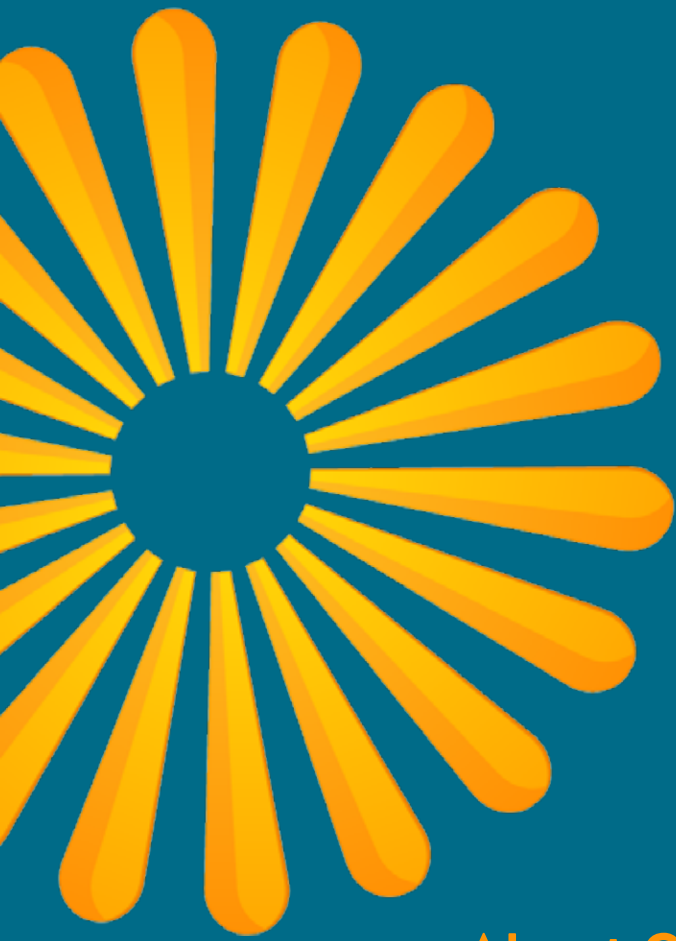




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“We build a broad new constituency for change.”

About Community Power Network

Community Power Network (CPN) is a network of grassroots, local, state, and national organizations working to build and promote locally-based renewable energy projects and policies.

We are a resource and strategic partner to our diverse, nonpartisan network that includes private citizens, nonprofits, municipalities, and community organizations.

We are dedicated to the vision that if a large and diverse number of people have a financial stake in the clean energy economy, they will fight for it. By building, demonstrating, promoting, and advocating for ways for people to financially benefit from clean energy, we build a broad new constituency for change.

All of us have a stake in a future where every community participates in the financial benefits of our energy grid. We achieve these benefits by moving from big, central plants to distributed, renewable energy.



Implementing our vision

As an organization we implement this vision by working on two different levels:

1. On the national level, we support and help build a diverse network of groups and individuals implementing renewable energy projects in their communities. We help member organizations advocate for policy, start renewable energy projects, and create change in their communities. We find and identify new groups and project models and put the community power movement on the map.
2. On the regional level we run state programs: **DC SUN**, **MD SUN**, **VA SUN**, and **WV SUN**. Each of these programs promotes solar throughout the state, with the goal of (1) developing and scaling solar projects within communities, (2) passing solar policies that expand the state's solar market, and (3) building a community of clean energy advocates that traverse traditional political fault lines.

This approach means we have the best of both worlds. We help new groups get started and serve as a resource to existing organizations around the country. We also use our state programs as a “testing ground” for new strategies to deploy community-based renewables. We then share our lessons learned and experience with the broader CPN network.

National Accomplishments

Our Executive Director, Anya Schoolman, founded CPN in 2011 in response to an overwhelming need from people who wanted help creating real change in their communities.

After starting the Mt. Pleasant Solar Co-op, Anya was inundated with calls from people around the country who had heard about the co-op and wanted to do something similar. They were tired of waiting for their legislators to pass climate legislation or support renewables. They wanted to actually do something, and were inspired by the idea that they didn't have to wait for permission. And, they were everywhere! Anya discovered that there were thousands of people around the country that had the same idea: we can't wait for our leaders to take action, we need to do it ourselves.

The only problem was that most people were operating on a very local level, often in isolation. It was frustrating to have to tackle every problem alone, and many didn't realize that they were part of a much broader movement of citizens all over the country. Community Power Network's role is to connect folks with one another, as well as to share resources, ideas, and hope. We're a part of the explosion of on-the-ground renewable energy projects and strategic policy reform.

As the community-renewables movement has grown, so too has Community Power Network. Although we are now implementing state programs throughout the mid-Atlantic, we haven't lost sight of the importance of giving people the tools and resources they need to create change in their own communities. The interest is there, people just need help getting started.

Our assistance generally consists of:

- Technical support to our members, helping them launch policy advocacy campaigns or scale up project deployment.
- Help to individuals wanting to start new groups, giving them the tools and encouragement to get started.
- Resource guides and information on community-energy issues.

We typically respond to one or two requests for technical assistance per week. The type of support varies widely, from helping someone figure out the best approach to get solar on their local school, to helping organizations strategize on a statewide energy policy campaign. We often help groups understand the practical 'real world' realities of getting renewable energy projects built. It's easy for to put together recommendations and "road maps" for deploying renewables. It's another thing to actually get a wind turbine in the ground. We focus on actual projects and creating real change, and this focus makes us unique as a national organization.



We help people all over the country start their own local renewable energy projects

In the past year, we've provided support to community members in South Carolina, California, Minnesota, Arizona, Texas, New York, and Maine. We advised African-American religious leaders in South Carolina on how to integrate solar into their community empowerment programs, collaborated with advocates working on community solar and group purchase programs in NY, and provided technical support to networks in the southern US and Rocky Mountain West on avenues to bring more renewable energy to rural electric cooperatives. We also co-hosted with the George Washington University Solar Institute the first ever national conference on **low-income solar**.

