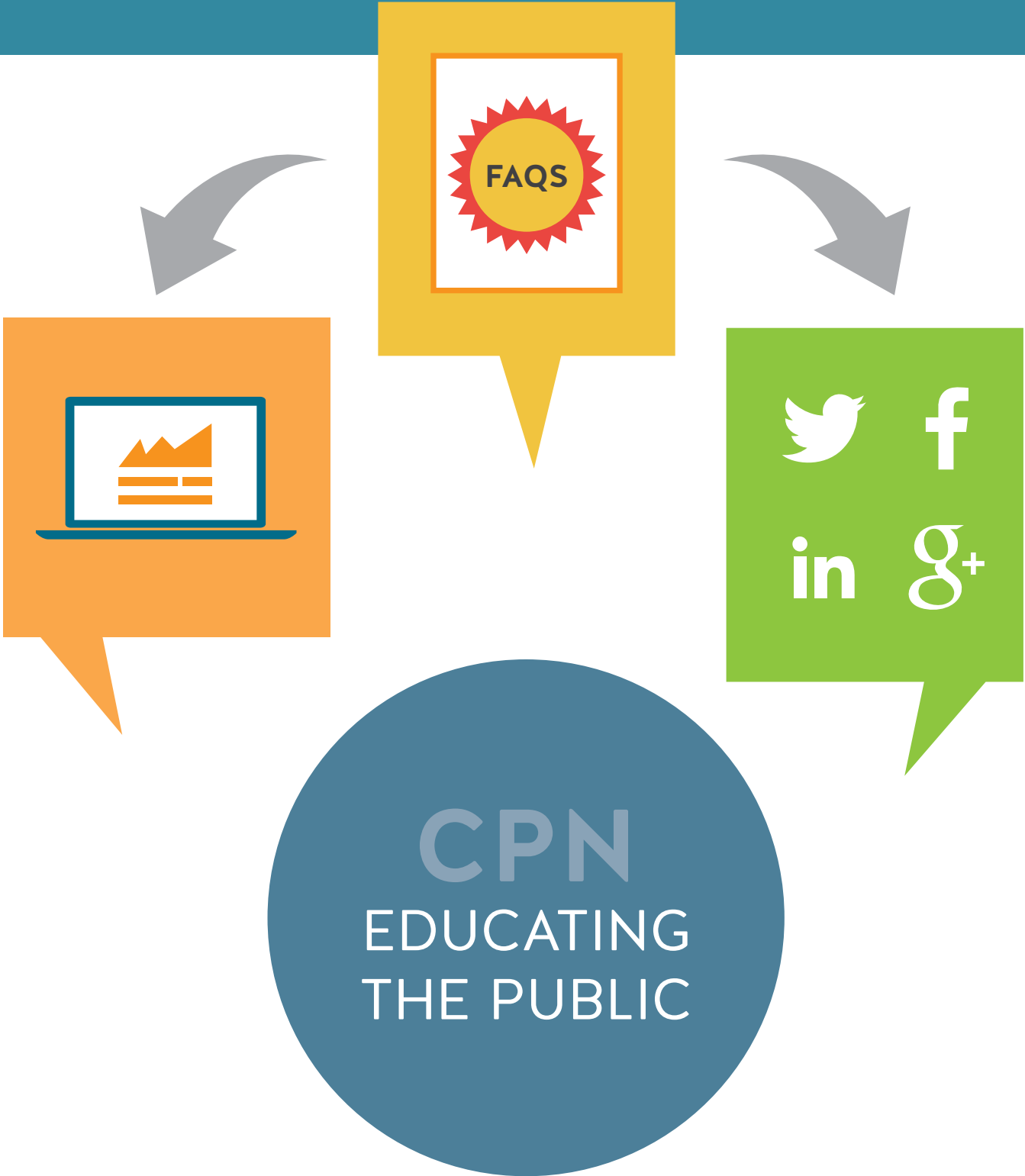
Ben Delman, Communications Manager

In 2015 we ramped up and professionalized our communications with the hire of Communication Manager Ben Delman. Ben has transformed our outreach and communications, producing regular content for our national website and state newsletters.

On a national level, we are a national convener on community-based renewable energy issues. We serve as a resource for information on what's happening in the space, and how citizens can get involved. We highlight projects around the country and share profiles of successful efforts.

On the state level we have developed content that educates and engages our community on important solar issues.

We've developed in-depth solar FAQs for each state and regularly deploy the content on our listservs and social media. We also publish monthly newsletters to update and educate our members.



We are changing the conversation around solar. We generate positive press on solar and show how communities are coming together around renewables. In 2015, we earned 131 positive press hits highlighting communities taking action and going solar together. Our media coverage helps us recruit co-op members. But more importantly, this coverage changes how solar is perceived by the public.



Popularity of residential solar co-ops grows in Maryland

By: Glenn Beery
 PUBLISHED: Aug 19, 2015

Anya Schoolman, founder of

VIDEO BY WOLFE

20 For Anya Ginsburg, the financial incentives of going solar were hard to beat.



Community Power Network Unleashes Group Buying To Bring Down Solar Costs

In News Departments > New & Noteworthy
 by Michael Puttre on Thursday 23 April 2015

One challenging aspect of the residential solar business is putting motivated buyers together with effective installers. The **Community Power Network (CPN)** is a nonprofit organization that functions as a group buying "referee" for homeowners, rather like a state-sponsored Solarize program. The main difference is that the nature of the group that drives the bulk-purchasing dynamic.

Richmond Times-Dispatch

Co-ops help Va. homeowners tap the power of the sun

Posted: Friday, September 25, 2015 9:00 pm
 By JOHN KANNEY, Richmond Times-Dispatch

With the solar industry in Virginia likely to grow more next year than ever before, a nonprofit group has its sights set on Richmond-area rooftops.

Virginia Solar United Neighborhoods — or VA SUN — has worked to form co-ops that have helped more than 200



Seeking sunshine: WV communities band together to go solar

Posted: May 14, 2015 2:04 PM EDT
 Updated: Jun 13, 2015 2:04 PM EDT
 By Sarah Tincher, Energy Reporter

The idea of "going solar" may seem like a daunting task to some, but West Virginians across the state are forming solar co-ops with their neighbors to make the switch together.

With the help of WV Sun, a nonprofit organization focused on solar project development and policy advocacy, communities are teaming up to make the switch throughout the state.

WV Sun first helped kickstart solar co-ops in Monroe and Fayette counties in the fall of 2014. The group has also hosted co-op meetings in Morgantown and Wheeling this month, with a Charleston program scheduled for May 19.

WV Sun is an affiliate of the Washington, D.C.-based Community Power Network, which unites grassroots, local, state and national organizations working toward renewable energy projects and policies.

"We facilitate the process but it's really a community-driven process," said Emily Stewart, Community Power Network chief of staff. "It's really based on what folks

SCALING SOLAR DEPLOYMENT

Community Power Network (CPN) has been working since 2007 to help communities go solar. Although we work with a number of different project models, over the last few years we've scaled up our implementation of neighborhood solar co-ops. We've launched 56 solar co-ops across all of our state programs since 2007.

Similar to buying in bulk, neighborhood solar co-ops are groups of neighbors that go solar together and get a discount – making solar more affordable and accessible. Typically, the group selects a single contractor to install systems on members' homes. Each participant owns their own system and signs their own contract with the installer.

