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East Los Angeles College First To Generate Its Own Electricity Through New \$9 Million Solar Energy Project

Massive renewable energy project is the Los Angeles Community College District's first as it moves towards goal to become energy independent and getting 'off the grid'

East Los Angeles College (ELAC) reached another milestone recently as college officials announced on August 29 the commencement of construction activity for its renewable energy project, a Photo Voltaic (PV) "farm" that will produce one megawatt of electricity. The \$9 million project is programmed to harvest nearly enough energy to meet the college's daytime electricity needs.

The ambitious renewable energy project at ELAC is the first milestone for the Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD) as it moves toward taking all nine of its colleges off the grid. The LACCD is the first community college system in the nation with plans to become entirely energy independent. Construction for the PV farm began on August 17, with completion expected by year-end.

"This renewable energy project is another example that illustrates our District's strong commitment to move expeditiously toward building climate neutral campuses that will positively impact the environment," said Dr. Marshall E. Drummond, chancellor of the LACCD. "Not only will our energy independent campuses save money for other educational resources, but they will also act as a living model to teach students how to lead sustainable, environmentally responsible lives."

Currently, East Los Angeles College uses on average slightly more than one megawatt daily to meet its energy needs. Future renewable energy plans for ELAC to make it entirely energy independent include using excess electrical energy to convert water into oxygen and hydrogen, using the hydrogen to power fuel cells for evening electricity needs. The other eight Los Angeles Community Colleges will follow suit soon with similar projects for their respective energy plans.

The PV farm at ELAC will be located on the South end of the Northwest Parking lot on campus. The project will be "Design-Built" by Chevron Energy Solutions under a 20-year Power Solar Service Agreement with the LACCD. This project is funded by the LACCD's Propositions A/AA Bond Program, which Los Angeles voters approved in 2001 and 2003.

The Los Angeles Community College District is the largest community college system in the country, educating more than 188,000 students each year. The LACCD has embarked on a \$2.2 billion construction and modernization program at its nine college campuses. As funded by the Proposition A/AA Bond construction program, the LACCD is also currently undertaking the largest public sector sustainable building effort in the United States. For more information, visit www.LACCDBuildsGreen.org.

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