In 2014, we continued to expand CPN's resource guides on new models and approaches in the sector. We built out our info pages on **low-income solar** models, **community solar/shared**



Anya Schoolman started CPN after getting calls from hundreds of citizens around the country who wanted to start renewable energy projects in their communities

“The interest is there. People just need help getting started.”



“Energy, equity, investments, and profits mean little in comparison to our right to life, the pursuit of happiness and the world we live in and cannot live without.” –Leo Woodbury

Rev. Leo Woodbury, Greater Anointed Ministries Fellowship

solar, and **solarize programs** around the country. We also shared updates on the **distributed wind** sector, profiles of organizations providing **community financing** for renewables, and regular **news updates** on community-based renewables and rural electric cooperatives.

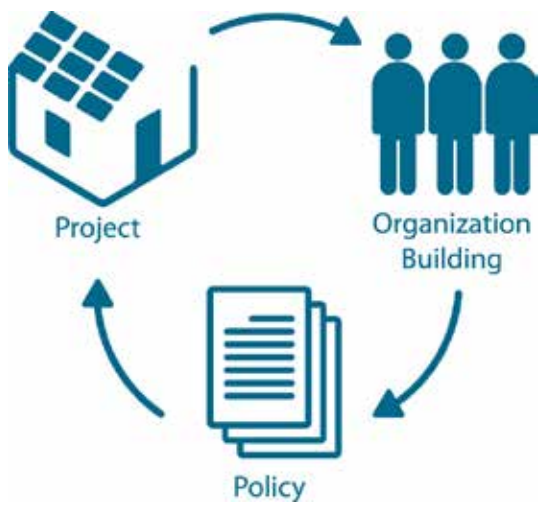
In April 2014 Anya was also chosen by President Obama as one of ten heroes who are **Champions of Change for Solar Deployment** for their efforts to promote and expand solar deployment in the residential, commercial and industrial sectors. The President’s award highlighted Anya’s success in building a regional solar movement. Other award winners included CPN members Henry Red Cloud, Founder and Sole Proprietor of Lakota Solar Enterprises (LSE), Tim Sears, co-founder of GRID Alternatives, Kate Bowman the Solar Project Coordinator for Utah Clean Energy (UCE), Elyse Cherry, Chief Executive Officer of Boston Community Capital, and Jessica Bailey, Director of Commercial and Industrial Property Assessed Clean Energy at Connecticut’s “green bank.” Half of the recipients of the Champions award were existing members of CPN!



We helped convene low-income stakeholders from around the country as part of the George Washington University Solar Institute’s first annual low-income solar conference



2014 White House Champions of Change for Solar Deployment



Over the last three years we've demonstrated that this approach is effective. We're now transforming energy politics in the states where we work.

Our theory of change is to link projects, organizing, and policy to transform state solar markets

State Program Accomplishments

On the state level, we focus on solar because it is the most simple and accessible clean energy technology. Our theory of change is to use on the ground solar projects to build a broad base of solar advocates. We then work with this broad base of advocates to effectively transform energy policy change on the state level and local level.

Over the last three years we've demonstrated that this approach is effective. We're now transforming energy politics in the states where we work.

SOLAR CO-OPS

After testing a number of different models we found that solar co-ops are one of the most effective ways to build a broad base of solar advocates. So, in 2014 we made the strategic decision to focus on solar co-ops as the core of our state work.

Known elsewhere as “solarize” programs, the basic approach is to gather homeowners, farmers, or businesses together and help them go solar as a group. By forming a group, participants can save up to 20% off the cost of the installation. We also support co-op members through the decision-making process, creating a group dynamic that helps more people go solar.

This process transforms the economics of a project for an individual homeowner. It also transforms the market for the solar installer. It catalyzes a transition from a high-margin, low-volume (completing a few custom installs a month) to a high-volume, low-margin approach (completing an installation every other day). This transition to a high volume model needs to happen for solar to scale and become accessible to the broadest possible base. We promote a transparent and competitive solar market while making consumer protection a top priority.



Our co-op members are excited to be able to go solar, get a discount, and connect with their neighbors in the process

We have launched 28 solar co-ops in DC, MD, VA, and WV across our state programs in the last two years. Although some of the groups are still in progress, in 2014 alone our co-ops generated 1,590 members, 413 installed systems, and more than 2.27 MW of solar installed in DC, MD, VA, and WV. Combined, our co-ops have resulted in more than \$6.9M in residential investments in solar. And, we've saved co-op members an estimated \$1.1M in system costs.

2014: Co-ops by the numbers

15

Implemented co-ops

1,590

Recruited solar co-op members

413

Systems installed

2.27 MW

Solar installed

+\$6 MIL

Facilitated in residential solar investments

+\$1 MIL

Saved for co-op members

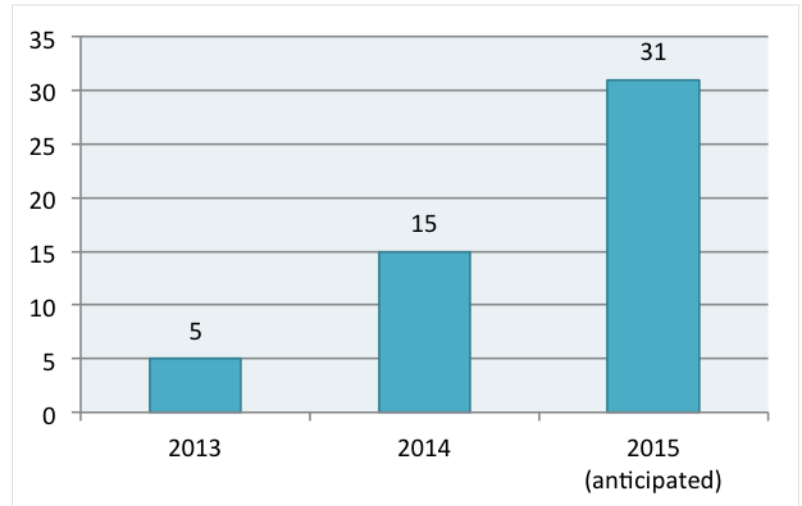
10

New solar jobs added by participating companies

SCALING

This year we invested heavily in developing a customized Customer Relationship Management database. This allows us to more effectively implement co-ops, drive greater solar adoption rates, create a better homeowner experience, and foster greater competition and lower prices in the solar market. We've also spent significant time and resources developing cross-cutting communications and informational materials for the co-ops. By utilizing a similar process for all co-ops regardless of their state, we can deploy lessons learned across all of our programs and achieve faster scaling.