By going solar as a group, homeowners:

- Save on the cost of their system.
- Get the support of the group as they go through the process.
- Connect with fellow solar enthusiasts.
- Become part of a growing solar movement in their state.

The installer chosen by the group is able to order equipment in bulk and reduce travel and marketing costs, allowing them to pass significant savings onto the participants.



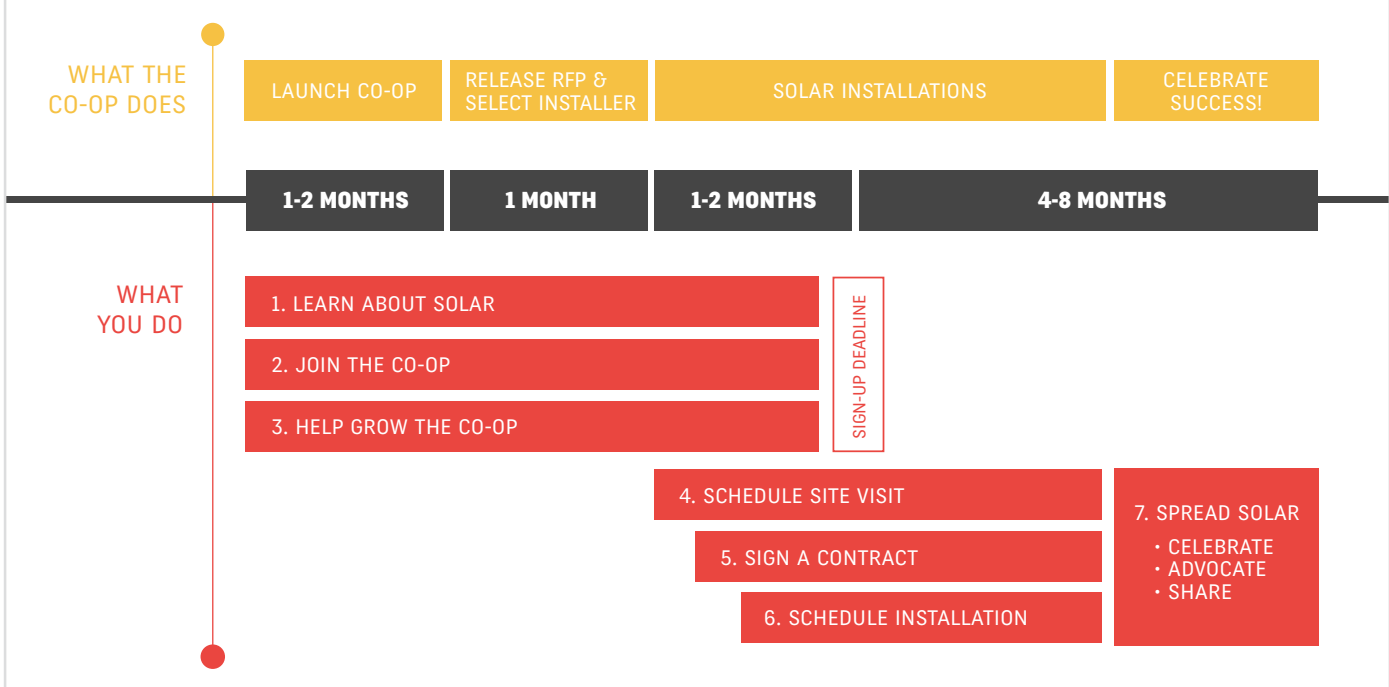
Our co-op members are very engaged. Many participate on selection committees, recruit their friends, put yard signs in front of their homes, help plan and promote informational sessions, speak with the media, and support the co-ops in their communities. The result of this peer-to-peer marketing is a close community of solar advocates and more people going solar than in a traditional advertising campaign.



WANT TO GO SOLAR?

JOIN A SOLAR CO-OP IN MD!

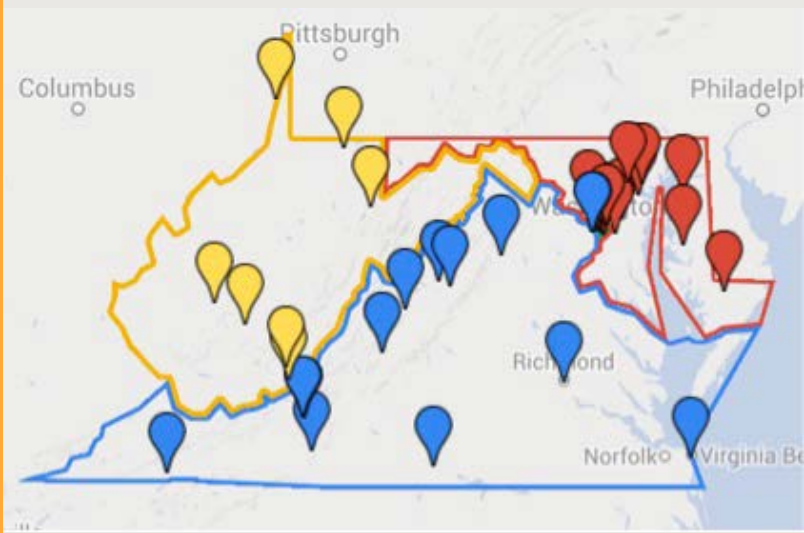
Your neighbors in Rockville are forming a solar cooperative to go solar together and get a great discount! If you've ever wanted to go solar, now is your chance!



To learn more and register for an information session, visit: www.mdsun.org/rockville
 Questions? Email: solarteam@mdsun.org

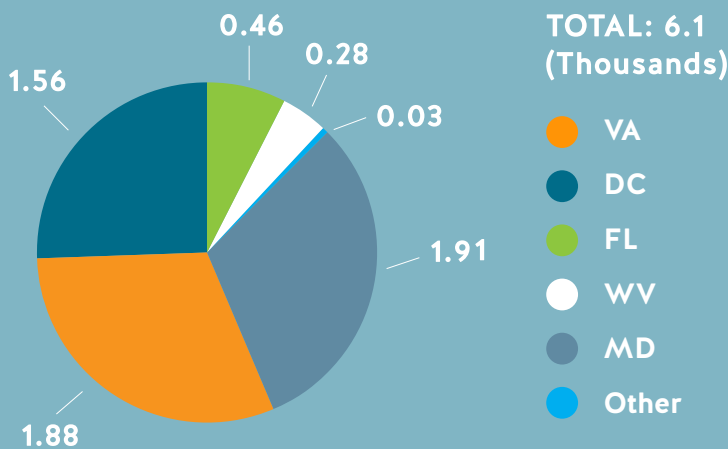
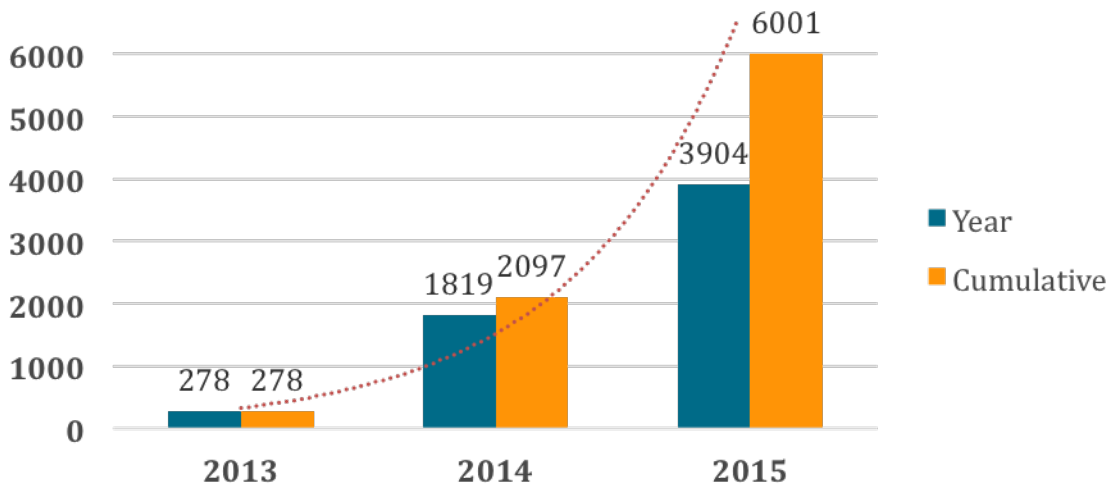
Solar co-op process

