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RREAL Begins Manufacturing Expansion!

In 2007, RREAL began piloting the manufacture of the SPF. Almost immediately, the demand for RREAL's state-of-the-art solar thermal collectors increased dramatically, and we outgrew the space. Ever since, we have been in need of additional space and improved tooling and fixturing to more efficiently manufacture the SPF.

We are pleased and grateful to report that we are now building a new and improved manufacturing facility!

With the help of a highly competitive grant from the Minnesota Office of Energy Security and a very generous match from the Hunt Utilities Group (HUG), RREAL will expand and retool our manufacturing facility. The expansion will more than double the size of our manufacturing facility and allow RREAL to better employ the principles of lean manufacturing. A more efficient and effective manufacturing process will ensure we can better serve our low-income communities and meet the needs of the growing commercial markets!

Our upgrade will also help us accomplish our goals of delivering Solar Assistance in another very important way. Through a combination of program replication and technology transfer, we hope to empower other communities with the ability to deliver Solar Heat to Low-income Families on a national scale. Our manufacturing upgrade will create a model facility that we can showcase for agencies and communities elsewhere in the nation that are interested in partnering with RREAL to develop solar thermal manufacturing capacity and sustainable jobs in their own regions. As a nonprofit manufacturer, we have the unique opportunity to share our technology with other agencies interested in delivering solar heat to low-income families while using market forces and social entrepreneurialism to help finance that important work.

Our manufacturing upgrade has generated work for a struggling construction industry here in Central Minnesota and will create numerous high-quality solar manufacturing and installation jobs as RREAL continues to produce ever-more clean, green, energy systems domestically.

We now have even more
Power to Make a Difference!



RREAL Welcomes Two New VISTA Volunteers



Roger Garton

RREAL continues to have the honor and privilege of hosting Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA). In 2010, RREAL has welcomed two new VISTA members to its team. VISTA members help non-profits like RREAL deliver services and programs to help low-income people become more self-sufficient and address poverty related issues within communities. Often referred to as “the domestic equivalent of the Peace Corps”, VISTA members make a full-time, one-year commitment and receive training and a modest monthly living allowance from the AmeriCorps VISTA program. All of RREAL’s VISTAs have been sponsored by the Initiative Foundation. Please help us in welcoming Roger Garton and Sean Muller to the RREAL and Pine River communities.



Sean Muller

ROGER is a recent graduate from the University of Minnesota where he studied Mechanical Engineering. He started volunteering with RREAL at the beginning of 2010 and became a full time VISTA in April. As part of the RREAL engineering team, **ROGER** is helping re-design our manufacturing process while also researching additional applications for our technology..

After graduating with a degree in Biology and Chemistry in 2008, **SEAN** moved to Portland, OR to study renewable energy technologies and work with sustainable community development initiatives. While at RREAL, **SEAN** will be using his experience and skills to assist with organizational streamlining and improving RREAL’s capacity to deliver solar power to more homes, both domestically and abroad.

Creating Green Jobs!

RREAL is proud to be bringing new members to the Team to help make Solar Accessible to people of all income levels.

Construction Manager - Brad Basset brings two decades of relevant experience to the position and will be overseeing hundreds of solar installations slated for the coming year. Mr. Basset will be filling the full-time Construction Manager position, a new green-collar job that has developed as the number of solar assistance installations RREAL provides has grown from 10 installs in 2006 to more than 300 already scheduled for the next 18 months. Brad will also be involved in training Minnesota Community Action Programs (CAPs) to install hundreds of more systems throughout the state during the same time period. “I have always been interested in finding innovative solutions to problems” says Mr. Basset “RREAL is providing innovative solutions and I am looking forward to working with RREAL to make a difference in people’s lives and in the environment”

Manufacturing Assistant - Sheyenne Jacob recently joined our manufacturing team to assist RREAL in meeting increased manufacturing orders. Over the next year and a half, RREAL will increase production five-fold, and Sheyenne will help make that happen. Sheyenne hails from Menahga, MN and is looking forward to growing along with our non-profit

A FEW OF RREAL’S 2010 SOLAR DESIGN-BUILD PROJECTS



Solar Assistance - RREAL's Reason for Being

RREAL remains focused on delivering solar heat to low-income families as a economically and environmentally responsible solution to fuel poverty that will last for decades. Solar Assistance is our flagship program, and Solar Assistance is growing. After a decade of persistence, RREAL is now experiencing steady growth and beginning to see solar thermal systems incorporated into energy assistance and weatherization programs across the State and beyond.

Over the past year, ...