We've also created and built out our state websites as a one-stop shop for all things solar in each state. The sites are an ever-expanding resource featuring educational tutorials covering solar basics, links to projects, policy updates, partner profiles, and current events specific to solar in each state. They are the only online resource for non-commercial, state-specific solar information in each location, providing critical support to citizens interested in solar projects and helping us scale up our reach.



Between 2013 and 2014 we tripled the number of co-ops we launched. And, we're on track to double our co-op deployment in 2015



BEYOND INSTALLATIONS

As part of our co-op process, we empower community anchors to start other projects in their communities. Our role is as facilitators and technical advisors, with local citizens or organizations as the face, heart, and soul of every co-op: organizing meetings, promoting the effort, recruiting their neighbors, and taking ownership of the process. In many groups, we've seen co-op leaders go on to organize other efforts or co-ops. The process not only transforms the economics of a project for an individual homeowner, but catalyzes more action within the community.

BUILDING A STRONGER MOVEMENT

As we work on co-ops, we also intervene on strategic policy issues and build our email lists via petitions and cross-promotion with other organizations on a state level. This allows us to create policy change and lay the groundwork for a stronger movement of solar supporters in the state. When necessary, we run targeted campaigns to protect existing solar policies such as net metering, or support new legislation that will expand the market such as community solar or programs to support low-income solar.



“My activities have stretched me as a person and made my retirement very fulfilling. When my role with Solarize Harrisonburg ends later this month, I plan to relax for a while and then hope to assist with other Solarize efforts north and south of us in the Shenandoah Valley. I also want to work on an effort to bring solar to lower income people in our city and county. I would like to use these efforts to change the legislative and regulatory environment in Virginia, which is currently not solar-friendly.” -Joy Loving, Solarize Harrisonburg partner

In our work in the mid-Atlantic region, we’ve also found that creating a statewide listserv has been an incredibly effective way to create and build a statewide network of solar supporters that care about solar and are want to help develop projects and support policy change.

By keeping our work focused on the practical issues surrounding solar, we appeal to a much broader base of participants. Many of our members are focused on their right to produce their own power, or their desire to create local jobs, and are invested in their state’s solar future. This allows us to help build a much larger and more diverse group of grassroots solar supporters than if the discussion was focused narrowly on “environmental” issues.

CREATING JOBS

We consistently find that participating in a co-op program provides many solar companies with the opportunity to scale up and grow their business. Being selected as a co-op installer means a company has a pipeline of 60-100 potential customers and a solid base of work for six or more months. Not only that, but many find that they are able to continue to grow their business through the bump in referrals that comes from satisfied co-op customers. Many installers use their participation in a co-op to hire additional staff, adopt more robust customer management systems, or improve their sales approach.



That installers are using co-ops as a tool to scale up their businesses is extremely exciting. Our approach from the beginning has been to serve as interveners for a short period of time (3-5 years) while we help jumpstart the market and create an environment where solar can take off on it’s own. We’ve seen this process work extremely well in Washington, DC, and are beginning to see significant results in Maryland, and Virginia. Our hope is that similar results can be replicated in West Virginia and beyond.



Installations on a group of new homes in Virginia. Image courtesy of Alt Energy.



LOOKING FORWARD

Our organizational model is built around the idea of identifying and testing new, innovative project models that will scale up deployment of renewables in the state. While we're focusing on solar co-ops for the next twelve months, we'll continue to provide technical assistance to organizations, nonprofits, churches, and other groups interested in solar. We continue to keep our focus on, and to experiment with, new tools and interventions that lead to:

1. Scaling the clean energy economy to provide broad local economic benefits,
2. Transforming the politics of clean energy to help organize diverse constituencies to fight for clean energy markets that benefit their communities, and
3. Focusing on passing specific, practical policy interventions such as community solar or-net-metering that help scale a broad and equitable clean energy economy.

By ensuring that each homeowner we interact with is well-educated and is quickly able to share information, each homeowner can be a spokesperson for the advantages of going solar, of joining the co-op, and of advancing policies that support solar adoption in their state. This will expand our impact and become a positive feedback loop for progress.

State Program Accomplishments

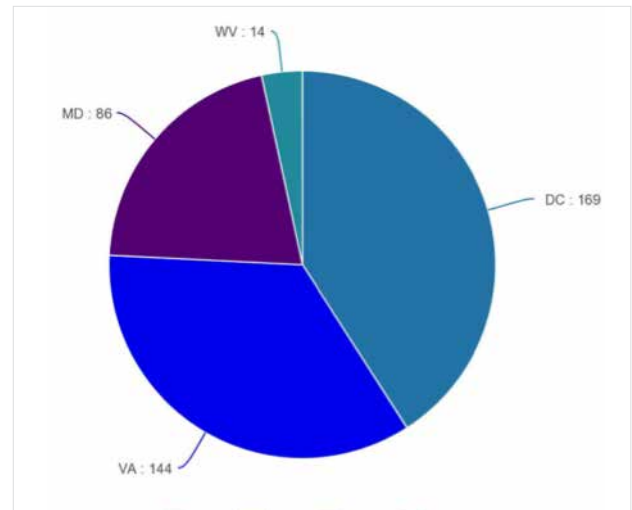
DC SUN

The oldest of our state programs and the most developed, we've been working on solar policy and project development in Washington, DC since 2007 with the **Mt. Pleasant Solar Co-op**. In 2014, our DC activities and accomplishments included:

DC Solar Co-ops

In 2014 in DC our solar co-ops had:

- 488 co-op participants
- 169 signed solar contracts
- 930 kW installed
- \$2,836,500 invested in solar in the District
- \$465,000 in estimated savings for co-op members
- Co-op installations represented 31% of the total solar capacity installed in DC in 2014.



In 2014 we helped 413 homeowners go solar through our solar co-ops. Most of the installations were in Washington, DC, home to DC SUN, our oldest state program.