Our focus on co-ops has allowed us to dramatically scale up solar deployment in the states where we work.



To-date we've launched 56 co-ops across three states and Washington, D.C.

We've doubled our installed kW per year, cumulatively installing a total of 6 MW of capacity in the past three years.



Helping Communities Go Solar

To-date we've facilitated the installation of 6 MW of distributed solar across six jurisdictions.

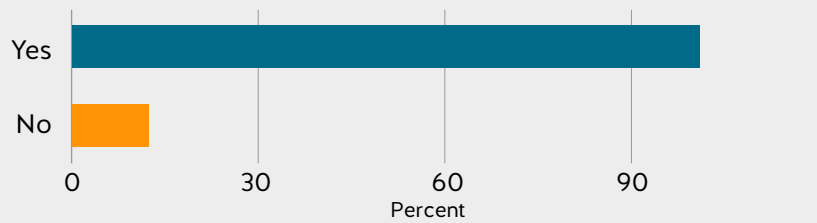
More than 5,500 people engaged in solar co-ops

For every person who goes solar, five have learned about solar and become part of our network. More than just facilitating solar installations, we're building a grassroots movement of solar supporters.

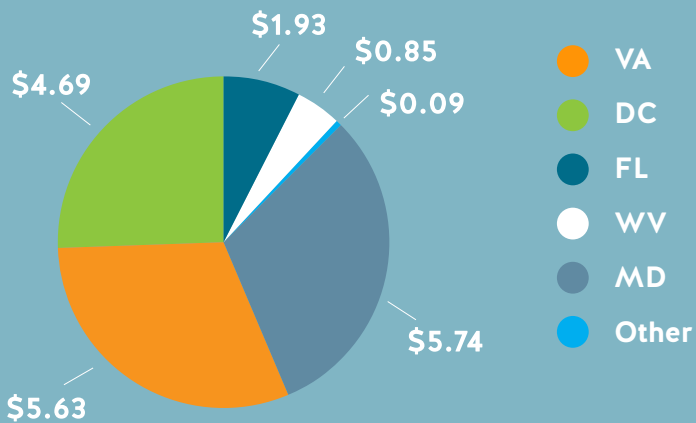
The result is not only greater number of homeowners going solar, but more citizens learning about solar technologies and policies. For every homeowner that signs a contract to go solar, five more have learned about solar and have become part of our network.



Would You Recommend the Bulk Purchase Process to a Friend?

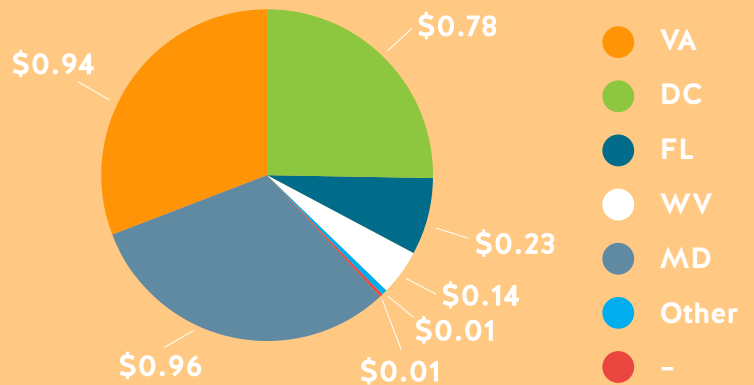


Dollars Spent (Millions) TOTAL: \$18.39



By going solar, our co-op members are investing in their local economies. Co-op members have invested in \$18 million worth of solar.

Dollars Saved (Millions) TOTAL: \$3.07



By going solar as part of a group, co-op members save on average 15-20% off the cost of going solar. To-date we've saved our co-op members more than \$3 million.

ENGAGING ADVOCATES



Our model is to use co-ops to build a strong base of committed citizens who are ready and willing to advocate for better solar policies.

After citizens participate in a co-op we fold them into our ongoing education and advocacy efforts. We regularly engage with them on policy issues and keep them informed about opportunities to take action. We recently began deploying regular monthly newsletters to educate and update our state networks on solar developments, in addition to our ongoing education efforts.

PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS



DC SUN is our most established program. We've worked in the District since 2007 to expand access to renewable energy. While D.C. has a thriving residential solar market, low-income citizens and renters are systematically excluded from being able to benefit from solar. This year we fought to ensure fair solar regulations and stand up for local control over our energy future.

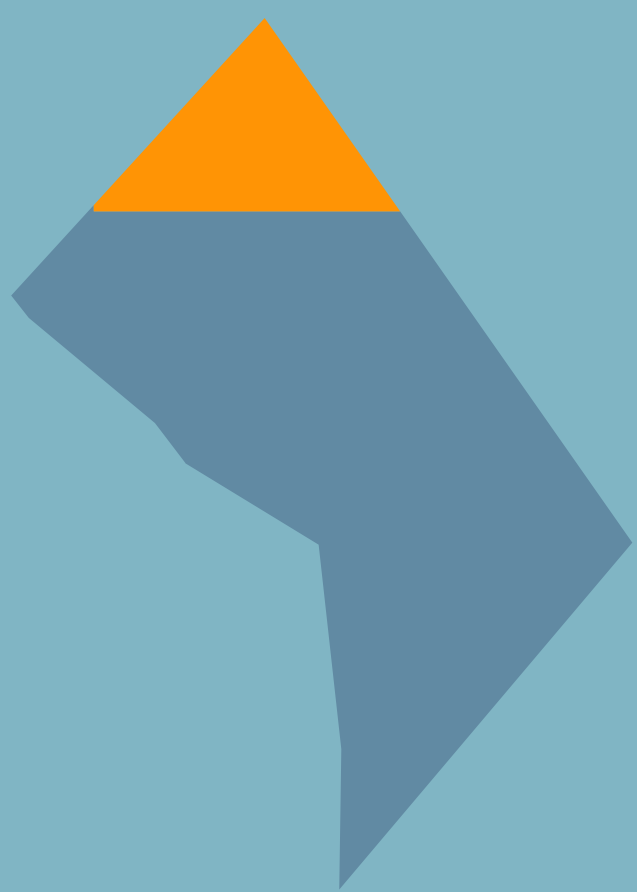
[Anya Schoolman, President, DC SUN](#)



