

## Colorado Solar Equity Rebate Pilot Program

### Program Overview

Between 2021 and 2022, SUN and the city and County of Denver partnered to drive a solar co-op that included a \$8,000 rebate for income qualified households to go solar and install 7 kW systems. The purpose was to connect Denver residents to distributed solar, drive solar education, reduce upfront costs, support local solar jobs, and encourage inclusive energy policies.

### Project Funding



Funding for this project came from the city and county of Denver.

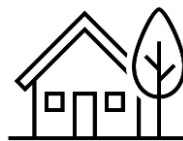
### Partners



SUN leaned on Denver’s Climate Action, Sustainability, & Resiliency office to launch a pilot program to explore the relationship between available rebates, average household median income, and solar co-op close rates.

### Colorado’s Energy Landscape

Nationwide, low-income households experience energy burden at a higher rate than non-low-income households.<sup>1</sup> Low to moderate income (LMI) communities face barriers and limited opportunities to reduce their energy costs and invest in energy efficiency.



The average low-income Colorado household spends **5 times** higher on energy expenses compared to other households.<sup>2</sup>

Colorado’s median energy burden is disproportionately higher for households of color.<sup>3</sup>



**5.4%** for Black households



**4.1%** for Latino households



**3.3%** for white households

The rate of solar adoption for LMI households is lower than moderate income households.<sup>4</sup> Literature suggests some barriers to accessing rooftop solar is homeownership, upfront costs, lack of qualifying credit, and solar education.<sup>5</sup> In combination with Colorado’s net metering policy, solar rebates provide an opportunity for LMI households to lower their energy costs, invest in energy efficiency, and promote an equitable distribution of clean energy.

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### Program Impact

Co-op Year	Rebate Members	kW Capacity	lbs of Carbon Lifetime Offset	Projected Total Savings	Metric Tons of CO2e lifetime offset	Dollars Invested
2021	2	13.20	606,554	\$64,047	275	\$27,340
2022	8	39.36	1,808,633	\$190,977	819	\$105,995
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>52.56</b>	<b>2,415,187</b>	<b>\$255,024</b>	<b>1,094</b>	<b>\$133,335</b>



### Lessons Learned

- Selecting two installers to manage co-op and LMI members allows us to focus on the quality of member engagement and customer experience.
- Engaging with community partners is important to building trust with the community.
- Reducing steps for the rebate process is important to reduce confusion and eliminate barriers.
- Incorporating an in-person component is crucial to maintain meaningful communication with LMI members.



### Next Steps: Program Strategies to Scale

Going into next year, we will:

- Partner with iChoosr to scale up the Denver co-op while SUN will be able to focus more on the rebate program and implementation.
- Introduce an in-person application assistance workshop to provide support and qualify LMI participants before the co-op launch.
- Host a meeting with selected installers to review best practices for LMI outreach and engagement.
- Work with a wide network of community partners to achieve targeted outreach.