Low-income Solar Conference

In April, the **George Washington University Solar Institute** partnered with DC SUN to convene 70 stakeholders from more than 40 businesses, non-profits, and government agencies to discuss and develop recommendations on how to best scale the deployment of solar to benefit lower income DC residents. To prepare for the event, we developed the first **detailed report** in the United States to lay out the challenges and opportunities of developing solar on low-income households. Out of the event came a national low-income solar conference that was held in September. The conference developed **recommendations** for developing a low-income solar incentive program in the District and opportunities for further partnerships between DC's low-income housing and energy programs. We continue to remain on the cutting edge of this work and plan on identifying and testing models for low-income solar in 2015.

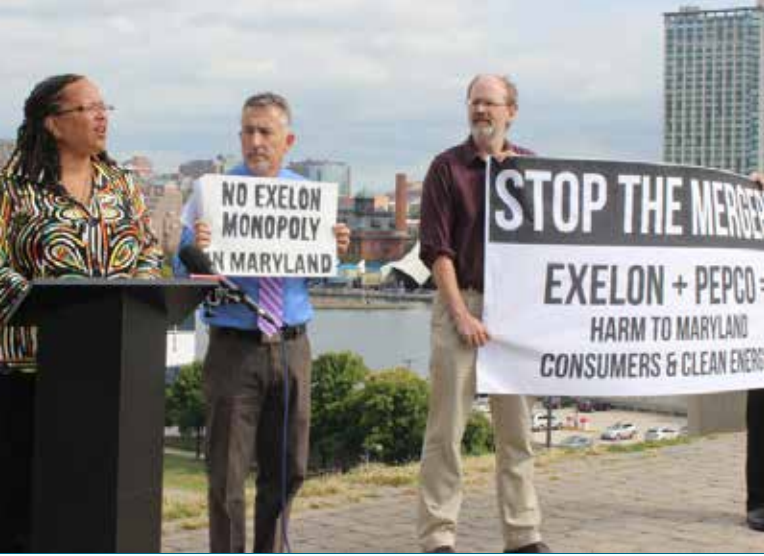
Low-income Solar Program

In response to many of the recommendations that came out of the April conference, DC SUN successfully worked with citizens to encourage the DC government to offer a **low-income solar incentive**. We're now in the process of helping low-income citizens take advantage of the incentive and working with DC government to ensure the program is equitable and accessible and guiding the process to scale the program.

Community Solar

Last year, DC SUN successfully passed the **Community Renewables Energy Act**. This groundbreaking policy allows renters, homeowners with shaded roofs, tenants of apartment buildings, and others to receive the benefits of solar energy by removing some of the remaining regulatory barriers to solar. Unfortunately, the Public Service Commission, (PSC) issued proposed rules that reduced the rate that community solar subscribers would be credited for their subscription to a renewable energy facility, like a solar array. Our coalition filed comments refuting this interpretation and we will continue to work to ensure the legislation is implemented in a way that increases solar access. We're also working with practitioners to tee up community projects and investigating models for how we can develop community solar projects that will increase accessibility to low-income residents.





Exelon Coverage

- **Why D.C. Solar Advocates Are Opposed To Pepco Merger With Exelon** (WAMU 88.5)
- **Poll: 6% of D.C. residents support Exelon-Pepco merger** (Utility Dive)
- **Opponents call on feds to stop Pepco-Exelon merger** (Washington Examiner)
- **The Exelon-Pepco merger: Big, nuke-heavy utility looking for new ratepayers to fleece** (Grist)
- **Group asks DC lawmakers to stop Pepco-Exelon merger** (WUSA-9)

Intervening in Exelon-Pepco Merger

In April 2014, giant nuclear electricity company, Exelon, announced plans to buy Pepco, the electricity utility that serves Maryland and DC. Coming on the heels of a 2012 takeover of Constellation Energy and its subsidiary Baltimore Gas and Electric, the deal would make Exelon the dominant utility in the mid-Atlantic region. With its recent takeovers of utilities in Chicago and Philadelphia, Exelon would become the biggest power distributor in the United States should the deal go through. For that to happen, the Public Service Commissions in the District and Maryland must approve it, finding that the deal serves the “public interest.”

DC SUN and MD SUN have serious concerns about the proposed merger, as Exelon has an extensive history of opposing renewables. DC SUN has been working since 2009 to level the playing field for renewable energy. This requires a local utility willing to engage with the public as a true civic partner. Exelon has demonstrated in other jurisdictions that it is unwilling to do so.

DC SUN has formally intervened in the Formal Case with the DC Public Service Commission, with the goal of blocking the merger. We have engaged pro-bono legal representation and are continuing to engage in the legal process. Our Executive Director is an expert witness in the legal proceedings and will testify in the evidentiary hearings taking place this spring.

We were also the first organization to publically raise the alarm about the Exelon merger in a **Washington Post Op-Ed** and we have subsequently organized a broad and diverse coalition of groups to oppose the merger. As leaders of the PowerDC coalition, we’re coordinating local organizations that range from ratepayers and low-income advocates, to environmental groups, jobs for justice, and democracy advocates. The coalition is focused on generating public attention to the merger. Activities have included publishing letters to the editor, distributing opinion pieces to our large mailing list, and partnering with other key organizations. These organizations include low-income housing providers, ratepayer advocates, and other community organizations. Using public petitions, public meetings, and targeted public events, we’ve created strong public pressure against the merger, with hundreds of citizens attending public hearings, more than 1,500 comments submitted online to the Public Service Commission, and significant **media coverage**.



Ward 8 Solar Co-op leader Akili West testifying in a merger hearing



Looking Forward

In 2015 our goals in DC include:

- Finish our fight to stop the Exelon-Pepco merger, and use the campaign to raise public awareness of the importance of local, community-controlled clean energy systems.
- Continue to scale up our solar co-op deployment with the goal of achieving significant levels of solar penetration in key neighborhoods within the city.
- Fix the PSC's community solar regulations to align with the policy's legislative intent and support the deployment of community solar installations in DC.
- Continue to explore and pilot models for deploying low-income solar.
- Build and strengthen a broad community consensus toward rooftop solar as an economic and environmental driver for DC.