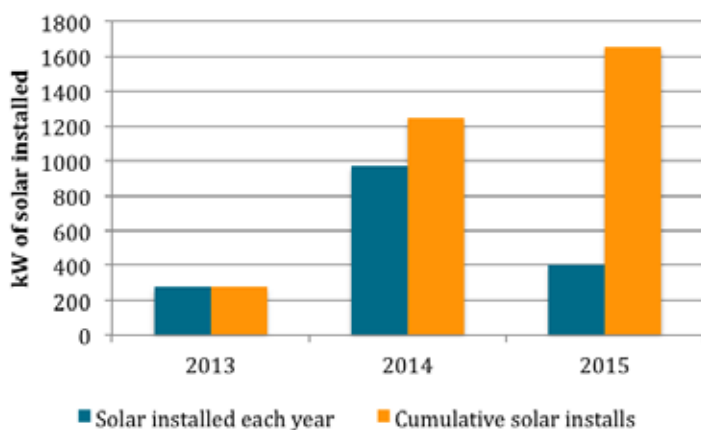
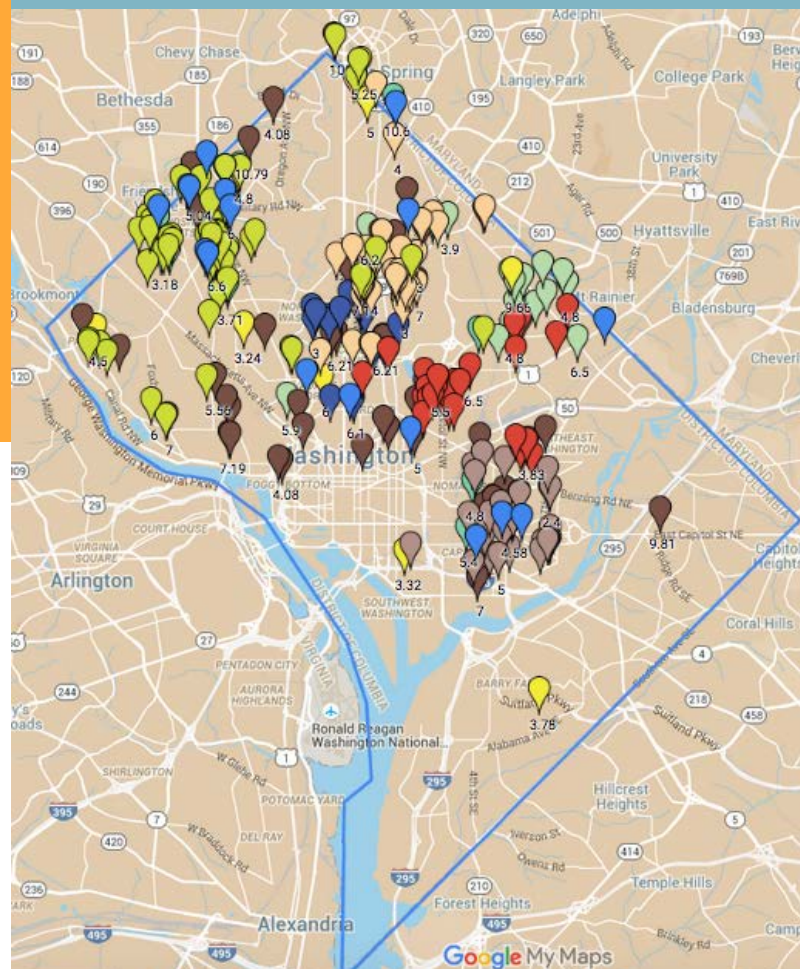
SOLAR CO-OPS: CONTINUING TO GROW DC'S SOLAR MARKET

Since we started tracking our work in the District we've:

- Recruited nearly 1,000 homeowners to participate in co-ops.
- Helped more than 300 co-op members go solar.
- Facilitated 1.5 MW of installed solar capacity.
- Facilitated \$4.7 million of local investment in solar.
- Saved co-op members over \$700,000 on their systems.



DC SUN co-ops are responsible for 10% of all solar installed in the District (SEIA)



Solar co-op installations in Washington, DC

OTHER PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS



Community Solar: Ensuring Fair Regulations

DC SUN has been leading the charge for community solar for the past five years. In 2015, the DC Public Service Commission inexplicably interpreted the Community Renewables Energy Act of 2013 – our landmark legislation for solar access – to provide a lower on-bill credit than rooftop solar. We were able to get emergency legislation introduced to restore the initial intent of the law and provide equal and affordable solar access to all DC residents. However, the legislation has not moved to a vote in committee due to utility pressure.

DC SUN conducted extensive citizen education around the unfair regulations. This includes raising the issue in the media, submitting comments to the PSC, and organizing residents to testify in favor of amending the regulations

Fighting Exelon: Protecting Our Right To Local Clean Energy

Throughout 2015 we continued to oppose the \$6.4 billion merger between Chicago-based energy giant Exelon and local utility Pepco, advocating on behalf of District residents who would not benefit from the creation of the largest utility company in the country.

Exelon maintained its long track record of intense lobbying against clean energy. It remained heavily involved in not only pushing through the deal, but flexing its influence at the state and federal level, hindering progress on both local clean energy policies, and the renewal of the 30% federal tax credit for solar.

DC SUN led a diverse coalition of groups in the District to fight the merger under the banner of PowerDC. We organized thousands of comments into the Public Service Commission, brought the issue to the attention of national media, and demanded the Public Service Commission (PSC) investigate the

real impacts of the deal on local residents. Our campaign was designed to fight the merger and to educate ratepayers on the potential for a distributed green energy future.

In a surprise unanimous ruling, the PSC voted to reject the proposed merger. It was truly a David and Goliath moment, and a win for local renewable energy advocates across the country. In its ruling the PSC noted:

“This proceeding has generated more interest and more active participation by parties and interested persons than any other proceeding in the Commission’s more than a century of operations.”

-DC Public Service Commission

Commissioners adopted our framing in their evaluation of the merger, citing a conflict of interest as one of its key concerns:

“We are also concerned about the inherent conflict of interest that might inhibit our local distribution company from moving forward to embrace a cleaner and greener environment.”

-D.C. Public Service Commission

The press noted the extent to which citizen mobilization had transformed this debate. For example:

“On one side were Exelon executives and Pepco shareholders, who stood to make out like bandits. On the other side were DC ratepayers and the district’s clean energy goals, which stood to get the short end of the stick.”

-“Grassroots pressure has put a stop to the proposed Exelon-Pepco merger in DC.”
Vox, August 2016

DC SUN IN THE NEWS

As a leading member of a diverse coalition of groups in the District, however, DC SUN was central to building a strong citizen movement against the merger.

“How Local Organizers Thwarted One of the Biggest Utility Acquisitions in History.”
Greentech Media (August 2015)

“After 4 States Approved A Big Utility Merger, DC Shocked Everyone By Denying It Over Clean Energy.”
ThinkProgress (August 2015)

Climate Progress described the decision with the headline:

“After Four States Approved the Merger DC Shocked Everyone by Denying it Over Clean Energy.”