RREAL has collaborated with **Ottertail Wadena Community Action Council (OTWCAC)** to train four teams of contractors and auditors to incorporate solar air heat into OTWCAC's Weatherization programming. Through the collaboration, sixteen families were served and OTWCAC is now empowered to regularly offer the technology to their low-income clients throughout their service territory.



Solar Assistance on the Passamaquoddy Nation

RREAL collaborated with the **Passamaquoddy Nation** near Eastport, Maine in the installation of four solar air heating systems. Three of the systems were in-

stalled on income eligible families' homes and one system was installed at the tribal office to demonstrate the technology to the entire community. It was an honor to work with the Passamaquoddy, and the Nation will continue to deploy the technology as part of its energy security strategy.

RREAL was also able to partner with Habitat for Humanity again and offer Solar Assistance for two families on the Iron Range that have recently moved into Habitat homes. The partnership makes a great deal of sense - affordable housing and low-cost heating! RREAL is grateful to have had the chance to partner with Habitat and hopes to continue to do so.

RREAL is also providing Solar Assistance to families throughout central Minnesota and with your help, we can still meet our goal of providing 50 families with clean, long-lasting renewable heating systems this year!

Over the coming year, ...

Over the next 18 months, RREAL will quadruple the total number of Solar Assistance installations to date!

Working with long-time collaborator Ottertail-Wadena Community Action Council (OTWCAC) and 8 other weatherization programs, we will deploy 280 installations across the state! This hands-on training and installation project will empower CAPs to continue the installations in the future.

Additionally, RREAL collaborated with the Conservation Corps of Minnesota (CCM) to secure funding for 60 Solar Air Heat system installations for qualifying families. This funding stream has been approved and recommended through the Legislative Citizen's Council on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR). The State Legislature must approve the expenditure during the next session.

RREAL is also scheduling several Solar Assistance installations with Brainerd Housing and Redevelopment Agency (HRA). These installations will help Brainerd HRA better serve their clients through stabilizing home heating costs for decades to come. Again, affordable housing programs are ideal partners for RREAL as the mission is congruent.

These partners are helping RREAL mobilize funds in order to make solar available to people of all income levels in a way that we've never been able to do alone!



Solar Assistance with Habitat for Humanity

If someone you know would be interested in RREAL's work, pass this newsletter along!

If you would like to receive our newsletter via email, please send your request to admin@rreal.org

Give to the Max Day!

Call to Action: Tuesday Nov 16th!

RREAL is a 501(c)(3), non-profit organization that relies on the generous donations of individuals dedicated to environmental and social justice. Please consider making a tax-deductible contribution so we can continue our important work making renewable energy accessible to people of all income levels!

Last November, an exciting new fundraiser called “Give to the Max Day” was developed here in Minnesota and set a new national record for single-day giving in its first year. RREAL was invited to participate last year and raised a considerable amount of money during “Give to the Max Day” which helped us complete more Solar Assistance installations this year than ever before. We are excited to be a part of “Give to the Max Day” again this year and we need your support. **Please consider making your tax-deductible end of the year donation to RREAL as part of this year’s “Give to the Max Day” on Tuesday November 16th.**

How can you give?

- **Giving is just one-click away.** Make your donation [HERE](#) at RREAL’s website. All donations are 100% tax-deductible and directly support our Solar Assistance program.

Why give on the 16th?

- **Double your money!** RREAL has secured \$8000 in matching donations. This means that every dollar you give during Give to the Max Day will be doubled, up to \$8000.
- ◇ If you give \$10, RREAL receives \$20! If you give \$1000, RREAL receives \$2000!

Why give through GiveMN on RREAL’s website?

- **More of your donation reaches our clients!** GiveMN.org has worked with U.S. Bank to minimize transaction fees so more of your donation goes directly towards Solar Assistance.
- **Hourly giveaways!** Throughout the 24-hour event, one donor will be randomly chosen *every* hour to have \$1,000 added to their donation. In other words — a 2 a.m. donation could get RREAL an extra \$1,000! You have our permission to stay up late.
- **Big prizes!** GiveMN will award \$20,000 and \$10,000 prizes to the two Twin City nonprofits and the two Greater Minnesota nonprofits that attract the largest number of individual donors. *That means even if you can only chip in \$10, it may put us over the top for additional help!*

Mark your calendars and make your donation [HERE](#). Every donation counts—especially on “Give to the Max Day.”

For other helpful information visit the Minnesota Council on Foundation’s blog right [HERE](#).

Feel free to print off this [.pdf](#) of the newsletter to share with your friends



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