

SUNSHINE SAVES MONEY FOR AMHERST YOUTH FOUNDATION

October 28, 2010

Buffalo, NY – The Amherst Youth Foundation just flipped the switch on a new solar energy system that will supply 42% of the building's electrical needs. The solar installation will save the youth organization over \$4,300 in the first year of operation. The 108-panel rooftop solar array is expected to produce 24,847 kWh of electricity per year. That is the equivalent amount of electricity consumed by 4 average homes.

By producing much of its own electricity, the Amherst Youth Foundation is now spending considerably less on utility expenses. The solar savings now allows the organization to dedicate more of its budget toward program services. As energy prices continue to rise, the solar electricity produced on the rooftop of the Sheridan Drive building will continue producing no cost, green electricity. Over its 25-year warranted lifetime, the solar panels will generate a projected \$165,000 worth of electricity that the organization would otherwise have to purchase from the utility company.

“The annual savings is a tremendous boost to our organization. We have to raise all the money we need for services and our Youth and Family Center.” According to Joe Bachovchin, Consulting Director of the Amherst Youth Foundation. “This \$4,300 is the equivalent cost of staffing and operating 10 middle school activity nights. It will provide 8 months of funding for Our Place, a program to serve special needs young adults in our community. It will provide money to do emergency building repairs or replace furniture and equipment that can no longer be used.”

Solar Liberty of Buffalo installed the system at no cost to the organization. The project was partially funded by a grant from the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), while the rest of the cost of the



Amherst Youth Foundation Flips the Switch on Solar.

Left to right: Joe Bachovchin, Consulting Director, and Paul Bowers, PE, Secretary, of the Amherst Youth Foundation Board of Directors with Nathan Rizzo, Vice President of Solar Liberty.

design and installation was a donation by Solar Liberty, a leading solar integrator that designs and installs solar energy systems for residential, commercial, and institutional customers.

“It’s important to demonstrate that solar energy is a viable way to power a building,” said Adam Rizzo, President of Solar Liberty. “Community centers, nonprofit buildings, and schools are especially important for promoting solar energy. Projects like this show homeowners and businesses that a solar panel system works well and gives a strong return on investment in Western New York.”

Aside from saving money, the Amherst Youth Foundation has a much greener building. The system is silent and produces zero pollution. It will offset the building’s carbon footprint by 426 tons of CO₂ over the system’s lifetime. That is the equivalent of planting a forest of 17,000 trees or removing 773,000 miles of automobile traffic from the roads.

“When public or nonprofit facilities use solar, they demonstrate to the community that upgrading a building with a solar energy system makes financial and environmental sense,” explained Mr. Rizzo. “Saving money on electricity is especially important for organizations that are dependent on the community for their support.”

Solar Liberty has been installing hundreds of solar energy systems statewide for government, commercial, and residential customers. Recent local installations have been completed at the Merchant’s Insurance downtown headquarters, the Buffalo City Mission, and a large system at the NFTA Bus Garage, as well as many Western New York homes. Major upcoming installations are the Rochester International Airport and New York State’s most powerful installation with the 1.1 MW University at Buffalo solar project.

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About the Amherst Youth Foundation

The Amherst Youth Foundation is the premier fundraising organization dedicated to supporting a broad and diverse range of programs to benefit the youth of Amherst. For additional information, go to our web-site www.amherstyouthfoundation.org <<http://www.amherstyouthfoundation.org>> or contact Joseph E. Bachovchin, Consulting Director at 633-6773.

About Solar Liberty

Solar Liberty is the largest solar electric installer in New York State with offices in Buffalo and Syracuse. Founded in 2003, the company installs grid-tied photovoltaic solar energy systems for government, nonprofit, education, commercial, and residential customers. Named by *Inc. Magazine* as the 5th fastest growing private company in the US energy sector in 2008, Solar Liberty is committed to creating turnkey renewable energy solutions with high-quality components. Visit www.solarliberty.com for more information.