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## **NYCEDC and Solar One Break Ground on Solar One Environmental Education Center**

*The Project Will Consist of a two-story Center to Teach Urban Environmental Stewardship*

*The Center will be a Model of Resiliency for Hurricanes, Storm Surges, and Other Potential Emergency Conditions*

*This Project is a Collaboration with the New York City Department of Education, the New York City Department of Design and Construction, the Mayor's Office of Climate and Environmental Justice, and the Department of Youth and Community Development*

**New York, NY** – Today, New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC) and Solar One, a leading sustainable energy non-profit, broke ground on a new and improved Solar One Environmental Education Center. Located at the north end of Stuyvesant Cove Park, the Solar One Environmental Educational Center will be used as a community resource to educate the next generation of environmental leaders.

The Solar One Environmental Education Center will consist of a two-story learning center to allow for the teaching and demonstration of urban environmental stewardship. The “Center” is being built with community benefits at the forefront and will allow Solar One to expand its programs, especially education offerings that will include afterschool and summer camp programs, classroom space to hold two classes simultaneously, an in-house presentation and lecture space for programs, and a hosting site for indoor community events, celebrations, workshops, and other opportunities. The events will include a range of ticketed and free opportunities. The space will also be available to rent for private, corporate, and non-profit events.

The Solar One Environmental Education Center will also feature advanced sustainable building engineering and design components such as energy generation via a 38kW solar array with battery storage alongside the FDR Drive, visible to tens of thousands of New Yorkers every day. It will generate off the grid solar electricity allowing the building to serve as a community disaster relief center in the event of future storms. This energy storage capacity will enable the building to be fully resilient. Construction is set to begin in November 2023

“Today, Solar One’s vision of a new environmental education center took a major step towards becoming a reality as shovels finally hit the ground,” said **New York City Council Majority Leader Keith Powers**, representing District 4 where the Center will be located. “I am proud to have secured several million dollars in funding to help make it happen. The signature new building will serve as a hub for Solar One’s numerous outreach programs and I cannot wait to see it finished.”

“The Solar One Environmental Education Center will play a vital role in helping protect New York City from future environmental weather events while also shaping the next generation of environmental leaders with education programs for students throughout the five boroughs, including hands-on outdoor activities and indoor lab experiences,” said **NYCEDC President & CEO Andrew Kimball**. “NYCEDC is looking forward to the positive green economy impact the Center will have on our city and the sustainability-focused opportunities it will create for New Yorkers.”

**Jane Crotty, chair of the Solar One Board of Directors and longtime board member** said, “The Solar One Board of Directors is thrilled to officially celebrate the groundbreaking of this visionary project. The Solar One Environmental Education Center at Stuyvesant Cove Park represents our unwavering commitment to a sustainable future by educating and inspiring the next generations of eco-conscious leaders. With solar innovation at its core, this center will empower New Yorkers with knowledge that we believe will foster a profound connection to our environment.”

“Today is momentous. We extend our gratitude to the large and extended family of generous supporters, both private and public, that believed in the concept of having an Environmental Education Center at Stuyvesant Cove Park; the idea of creating a space of enlightenment, innovation, and inspiration,” said **Solar One CEO Stephen Levin**. “Together, this Center we're creating is sustainable. It will feature interactive exhibits on urban environmental stewardship and innovative public programming to equip our community with the knowledge and tools needed to champion a cleaner, greener, and brighter future for all.”

“Our *PlaNYC* action plan is all about protecting New York City and making it more livable not just for its current residents, but for future generations to come, and that’s exactly what Solar One is doing with this center, and we applaud them for their work to address climate change,” said **Victoria Cerullo, Acting Executive Director, Mayor's Office of Climate & Environmental Justice**. “Presenting New Yorkers of all ages with opportunities to learn about how they can make New York City a more resilient place to live, work and play is a necessary step as we look for ways to keep our residents safe from increasingly high temperatures, extreme rainfall and coastal flooding.”

“We are proud to support Solar One’s Environmental Education Center, which will be a model of resilience for coastal cities,” said **Chris Raup, vice president, Energy Policy & Regulatory Affairs at Con Edison and a member of Solar One’s Board**. “Anticipating weather-related events and designing to overcome those challenges is a responsible way to look after our communities. Solar One's project serves as a leading example of infrastructural hardening and climate change adaptability.”

“Congratulations to Solar One and EDC on finally moving forward with this project, which has

been a long time coming. I am proud to have played a part in bringing it about and look forward to the exciting future amenities and programming that Solar One will be offering in the new building,” said **Manhattan Borough President Mark Levine**.

The design and construction of the Center will be managed by NYCEDC on behalf of Solar One. The construction manager is Gilbane Building Company, and the architect is Bjarke Ingels Group.

“Gilbane Building Company is eager to partner with NYCEDC, Bjarke Ingels Group, and Solar One on a project that serves as a model for sustainable and resilient design and construction,” said **Ian Goldberg, senior project manager, Gilbane Building Company**, the construction manager for the project. “The new, ground-up 6,000-square-foot flood-resistant building will be a recreational and educational asset contributing to the redevelopment of the East River Waterfront and its surrounding community.”

“As a gateway to the northernmost point of the East Side Coastal Resiliency waterfront redevelopment, the project will take advantage of its siting along the East River shoreline, educating the immediate community and New York City at large about the city’s ecology and how the built environment co-exist,” said **Ryan Harvey, senior architect at Bjarke Ingels Group**.

The Center is a project decades in the making and would not have been possible without current and former elected officials including: Council Speaker Adrienne Adams, Councilmember Keith Powers, former Councilmember Dan Garodnick, Manhattan Borough President Mark Levine, former Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer, former Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer, NYS Senator Brian Kavanagh, NYS Senator Brad Hoylman-Sigal, NYS Senator Tom Duane, NYS Assemblymember Harvey Epstein, and former U.S. Rep. Carolyn Maloney.

In addition to public funding, the project has been supported by philanthropic contributions from the Schmidt Family Foundation, Luesther T. Mertz Charitable Trust, JC Kellogg Foundation, the Kresge Foundation and the Gund Foundation. A leading private contributor to the project was Con Edison, who provide electric, gas, and steam service for more than 10 million people who live in New York City and Westchester County.

#### **About NYCEDC**

New York City Economic Development Corporation is a mission-driven, nonprofit organization that works for a vibrant, inclusive, and globally competitive economy for all New Yorkers. We take a comprehensive approach, through four main strategies: strengthen confidence in NYC as a great place to do business; grow innovative sectors with a focus on equity; build neighborhoods as places to live, learn, work, and play; and deliver sustainable infrastructure for communities and the city's future economy. To learn more about what we do, visit us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [Instagram](#).

#### **About Solar One**

Solar One is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization whose mission is to design and deliver innovative education, training, and technical assistance that fosters sustainability and resiliency in diverse urban environments. Solar One facilitates learning that changes the way people think about energy, sustainability, and resilience by engaging diverse program participants. Programs help individuals and communities explore new ways of living and working that are more adaptive to a climate-change impacted world. Learn more at [solar1.org](http://solar1.org).