In the long term, our goal is to make DC a national showcase for local, clean energy. This will allow us to show how solar can be deployed to strengthen local economy, create jobs, and facilitate equity. We'll achieve this by piloting innovative projects, policies, and approaches that will lead to the maximum build-out of solar within an urban footprint.

MD SUN

In 2013 MD SUN program reassessed its strategy for deploying solar in a state with a strong solar market and greater penetration. Our goal was not to just get solar on roofs, but drive solar penetration into areas of the market that were not covered, broaden the constituency for solar, and demonstrate how local clean can contribute to local jobs and economic self sufficiency.



Corey Ramsden, MD SUN
Program Director

Increasing Capacity

In 2014 we received funding from the Abell and Town Creek foundations to implement five solar co-ops in Baltimore and along the Eastern Shore. The funding allowed us to bring on a full-time Maryland Program Director, Corey Ramsden. Corey has 15 years of experience in the IT industry and is a certified NABCEP PV Installation Professional, bringing strong technical experience to our team.

Solar Co-ops

In 2014 in MD our solar co-ops had:

- 316 co-op participants
- 86 signed solar contracts
- 473 kW installed
- \$1,442,650 invested in solar in Maryland
- \$236,500 in estimated savings for co-op members
- Co-op installations represented .6% of the total solar capacity installed in Maryland in 2014.

Partnerships

We've also begun partnering with organizations to develop pilot programs that seek to expand solar access. In particular, in 2014 we launched a pilot initiative with **Retrofit Baltimore**, a program of the Baltimore-based nonprofit **Civic Works** dedicated to helping homeowners realize the benefits of home energy efficiency and creating local family-sustaining jobs. We're implementing a solar co-op in partnership with them, with the goal of helping Retrofit develop the expertise to continue to implement solar projects in Baltimore, as well as create a solar job training program that will place qualified trainees at well-paying jobs with solar companies in the area. Our hope is this pilot can expand and create a pipeline of solar customers that will increase the need for solar jobs in the Baltimore area. We're excited to be able to share lessons learned in 2015.

In 2014 we also began exploring a partnerships to develop project models and policies to bring solar to low income households, including significant redevelopments taking place in inner city Baltimore. Low-income households have the most to gain from solar installation, yet they face the greatest obstacles toward adoption. We worked on a number of proposals partnering with local non-profits that would allow low-income families to receive solar systems in the place of electricity bill assistance, significantly reducing their electricity bills and essentially "prepaying" there bills with solar.

Technical Assistance

We continue to provide technical assistance to communities and groups around the state, including:

- Maryland Clean Energy Center, where we provided assistance on writing brief solar section for an "**Energy in MD 101**" for state legislators in the January session.
- St. Ambrose Housing Aid Center, where we worked on a proposal to put solar on a city block of 45 low-income row homes in West Baltimore. Although ultimately St. Ambrose could not raise money to purchase the homes at the receivership auction, we continue to explore ways to work with St. Ambrose to use low-income solar development for electricity savings.
- Citizens Planning and Housing Association, a community development and low-income housing advocacy group in Baltimore that has helped with our solar co-op outreach efforts and is well-connected in low-income advocacy in Baltimore. We worked with them to put together a funding proposal and support the St. Ambrose housing initiative.
- Episcopal Housing Corporation, with which we explored facilitating an RFP for a large installation with battery storage on an old city school they are developing into a shelter for St. Vincent De Paul. Although the project has stalled, it is a great example of a resilient disaster shelter that we would like to help develop as a tool to demonstrate the importance of solar for community disaster preparedness.

Advocacy

In 2014 we supported efforts to pass legislation to create a pilot community solar program in Maryland. Similar to DC, the legislation would allow citizens to subscribe to and receive credit on their utility bill for the production of a solar system installed elsewhere in the state. We testified in support of the legislation, organized citizen outreach to legislators, and coordinated with other groups within our informal coalition. Efforts to pass community solar legislation in 2014 were not successful. However, due in part to the groundwork laid by those efforts, community solar legislation did pass the legislature in April, 2015 with regulatory implementation expected to take place by May 15th, 2016.



Installers put up systems as part of the University of Maryland solar co-op



Looking Forward

In the short term, our goal in Maryland is to build a network of solar co-ops across the entire state, with particular focus on conservative and rural areas. Our aim is to demonstrate the popularity and efficacy of solar in areas that may not traditionally support solar or clean energy. This will allow us to have the diverse grassroots base necessary to defend and expand existing solar policies and help to scale clean energy equitably in the state.

In 2015 our goals for MD include:

- Launch 15 co-ops including 5 in the Baltimore area and 5 on the Eastern Shore.
- Double our list of homeowners, installers, civic organizations, and other solar stakeholders through a variety of marketing channels, co-op development and timely, informative Maryland-specific solar content.
- Model low-income solar viability by implementing several pilots throughout the State with particular focus in and around Baltimore.
- Support the successful roll out of the community solar legislation by collaborating with all stakeholders on Public Service Commission regulation implementation and pilot project guidelines development.
- Support industry and community-based efforts to improve Pepco's interconnection turnaround time performance.

Over the long-term, our goal is to create a state-level model that demonstrates that a significant amount of a state's energy needs can be provided by clean, locally-owned renewables. We plan to prove that, when people are given a stake in the clean energy economy, they will fight for renewables.

VA SUN

We launched our VA SUN program in 2013. In 2014, the program reached critical mass with a full-time staff person dedicated to our Virginia work and a number of breakthrough solar co-ops that generated significant media attention. In Virginia in 2014 we were able to begin to change the conversation around solar. Before VA SUN and solar co-ops, many people in Virginia claimed that solar was nearly impossible to develop in the state because Dominion Power's monopoly and the lack of incentives. By using solar co-ops to demonstrate that solar is possible and economical, we've helped shift the conversation towards solar. Our network of solar co-ops is helping transform the political and energy outlook of the state.