The issue remains open as D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser agreed to support a last-minute settlement with Exelon. The settlement offers nothing substantial on clean energy development and only focuses on short-term ratepayer compensation. After a “shock and awe” media and lobbying blitz from Exelon and Pepco, the D.C. government and utilities submitted a new settlement for consideration of the PSC in October.

PowerDC continued to hold public officials, as well as Pepco and Exelon, accountable by raising important questions about the nature and timing of this agreement. Specifically, the group called out a suspicious payment made by Pepco to the city. This payment allowed the District to buy land to secure a deal with DC United to build a new soccer stadium. The group also raised concerns that Exelon secretly hired a close mayoral ally to lobby for the deal.

The PSC is now deciding whether or not to accept this hastily negotiated back-room settlement. The Mayor’s settlement does not address the core conflict of interest problem that constituted the very heart of the PSC’s rejection argument in August, and we are hopeful that the interest of District residents will prevail.

Much is at stake. Killing the proposed merger will send a warning across America that regular citizens will to fight for their right to generate their own clean energy.

EFFECTIVE ORGANIZERS

DC SUN worked closely with coalition members to demonstrate broad public opposition to the merger.

“This proceeding has generated more interest and more active participation by parties and interested persons than any other proceeding in the Commission’s more than a century of operations.”

-DC Public Service Commission



MD SUN program came into its own in 2015. We brought on Corey Ramsden as our full-time MD SUN Program Director and deployed 11 co-ops across the state. We also launched an innovative low-income pilot program and worked to ensure that the forthcoming community solar regulations are fair and equitable to increase access to solar for all Marylanders.

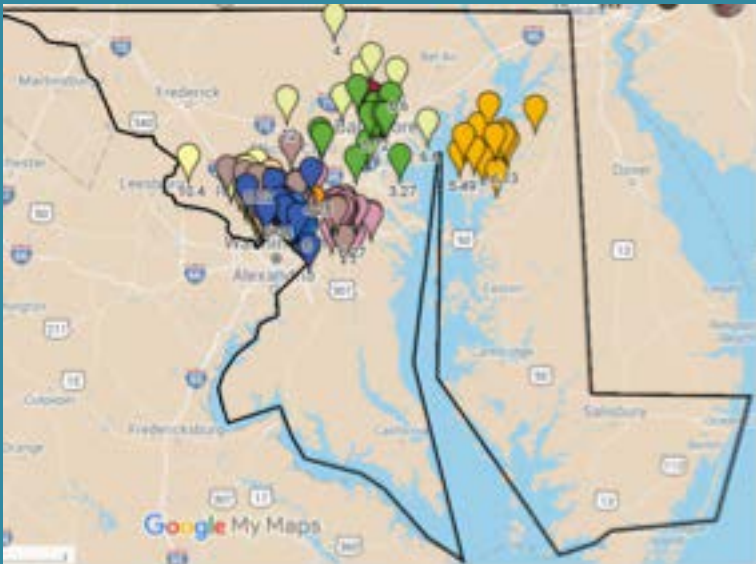
Corey Ramsden, MD SUN Program Director



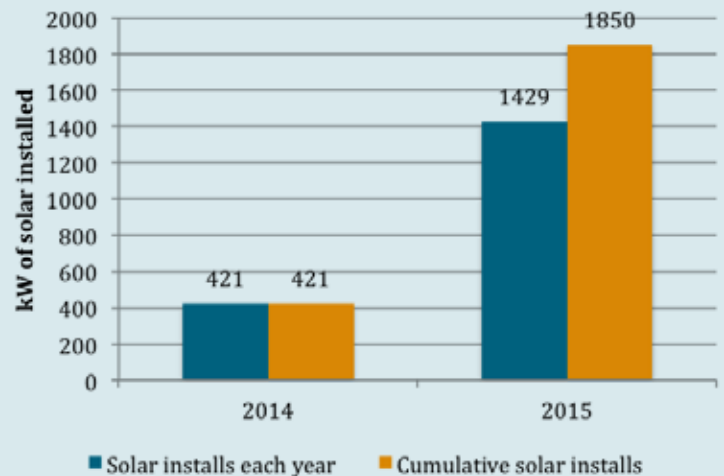
SOLAR CO-OPS: BUILDING A BROAD BASE OF SOLAR SUPPORTERS IN MARYLAND

Since starting our work in Maryland we've:

- Recruited nearly 2,000 homeowners to participate in co-ops.
- Helped over 300 co-op members go solar.
- Facilitated 2.0 MW of installed solar capacity.
- Facilitated \$6 million of local investment in solar.
- Saved co-op members over \$1 million on their systems.



Across the state we've launched 14 solar co-ops, including 11 co-ops in 2015 alone!



We've continued to scale up our solar deployment in the state, nearly tripling our installed capacity between 2014 and 2015

ROCKSTAR PARTNERS

Each co-op is only possible thanks to the collaboration and support of local partners.



Beth El Congregation,
Chesapeake Climate Action Network
(CCAN), City of Bowie, City of Chestertown,
City of Rockville, City of Takoma Park, Community
Purchasing Alliance, Earth Justice, Easton Utilities,
Energy Advocates, Fuel Fund of Maryland, Interfaith
Power and Light (DC.MD.NoVA), Maryland Clean Energy
Center, MDV Solar Energy Industry Association, Metro
Washington Council of Governments, Nuclear Information
and Resource Service (NIRS), Organizing for Action, Pickering
Creek Audubon Center, Prince George's Sustainable Energy
Program, Retrofit Baltimore, Riverdale Heights, Rockville
Environment Commission, Salisbury University Smart
Growth Club, ShorePower Initiative/Washington
College, Sierra Club, Temple Sinai, United
Workers, University of Maryland
Environmental Finance Center



Although Nancy Franklin had already gone solar on her Maryland home, she was one of the biggest supporters of the Bowie Solar Co-op that formed in her community. Nancy attended informational meetings, spread the word about the co-op to her neighbors, and shared her experience with the group. Thanks to her support, the Bowie group helped over 50 homeowners go solar!

Jonathan Smith, an active member of the Rockville Solar Co-op, not only helped organize the group, but is also working to help his synagogue go solar.

Sherri Downing, a Councilmember in Fairmount Heights, organized an informational meeting for her neighbors. Her goal was to take her entire block solar, as well as to spread the word about newly passed community solar legislation for those who can't go solar on their own homes.

LOCAL CHAMPIONS



Brian Ambrette with the Eastern Shore Land Conservancy hosted a conference on renewable energy and helped connect solar advocates with people working on land use and conservation issues.



Jake Day (left) is the Mayor of Salisbury and has been a champion for the Salisbury Solar Co-op from the start. Jake has helped organize informational meetings and shared information about going solar with his constituents as part of his efforts to expand solar adoption in Salisbury.

OTHER PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS



Low-Income Solar: Piloting innovative project models

In 2015 MD SUN launched a pilot program to help low-income homeowners go solar and save on their energy bills. Energy is increasingly unaffordable for Maryland's low-income residents and many regularly rely on energy bill forgiveness programs to keep the lights on. In 2014, home energy costs accounted for between 21% and 40% of yearly income for low-income residents¹. Families are often forced to choose between paying heating and electricity bills, or medical bills or rent. Energy bill forgiveness programs are a short-term fix. Solar is a long-term solution to this problem because it permanently reduces a homeowner's bill and provides a new asset for the family.

