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Media Contact:  
Tara McDermott  
[tmcdermott@empower-solar.com](mailto:tmcdermott@empower-solar.com)  
516-554-4084

**NYC and Long Island Students Win Student Solar Competition**

*Teams from Cold Spring Harbor, Commack, Old Westbury, Nesconset, Brooklyn, and Long Beach receive awards and scholarship prizes from EmPower Solar*

WANTAGH, NEW YORK, JUNE 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021 -- The winners of the semi-annual Student Solar Competition were announced by EmPower Solar at an awards ceremony on Saturday, hosted at the Jones Beach Energy & Nature Center. Winning teams took home \$2,400 in total prizes.

EmPower Solar, a Long Island-based solar energy company, challenged New York elementary, middle, and high school students to participate in a multi-faceted competition that encompassed science, technology, engineering, mathematics (STEM) and creative components. Over 50 teams from schools across Long Island and New York City participated. The participating students were tasked with answering the question, “How much solar power do you need to power your home or business and an electric vehicle?” Responses were submitted through posters for the elementary competition and via YouTube videos for the middle and high school competition.

Awards were presented to the winning teams at the competition awards ceremony, an afternoon of interactive fun, learning, displays, and refreshments at the brand-new Jones Beach Energy & Nature Center in Wantagh, NY.

For the high school division, first place went to team “SUNS,” made up of Kathleen Engel and Sophie Talamas from Cold Spring Harbor High School. The high school students each won \$500 scholarships. The second-place prize went to sibling team “WSUN21” – siblings Jason and Sarah Goodman of Dix Hills representing Commack Middle School and Winston Preparatory School – with each student taking home \$250. Ace Shu and Sahana Dhama of team “Solar Shine” attend The Wheatley School in Old Westbury and earned this year’s third-place prize of \$100 each.

The first-place winner in the elementary school poster contest was fourth grader Vardhan Ravva from Tackan Elementary School in Nesconset. Jeffrey Feng of PS 97 Highlawn in Brooklyn earned the second-place spot. Long Beach Lindell Elementary School Team “Sunnyside Up” consisting of Christopher Montoya and Charles Vogue came in third place. The elementary school team winners took home a total of \$700 in Amazon gift cards for school supplies and learning essentials.

Winning video and poster submissions can be found online at [empower-solar.com/alliance/student-solar-competition](http://empower-solar.com/alliance/student-solar-competition).

"It's incredibly valuable for students to have hands-on project-based learning experiences early on in their education, especially on environmental issues," said David G. Schieren, EmPower Solar CEO. "Many of us at EmPower have benefited directly from project-based STEM programs, and therefore are dedicated to providing similar opportunities to our community." Schieren's experience with the U.S. DOE Solar Decathlon in 2005 is why he started EmPower Solar with business partner and COO Gregory D. Sachs, and why the company continues to host the annual student competition.

The competition was held in partnership with Alley Pond Environmental Center, The Cloud Institute, Drive Electric LI, Farmingdale State College Renewable Energy and Sustainability Center, the Town of Hempstead Clean Energy Park, the NYS Jones Beach Energy & Nature Center, and U.S. Green Building Council - Long Island Chapter.

### **EmPower Solar**

EmPower Solar develops, engineers, installs, and services solar and battery systems for residential and commercial clients. Since 2003, EmPower Solar has empowered thousands of New York homeowners and businesses in the Long Island and greater NYC area with 35 megawatts of distributed solar. We proudly serve the Nassau, Queens, Suffolk, Brooklyn, Staten Island, and Westchester communities.

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