Increasing Capacity

In 2014 we raised a significant amount of funding from the Oak Hill Fund and were able to hire Aaron Sutch as our full-time Program Director. Because of Aaron's strong background in solar technology and education, as well as our cross-cutting CPN experience, we've been able to significantly scale up our solar co-op deployment in Virginia. We've also been able to provide



Aaron Sutch, VA SUN
Program Director

significant installer-neutral technical assistance to homeowners, churches, condominiums, and other organizations seeking advice on how to go solar.

Solar Co-ops

In 2014 in Virginia our co-ops had:

- 667 co-op participants
- 144 signed contracts
- 792 kW installed
- \$2,415,600 invested in solar in Virginia
- \$396,000 in savings for co-op members
- Our co-op installations were 13% of the total solar capacity installed in Virginia in 2014

Solarize Blacksburg (VA)

We launched the Solarize Blacksburg campaign in March 2014 through a partnership with Community Housing Partners and the Town of Blacksburg. Through community organizing and bulk discounts, as well as offering solar loan options, the program managed to triple the amount of solar installed on Blacksburg homes in just 3 months. The co-op put 210 KW of solar on 40 participating homes in the first three months and in the end facilitated 299 kW of solar. Nearly 500 homeowners signed up to participate and Solarize Blacksburg resulted in a 5% increase in the total amount of solar installed in the state in 2014.

After a competitive bidding process, two Blacksburg-based solar installers were selected to participate in the program. While there was initial hesitation about lowering prices, at the close of the program the installers indicated that with the increase in business and demand, they would be able to permanently lower prices—leading to more affordable solar and more installations even after the campaign.

VA SUN provided significant back-end support for the program—managing customer intake, performing satellite site assessments, answering questions about solar policy, finances, and technology. We also assured a smooth site assessment and contracting process with the installers.

Since the program launch, its success has made waves in the Virginia environmental community—leading to copycat efforts in Richmond, Roanoke, and Charlottesville in which local organizations are running their own programs after consulting extensively with VA SUN and Community Housing Partners on program design.

With the proliferation of solarize programs around Virginia, we are proud to have already made a mark on the Virginia industry just one year in. We hope to continue scaling this effort and bringing it to more communities throughout the Commonwealth in the coming year.

Technical Assistance

In the last year, we have fielded more than 300 inquiries providing technical advice ranging from questions about equipment and components all the way to advanced policy considerations. We have advised condominium boards and municipalities on practical matters related to going solar and developed resource materials to help condominiums go solar. We also shared our RFP process with a group of Northern Virginia Churches (organized through Greater Washington Interfaith Power and Light [GW IPL]), enabling them to issue an RFP for Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs) to solarize their churches. We have also advised municipalities such as the **Town of Halifax** on project models for solarizing public buildings and responded to citizen inquiries on basic solar matters including Virginia net metering statutes, finance structures and local solar contractors. VA SUN is currently advising **Habitat for Humanity of Northern Virginia** on a multi-home solar project, **The Barclay** condominium in Northern Virginia on rooftop solar options, and the **Town of Abingdon** on the possibility of a municipal-based solar co-op for residences and businesses.

As demand for our expertise grows, VA SUN's outreach and technical support efforts are now finding bigger audiences. We presented at **Virginia Green's Annual Conference**, the **Virginia Bed & Breakfast Association of Virginia Annual Conference**. We are scheduled to speak at **VCU's annual Energy and Sustainability conference**, the **Environment Virginia Symposium**, **Community Purchasing Alliance Workshop** and a number of municipal meetings and condominium board meetings.

Advocacy

In 2014 our advocacy efforts in Virginia were somewhat limited as we focused on building our base of solar supporters and responding to local policy issues that emerged in our work with partners, rather than seeking out broad advocacy efforts. Our accomplishments included:

- Participating in the Virginia Small Solar Working Group, sponsored by the VA Dept. of Environmental Quality. Unfortunately, the group sought consensus proposals with Dominion Power and AEP, who strung the group along to the very last meeting before pulling out of forum talks.
- Providing program design and technical support to Fairfax, Arlington, and Blacksburg governments who sponsored a bill to allow for shared solar at apartment complexes, as well as with families with shaded roofs.
- Working with local installers, activists, homeowners, and the Solar Energy Industry Association in Blacksburg to provide legal guidance for homeowners who were being told by their homeowners association that solar is prohibited, even on the homeowner's own roof. In 2014, Governor McAuliffe signed legislation nullifying HOA bylaws preventing solar installations, but allowed for "reasonable restrictions". Through our work, we fought HOAs who overstepped "reasonable", and helped homeowners understand their rights.



Our community partners for Solarize Floyd got the word out about the program and helped generate excitement around solar.



We continue to stay engaged on Virginia energy policy as we use our co-ops to build a strong, grassroots base of advocates





Our goal is to continue to engage project partners, and build our website, listserv and mailing lists to create a growing and powerful voice of solar support in the state

Looking Forward

In 2015 in Virginia we plan to continue to scale up solar co-op deployment around the state, increasing the size and frequency of our co-ops. We expect to facilitate 10 more solar co-ops in the state in 2015, resulting in an additional 1 MW of installed residential solar capacity, more than \$2 million in retail solar, and 1,000,000 lbs. of CO₂ avoided.

In addition to deploying co-ops, we plan to pilot and build out innovative project models such as the Richmond Commercial Solar Co-op (already in early stages) and create new project models to engage low-income communities and agricultural entities. We'll continue to provide project development services for community non-profits, congregations, and condos, including developing RFPs, securing financing, harnessing available incentives, and completing financial analyses. In the process we'll educate these organizations about the barriers to solar for these groups and how they can support policy efforts to address these barriers.

We'll also continue strengthening our education and outreach efforts to empower community activists to continue their work on state solar issues once the co-ops have finished. In 2015, we will work to empower community activists to further engage with VA SUN and build a diverse, educated, and highly mobilized constituency for solar. We will facilitate solar co-op leaders to help "tell the VA SUN story" and create a tidal wave of solar support through educational workshops and sustained community engagement. We provide outreach materials, data on co-op success and a background on relevant policy issues to solar co-op leaders who then engage surrounding communities around the state. This virtuous cycle helps other communities go solar by training leaders in the formation of solar co-ops, and by building a basic foundation of solar and energy market literacy and an attitude that 'solar can be done' on the grassroots, citizen level.