Our pilot program will help ten homeowners go solar and provide the experience and data necessary to grow the program. We believe this initial effort will demonstrate solar is a viable and desirable option for low-income households, help transform the thinking and approach of the old line energy assistance philanthropies, and create a set of facts and experiences that can be used to design a larger scaling program. We anticipate publishing the results of our pilot in early 2016.

Community Solar: Expanding solar access in Maryland

Maryland passed legislation creating a community solar pilot program in 2015, with the goal of expanding solar access to all Marylanders. We engaged in the community solar rule-making process at the Maryland Public Service Commission through out the year. With our members, we participated in public

¹ <http://www.homeenergyaffordabilitygap.com>



meetings, responded to requests for public comment, and regularly coordinated efforts with other solar stakeholders to ensure the regulations made community solar accessible and beneficial to all Marylanders. This includes low- and moderate-income residents. We also provided technical support to municipalities interested in community solar and educated our members on the basics of community solar.

The process has been very productive and we look forward to the regulations being finalized in 2016. We anticipate exploring ways to develop community solar projects throughout the state, focusing particularly on low-income communities.



Residential solar capacity has increased dramatically in the past two years in Virginia. VA SUN is one of the biggest drivers of this change. We scaled up our solar deployment via solar co-ops and have had overwhelming interest from homeowners across the state.

Aaron Sutch, VA SUN Program Director



SOLAR CO-OPS: DRAMATICALLY SCALING UP SOLAR IN VIRGINIA

Since starting our work in Virginia we've:

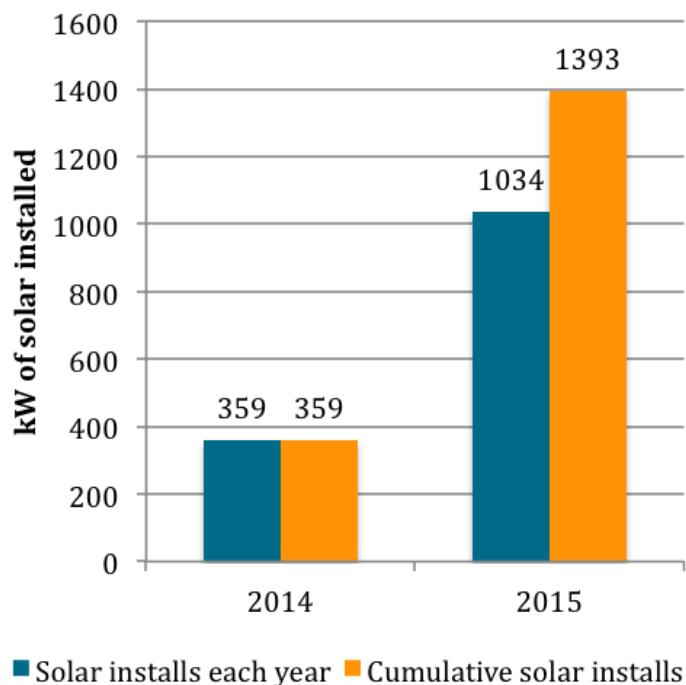
- Recruited more than 2,000 homeowners to participate in co-ops.
- Helped 314 co-op members go solar.
- Facilitated 1.8 MW of installed solar capacity.
- Facilitated \$5.63 million of local investment.
- Saved co-op members \$940,000 on their systems.



We're working in communities all across the state and to-date have launched 14 solar co-ops



VA SUN co-op installs account for 11% of all solar installations in Virginia (SEIA)



Solar co-op installations in Washington, DC

ROCKSTAR PARTNERS

Our goal is to empower a diverse cross-section of advocates and allies with the technical knowledge and enthusiasm to have a greater impact once their local co-op comes to a close.



Greater Washington
Interfaith Power and Light, Local Energy
Alliance Program (LEAP), Community Housing
Partners, the Town of Blacksburg Sustainability Office,
Climate Action Alliance of the Valley, Sierra Club Virginia
Chapter, Richmond Regional Energy Alliance, Virginia Green,
Virginia Commonwealth University, Arlington Initiative to
Rethink Energy (AIRE), Arlingtonians for a Clean Environment
(ACE), Community Purchasing Alliance, Mom's Clean Air
Force, VA Organizing, Town of Halifax, Oak Grove Bed
and Breakfast, MDV SEIA, Rappahannock League for
Environment Protection, Hampton Roads Solar Tour,
Drive Electric RVA, and the Richmond
Hindu Temple.



We worked with the Town of Halifax and the Oak Grove Plantation Bed and Breakfast, a local business, to organize the Halifax Solar Co-op. The result was a group of more than 50 members and the emergence of a local champion and solar advocate who continues to promote solar to this day. Glen Ratliff, a long-time resident of Halifax County, was the co-op's first installation. Glen was so excited about his install that he began offering free tours of his home to local residents curious about solar. Glen has now given dozens of tours of his solar installation and has taken it upon himself to demystify the technology in Halifax County.

Sekar Veerappan, a member of the Richmond Hindu Temple, has worked with us to start the Richmond Community Solar Co-op. He got interested in co-op after reading about other successful co-ops around Virginia and wanted to start a group in Richmond. Sekar enlisted two local businesses (The Alliance Group and Boulevard Creative) as well as an electric vehicle association (Drive Electric RVA) to promote the co-op. Thanks to these efforts the group now has nearly 50 members.

Sandy Greene, a longtime resident of Augusta and the organizer of the Augusta County Solar Co-op, got involved through her friend Joy Loving. Sandy used her position in the community to plan co-op events with civic organizations and educate decision makers about the co-op and solar. She created a fun, informative PowerPoint presentation with references and photos from the Rural Electrification Project of the 30's and lots of global examples of solar installations to help rural Augusta County residents understand solar technology.

LOCAL CHAMPIONS



Teresa Stanley is the Hampton Roads organizer for VA Organizing, a multi-issue grassroots group that works for non-partisan change in the state. Teresa was pivotal in launching the Virginia Beach Solar Co-op and helped plan info session and conduct outreach. She is also working with VA SUN to identify low-income and disaster resilience solar models for Hampton Roads.

Ambassador Larry Wohlers is our on-the-ground partner for the Rappahannock Solar Co-op. Larry is involved with Rappahannock League for Environmental Protection (RLEP) and helped bring the co-op model to Rappahannock County by reaching out directly to VA SUN. Larry helped organizing local info sessions and he hosted the bid selection committee for the co-op at his residence. A co-op member himself, he plans to move forward with a ground-mounted solar array.



Carl Espy is the town Manager for Halifax County. His involvement and interest led to the Town of Halifax partnering on the Halifax County Solar Co-op. Carl became interested in solar after attending a municipal leadership conference highlighting the success of VA SUN's work in Blacksburg. Carl helped coordinate communications between city and utility officials and the co-op's installer. His enthusiasm has also led to consideration of solar in future county and city buildings.



In 2015 WV SUN worked to scale up solar deployment in the state via our co-ops. There is a growing momentum behind solar in West Virginia, as people hear that solar is possible and want to explore going solar for their own homes. We also used this momentum to help citizens defend their right to go solar, organizing a successful defensive campaign after the legislature attempted to repeal net metering.

