



Media Release

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Media inquiries

Jessa B. Turner • Media & Public Relations Coordinator • (520) 382-2485 • jbturner@uatechpark.org

Solar Zone at the UA Tech Park Wins Innovation in Economic Development Award from EDA

(Tucson, Arizona) The University of Arizona Tech Park received national recognition for its comprehensive, integrated solar research park. The Solar Zone at the UA Tech Park received the ***Innovation in Green Technology Award*** from the Economic Development Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce.

U.S. Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development John Fernandez announced the winners of the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) 2010 Innovation in Economic Development Awards during the Southeast Workforce and Economic Development Conference co-hosted by EDA and the U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration on October 25, 2010.

The Solar Zone is a comprehensive, innovative economic development strategy to create a supportive environment where companies can develop, test and demonstrate the next generation of renewable energy products and technologies. The goals of the Solar Zone are to attract private investment; create sustainable, high-wage jobs; develop a skilled workforce; support utility efforts to reduce reliance on fossil fuels; and educate the public on the importance of sustainable energy.

“The 2010 Innovation Award winners showcase some of the nation’s best practices for promoting economic development through collaborative initiatives and highlight outstanding examples of regional success in the global marketplace,” said Fernandez. “I congratulate all the winners for their tremendous contributions to strengthen our nation’s economy.”

The Solar Zone’s comprehensive scope is key to its innovative approach to creating a regional solar-based economy. At completion, the Solar Zone will accommodate all significant components of the solar energy continuum: generation; manufacturing and assembly; research and development; workforce development; and public awareness.

Phase one of the Solar Zone development is a unique public/private collaboration between the University of Arizona and Tucson Electric Power (TEP). Construction of phase one, which includes six solar generation projects sited at the Solar Zone by TEP,

occupies 222 acres within the UA Tech Park and is expected to be completed by 2012. The projects represent a capital investment of \$80-100 million and will combine to generate approximately 45,000 megawatt-hours (MWh) per year, enough to power nearly 4,000 Tucson homes.

“The Solar Zone offers TEP a unique opportunity to evaluate the performance of various solar generating technologies side by side, at the same location,” said David Hutchens, Vice President of Energy Efficiency and Resource Planning for TEP and its parent company, UniSource Energy Corporation (NYSE: UNS). “It’s an innovative approach to renewable resource development that supports the expansion of southern Arizona’s green energy economy.”

Bruce Wright, the Associate Vice President for University Research Parks added, “We believe that the Solar Zone at the UA Tech Park will be the nation’s largest multi-tenant, multi-technology demonstration site.”

The Solar Zone has moved from a concept to reality in less than a year. Site preparations are estimated at \$2.5 million and are being accelerated so that the solar companies can qualify for available federal tax credits before they are extinguished.

Phase One Solar Zone projects include:

- TEP will own and operate a 1.6 MW single axis tracking PV array being developed by Solon, a Tucson-based solar system manufacturer and integrator
- Bell Independent Power Corporation of Rochester, N.Y. is building a 5 MW concentrating solar thermal power plant with integrated storage
- Connecticut-based CTC Electric plans a 5 MW, fixed photovoltaic installation
- EMCORE Corporation of Albuquerque plans a 2MW concentrated photovoltaic system
- Foresight – Solar Point, LLC. will be developing a solar photovoltaic facility of approximately five megawatts capacity at the Solar Zone Foresight-Solar Point, a joint venture of Foresight Renewables, LLC and Solar Point Partners, LLC
- Seal Beach, Calif.-based Amonix Solar will build a 2 MW concentrating solar (CPV) system project

The **UA Tech Park** advances the University of Arizona’s research mission and its efforts at technology development and technology commercialization. The UA Tech Park contributes \$3.0 billion annually to Pima County’s economy. It is one of the region’s largest employment centers hosting approximately 40 businesses and organizations that employ 7,000 people. The UA Tech Park is also home to the Arizona Center for Innovation, a technology business incubator, and three educational institutions - UA South, Pima Community College, and Vail Academy and High School. The UA Tech Park has been nationally recognized as one of the premier university research parks in North America. For more information, visit www.uatechpark.org.