Over the long term we intend to demonstrate how empowered grassroots citizens, when organized through VA SUN and motivated by their own desire to save money and produce clean local energy, can transform the politics of clean energy in a state. We believe this is possible even where a monopoly utility that calls all the shots seems intent on keeping the old utility model alive as long as possible.

WV SUN

We launched our WV SUN program in 2013 under the name Solar Holler and until this past year it was part of a dual VA/WV SUN program. Our Solar Holler program ran from July 2013 through July 2014 and we developed two primary approaches to deploying solar in West Virginia: The Solar Holler and solar co-ops.



Solar Holler

We created an innovative “Solar Holler” model, which we launched in Shepherdstown. In situations where the economics of solar do not yet work, we use a crowd funding approach to fill in the missing funding. This approach allows community organizations, like churches or schools, to go solar by having their supporters sign up for an electric hot water tank regulator and dedicate the income from the regulator to the solar project. This model has gained statewide attention and has promise as a means to scale deployment for nonprofits and community entities.

Although an excellent approach for project development, we ultimately determined that the Solar Holler model would work best as a private enterprise. We worked with Dan Conant to spin off the model as an independent social enterprise. To-date, the Solar Holler has implemented projects on the Shepherdstown Presbyterian Church, the Bolivar-Harpers Ferry Public Library, near Harpers Ferry, and a number of other projects are in development. We’re excited that the Solar Holler has been our first successful social venture spinoff, generating new jobs and creating a broad new constituency of supporters for the emerging solar sector beyond just the WV SUN program.



The Solar Holler model is the first of its kind and allows communities to go solar that otherwise would not have the financial resources. Its expanding access to solar, particularly in rural areas.



Local electricians installed regulators on hot water tank in Shepherdstown as part of the Shepherdstown Solar Holler project



We’re helping farmers and rural business owners go solar as a means to reduce monthly bills and facilitate local energy independence



Bill Howley, WV SUN Program Director

Increasing capacity

In early 2015, we hired Bill Howley as our part-time WV SUN Program Director. Bill has worked with government agencies, community groups and arts organizations in Ohio and across West Virginia for more than thirty years. Bill and his wife live on a small farm in Calhoun County where they raise most of their food and produce almost all their electricity from a 3.54 KW solar power system. Since 2008, Bill has written and edited **The Power Line: the View from Calhoun County**, an extremely influential blog about energy issues in West Virginia. Even before Bill joined WV SUN, he was an important part of educating and organizing the state solar community.



Solar Co-ops

In 2014 in West Virginia our co-ops had:

- 119 co-op participants
- 14 signed contracts
- 77 kW installed
- \$234,850 invested in solar in West Virginia
- \$38,500 in savings for co-op members

Monroe and Fayette Solar Co-ops

In the spring of 2014 citizens in Monroe and Fayette counties in West Virginia contacted us about forming a solar co-op. Both communities had heard about solar co-ops happening in Virginia and were eager to bring a similar momentum to West Virginia. The Monroe co-op was co-sponsored **Stand up for Monroe!**, a community group that was formed to oppose fracking in the county. After successfully opposing a hydraulic fracturing project and natural gas pipeline, the group sought us out to help them create an electric grid that gets its energy from renewable sources. They knew that it wasn't enough to just oppose dirty energy: in order to be truly successful they needed to build a decentralized, sustainable energy system.

Although we were unsure of whether co-ops could be successful in rural West Virginia, in June of 2014 we launched the Fayette County and Monroe County Solar Co-ops. Both co-ops have had a core group of dedicated leaders that have been actively involved in recruiting participants, understanding their solar markets, and identifying ways to improve solar in West Virginia. We've been blown away by the level of interest and engagement, and even joy, from participants who had previously felt that they could never get solar in West Virginia. Although formed by an anti-fracking group, the participants in the co-op were extremely politically diverse, came from all walks of life, and many commented that they would not have gotten to know each other if it weren't for their involvement in the co-op.

There has been huge interest from citizens because these communities are proud to become leaders in the development of a state solar market. They've demonstrated that citizens of West Virginia are ready for solar and are hungry to use it as a way to transform the energy politics of their state. The co-ops have also received significant **media attention**, including a piece on **WV public radio**. As a result, we're being contacted by citizens around the state also interested in starting their own co-ops.

In November and December, we also began working with on-the-ground groups to lay the groundwork for launching the Morgantown and Wheeling co-ops. In Morgantown, we've partnered with the local **Morgantown Green Team** and **Downstream Strategies**, a local consulting firm that has been implementing planning initiatives across the state. In Wheeling, we've partnered with the **Wheeling Green Table**, a local sustainability organization that has been very effective at getting the word out about the co-op. Both are well on their way to becoming large and effective groups.

Technical Assistance

We also provided technical assistance to a large number of community partners ranging from Roanoke Habitat for Humanity to the WV Council of Churches.

Advocacy

Throughout 2014 we worked on a number of advocacy and list-building efforts in West Virginia, including:

- Driving public comment on a WV Public Service Commission case to establish a registration process for solar homeowners wanting to sell renewable energy credits. Previously, only utility-owned power plants were able to do so. No thought had been given that solar homeowners would want to participate as well. In part thanks to our comments, the PSC approved a new process for homeowner registration. While this policy sounds mundane, it is key to scaling rooftop and community-owned solar in the state.
- Fighting against WV utilities requiring unnecessary industrial scale metering equipment, at homeowner's expense, for net metering of solar electricity. The requirements were adding \$400 to \$500 for every installation. We generated a number of comments to the PSC, and the equipment requirement was removed.
- Publishing the first account of how West Virginia net metering rules discriminate against businesses, churches, municipalities, non-profits, and any institution that pays commercial electric rates. We are currently using this issue to organize businesses and organizations that would otherwise go solar were it not for these rules, with the goal of mobilizing them in the coming years.
- Spearheading an effort to broaden the definition of emergency generator back-up power for state grant and tax credits beyond diesel and propane generators to include solar with battery back up. We delivered more than 300 petition signatures to members of the State Senate and House calling on them to act.