Karan Ireland, WV SUN Program Director



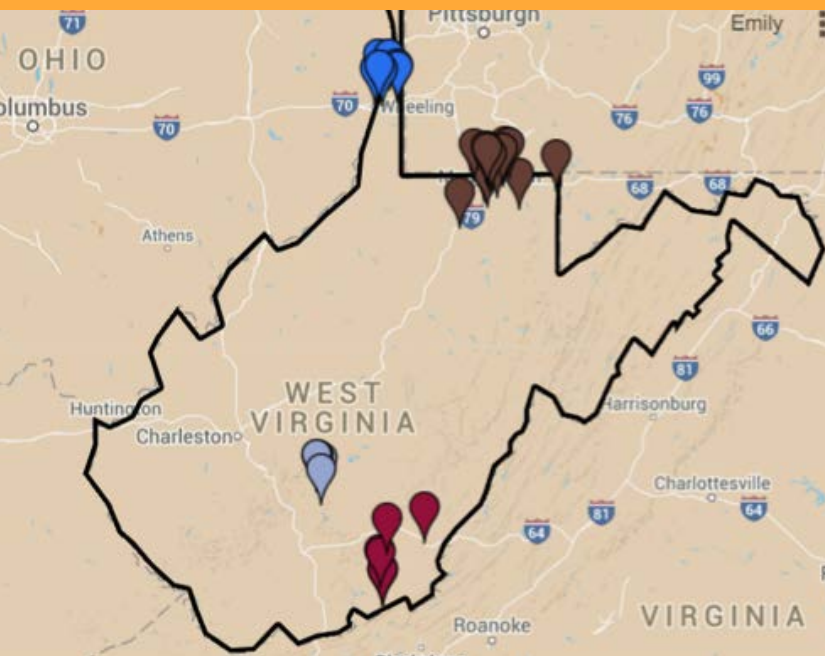
SOLAR CO-OPS: SUPPORTING WEST VIRGINIA'S EMERGING SOLAR COMMUNITY

Since we started our work in West Virginia we've:

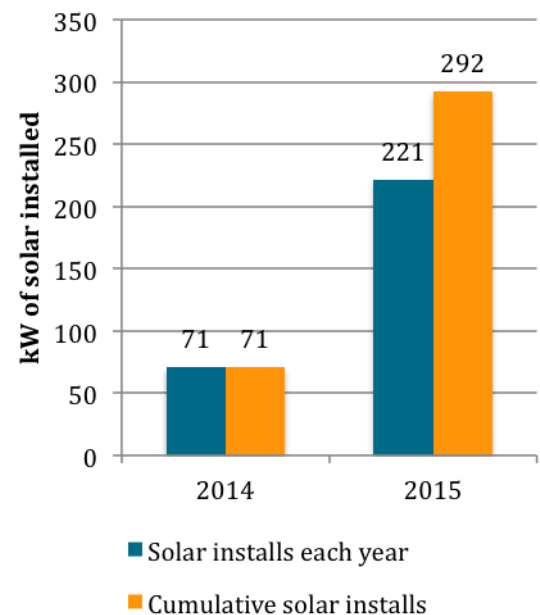
- Recruited more than 250 homeowners to participate in co-ops.
- Helped over 46 co-op members go solar.
- Facilitated nearly 300 kW of installed solar capacity.
- Facilitated nearly \$1 million of local investment in solar.
- Saved co-op members over \$140,000 on their systems.



WV SUN co-op installs account for 10% of all solar installations in the state (SEIA)



We've launched five co-ops across the state



In 2015 we tripled the amount of solar capacity we deployed via our solar co-ops

ROCKSTAR PARTNERS

Our goal is to empower a diverse cross-section of advocates and allies with the technical knowledge and enthusiasm to have a greater impact once their local tco-op comes to a close.



Morgantown Municipal
Green Team, Sierra Club,
Downstream Strategies, Wheeling
Green Team, Wheeling Academy of Laws
and Science Foundation (WALS), Mountain
Lakes Preservation Alliance; Tucker Renewables
Cooperative; Stand Up For Monroe; WV
Greenworks, Inc.; West Virginia Citizen Action
Group; WV Environmental Council;
Ben Franklin Career Center



Cory Chase, Thomas, WV, was so enthused at the idea of going solar with his neighbors that, by the time he had contacted us, he'd build a Facebook group with a dozen members who were ready to form a co-op.

“We are working with WV SUN to get help with vital technical information and help, which will allow us to make better informed choices. I have learned more about the bidding process and how our group can customize that process to suit our group. I care about solar because it is important to invest in renewable energy: for ourselves and future generations.”

-Corey Chase, Tucker County Solar Co-op leader



Joe Chasnoff, organizer of Stand Up, Monroe!, originally reached out to WV SUN in 2013 to start a solar co-op after their group successfully opposed a fracking pipeline in rural Monroe County. We're now working with him to organize a second round of the Monroe County Co-op.

“We are working with WV SUN because of the valuable knowledge, experience, credibility, and good vibes they bring to the process of building a co-op bulk purchase of solar systems.

I've made new friends, got a great solar system, and learned a ton about how to promote solar. I care about global warming, a clean healthy environment, and we have to advance an alternative to fossil fuels and shale gas development in order to save our precious pure water here in Monroe.”

-Joe Chasnoff, Monroe County Energy Co-op Leader

LOCAL CHAMPIONS

We work closely with experts throughout the state to ensure that we're working on strategic solar issues that are going to grow the overall market.

“I think that organizing people to go solar is crucial for building a base of people who can challenge the power of the utilities. Decentralizing power (both electrical and political) is key to having a democratic and sustainable energy system.”

-Cathy Kunkel, WV SUN Advisory Board Member



“I am working with WV SUN to promote a brighter path forward for West Virginians. As our state does not have any state-specific benefits for installing solar, innovative cost saving strategies like that of the co-op model really help to bring people in and promote solar PV.”

- Joey James, Downstream Strategies Staff Scientist and organizer of the Morgantown Solar Co-op.





OTHER PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Defending citizen rights to produce our own energy

In January 2015, we successfully responded to a legislative attack on net metering in the state legislature. Net metering is the bedrock policy that allows solar homes to reduce their electric bills by the amount of energy they produce. The state House and Senate considered legislation that would have threatened the statutes that required West Virginia utilities to implement net metering.

We quickly pulled together a legislative steering committee, identified key players, put together advocacy language and an action alert, and urged people to share. The entire WV SUN listserv then mobilized their networks. After one week, we had secured an unprecedented 662 actions to contact House or Senate committee members. In total, legislators and the governor heard the message from more than 1,000 constituents that net metering was important to West Virginians. As a result, many legislators made statements emphasizing their commitment to keeping net metering and engaged with our citizens. In a press release that accompanied his bill signing, the governor emphasized the increasing role that solar is playing in the state and acknowledged the importance of new solar jobs. Ultimately the Public Service Commission convened a task force to study the costs and benefits of solar to the grid and throughout 2015 WV SUN served as a member of this task force. We're continuing to follow the issue closely.

This moment was the first time West Virginia's solar community had come together to speak with one voice. Our organizing work is helping create that unified presence and build a broad base of solar supporters around the state.