We also were quite successful at raising the public profile of solar via the Shepherdstown Presbyterian Project. Through this media outreach, we have helped drive the conversation around solar from one focused on the fringe green-techie supporters, to one that focuses on the affordability of solar and its economic development potential.

Looking Forward

In the short term, our goal is to continue to deploy co-ops in the state, increase public awareness of solar, and demonstrate that solar is economically feasible even in states like West Virginia, with low environmental awareness and relatively low electric rates. Our current focus on more urban co-ops, including one in the state capital, Charleston, have already raised the media awareness level among state media outlets. We're also focusing on outreach to farmers and businesses that can take advantage of federal REAP funding for solar projects.

In the long run, much like in Virginia, we seek to build a broad, active grassroots constituency that can effectively bridge the pro/anti-coal divide that is currently entrenched in the state. There is an active solar community in West Virginia, but it is not well-organized or focused on solving problems for solar power generators in the state. We hope to build on our organizing to bring the state's solar community to bear on new policy issues. We believe that it's possible to build support for clean, locally produced energy and create a politically diverse coalition because individual homeowners and citizens can benefit from solar and save money on their utility bills.

In 2015, WV SUN's goals are to:

- Increase media coverage of co-ops by focusing on the state's main urban areas.
- Convene a solar legislative working group, based on members of existing co-ops, as well as the broader solar community in the state.
- Target and build a new base of support among the new Republican majority in the West Virginia legislature by educating new legislative leaders about solar issues.
- Increase the number of potential new co-op partners and locations by participating in events such as the West Virginia Development Hub's Hubapalooza in Summersville and Create West Virginia's annual conference in Fayetteville.
- Better define the functionality of each of our communications channels: newsletter, listserv, Web site/ blog, Facebook to serve the needs of specific elements of our supporters, from casual browsers to active co-op members to policy wonks.

Institutional Growth

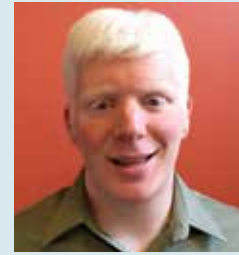
2014 was an exciting year for CPN as an institution. In August we received our 501(c)3 status and became an official tax-exempt organization. In January 2015 we also became independent of our fiscal sponsor, Rockefeller Family Fund, and are now managing our finances as an organization. We have moved into our new offices in the Mt. Pleasant neighborhood of Washington, DC and significantly expanding our staffing over the course of the year. In 2014 our hires included:

1. Full-time CPN Bulk Purchase Manager
2. Full-time VA SUN Program Director
3. Full-time MD SUN Program Director
4. Part-time Administrative support
5. Part time WV SUN Coordinator

Over the course of a year we transitioned from a staff of four to a staff of seven, and are now maintaining active, fully-staffed programs in Maryland, Virginia, and West Virginia. We've also begun working with an accounting firm specializing in nonprofit accounting services, and we continue our relationship with the law firm Harmon, Curran, Spielberg, and Eisenberg.

Looking Forward

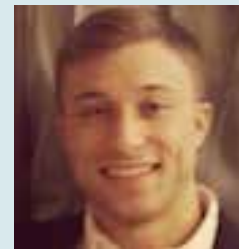
2014 was a pivotal year for Community Power Network. Although we continue to learn about and test new project models, we spent much of 2014 doubling down on our solar co-op model as a means to deploy solar in our four program states. We developed



BEN DELMAN,
Communications
Manager



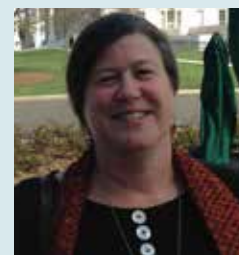
BILL HOWLEY,
WV SUN Program
Director



GRANT KLEIN,
Program Manager,
Solar Co-ops



COREY RAMSDEN,
MD SUN Program
Director



ANYA SCHOOLMAN,
Executive Director



EMILY STIEVER,
Chief of Staff



AARON SUTCH,
VA SUN Program
Director

a specialized Salesforce tool to allow us to scale, and have ramped up our staffing to be able to meet growing demand from communities for solar co-ops.

We're now positioned to make serious headway on creating a broad, active, engaged base of solar advocates that can be deployed to support progressive solar policies in their states.

To achieve this vision, though, there's still much to be done. Our plans for 2015 include:

National-level

- Improve communications with our national Community Power Network, with a focus on profiling our member successes and accomplishments through increasing use of social media, and refreshing the monthly CPN newsletter to better facilitate the sharing of lessons learned in local clean energy projects and policies.
- Continue to develop practical hands on reports and resource guides on new models and approaches to community-based clean energy.
- Pilot, test, deploy and disseminate new models and policy for low-income solar by working with low-income housing organizations, communities and local governments.
- Explore other aspects of scaling the political impact of our movement, such as national action newsletter, service or membership approaches, and direct fundraising.
- Expand statewide solar networks to additional two or three more states. Depending on funding opportunities these could include Pennsylvania, Ohio, Illinois, or Minnesota, Florida, Tennessee, Kentucky or South Carolina.

State-level

- Deepen and expand our existing state networks.
- Create unified branding within state networks to better promote the co-ops.
- Refine co-op information materials so co-op members, and prospective members clearly understand the benefits of going solar with a group.
- Work with successful co-ops to brand the co-op model as viable and repeatable in a variety of markets.
- Develop a flexible template of communications tools and tactics to better inform the public about the co-op opportunities in their community.
- Deepen our support for and engagement with the leaders of our local co-ops.

2014 was a transformational year for Community Power Network and we're excited for what lies ahead. We've demonstrated the efficacy of our theory of change and built an institution capable of achieving scale. Having laid this groundwork, we're now beginning to fundamentally transform the politics of solar on a much larger scale. We're helping people do something in their communities to address our nation's energy crisis and, in the process, fundamentally transforming our energy future.



We're now positioned to make serious headway on creating a broad, active, engaged base of solar advocates that can be deployed to support progressive solar policies in their states.



Image courtesy of Greater Washington Interfaith Power and Light



**Community
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“Having laid the groundwork, we’re now beginning to fundamentally transform the politics of solar on a much larger scale.”