IN MEMORY OF

BILL HOWLEY



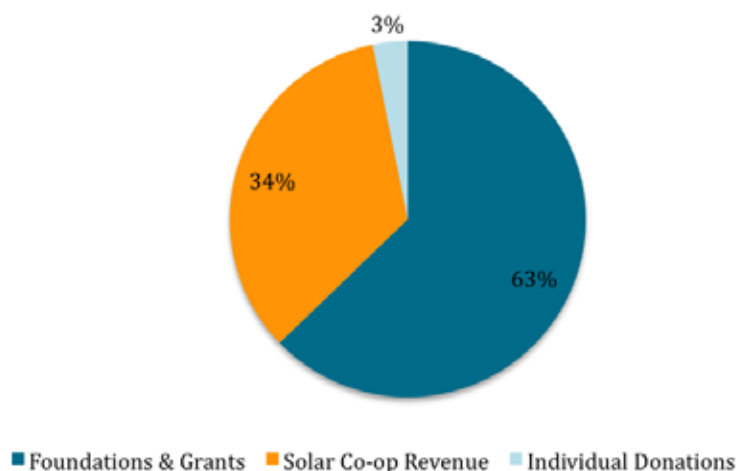
On April 23rd, 2015, WV SUN Program Director, Bill Howley, was killed in an auto accident.

We are incredibly sad to have lost such an outstanding leader and a person who educated and inspired us all. Bill was a leading citizen advocate on energy issues in West Virginia and author of [The Power Line](#), one of the foremost blogs on energy issues in the country. Bill's commitment and dedication to justice, his depth of intellect, and his sense of strategy made him a giant. He lived and breathed his core values. He guided and inspired us and gave us hope, and we are so sad to have lost him.

In honor of Bill's memory, Community Power Network created the Bill Howley Memorial Fund, dedicated to empowering and supporting future energy activists and educators in West Virginia. Bill helped create an inspiring vision for West Virginia's energy future and we will continue to work tirelessly to make that vision a reality.

FINANCIAL RESOURCES

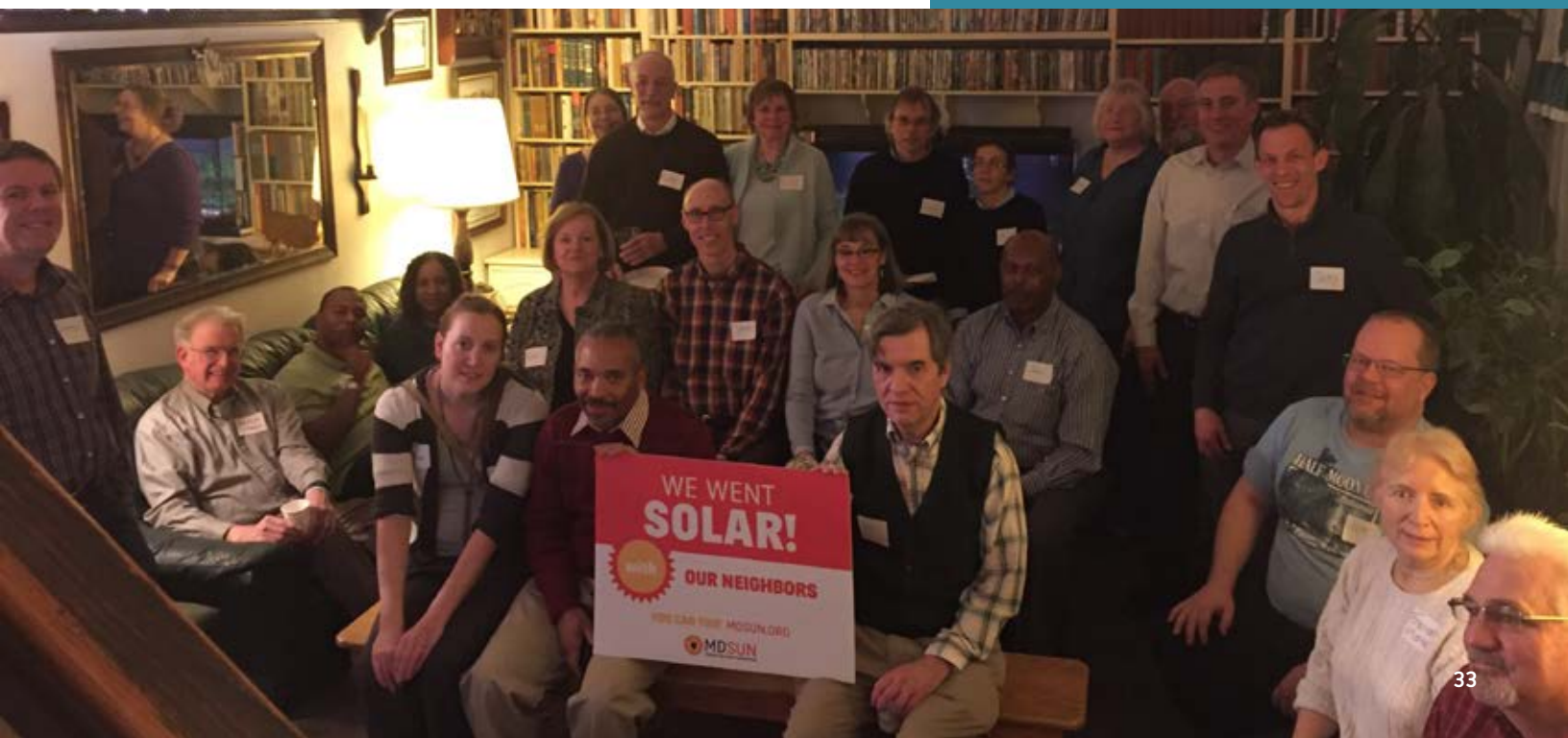
We receive support from foundations, individual donors, and revenue from our solar co-ops. Our diverse revenue sources help us grow our programs and ensure we continue to be financially secure. In particular, our solar co-op work generates a fee-for-service that allows us to fill in funding gaps and keep our programs strong.



Our work would not be possible without the generous support of innovative foundations and individual donors. Thank you!

FOUNDATIONS:

- Abell Foundation
- Appalachian Stewardship Foundation
- the blue moon fund
- Council on Governments
- Energy Foundation
- Horning Family Fund of the Community Foundation of the National Capital Region
- One Foundation
- Rockefeller Family Foundation/Changing Horizons Fund
- Town Creek Foundation
- West Wind Foundation



CONCLUSION

This was a year of growth for Community Power Network. We proved that we could scale our impact by doubling our co-op work. We also built real political power for the clean energy movement. In places like West Virginia and Virginia we have re-framed the solar debate. We've moved the conversation from "Does solar even work?" to "How can I get it?" In Washington D.C and Maryland we have also changed the conversation to focus on access and equity by pushing for low-income solar programs and community solar. It is not enough that the solar market is big: it has to be fair and its benefits must be widely distributed.

As we look to 2016 we are expanding the geographic scope of our program to include Ohio and Florida. We are deepening our civic engagement to include greater opportunities for leadership development, as well as focusing on developing the infrastructure to network our community leaders from across each state.

Our work is led by the fundamental belief that a truly distributed, democratic, and equitable green energy movement will be unstoppable. We are focusing on developing and scaling programs in new sectors beyond the residential market. We are focused on educating and empowering local leaders to fight for their own green energy future.



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