



**The Thomas Jefferson Solar Panel Initiative**  
**The Thomas Jefferson High School**  
**for Science and Technology**

March 15, 2009

Dear 8<sup>th</sup> Period Activity Leader(s),

We write to ask for your support of the Thomas Jefferson Solar Panel Initiative (TJSPI), a group working to raise enough funds to purchase and install solar panels at Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology (TJHSST).

This project will have an ecological and educational aspect to it. Although the benefits of using renewable energy are well-known, namely, independence from fossil fuels and a reduction in TJ's carbon footprint, the educational impacts of this project are also immense. One of the technologies students in the Energy Systems Lab and other classes study are forms of renewable energy, especially solar energy. Although studying about these systems is beneficial, having a working solar panel array would be phenomenal. Additionally, the solar panels would reduce the energy costs of the school, allowing funds to be redirected to desperately underfunded areas. Finally, solar panels at TJ would cast the school in an even more positive light, will bring the school a more enhanced image in the community, and will keep TJ on the forefront of modern scientific thought and technological progress.

With your help, we raised \$40,000 in FY 2008 to purchase an initial, grid-tied solar photovoltaic panel array. Now, we are looking to expand the system and explore other forms of alternative energy. To meet this goal, we seek to raise an additional \$10,000 by the end of June 2009 via the assistance of community members, groups, and businesses who recognize the importance of advancing science and technology in our next generation, becoming more acutely aware of our dependence on nonrenewable energy, and encouraging students to become more involved and understanding of current issues.

To contribute, please drop off the attached form in Mrs. Hurowitz's teacher mailbox in the front office. After receiving your form, we will work out the transfer of your contribution from your account to the solar panel funds. If you would like to donate a non-monetary donation (e.g. material goods, services, etc.), we are very open to the idea and would love to have your help.

Those contributing \$1,000 or more will be recognized by having their club's name (or alternative text) engraved in a commemorative donor wall with a digital display located at TJ. Contributions of higher amounts will have larger plaques on the display. You will also be featured in our literature that we distribute and at all our events.

For more information, please visit [tjspi.110mb.com](http://tjspi.110mb.com). Thank you for advancing science and technology in our area and for supporting FCPS, TJHSST, and all us students who make up these bodies.

Sincerely,

Varun Bansal  
Chairman, TJSPI

Seth Kolker  
Secretary, TJSPI

Amanda Hurowitz  
Sponsor, TJSPI

Hadan Kauffman  
Sponsor, TJSPI

*Attached: Donation Form, TJSPI Information Sheet, Standard Solar Information Sheet*



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Estimated total value of goods being donated: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

How will your contribution be given to the TJSPI:

- They are already stored at school.
- We will bring them to school.
- We would like the TJSPI to pick them up from a non-school location.
- Other

b3) If your donation consists of services, please fill out the following:

Description of services being provided: \_\_\_\_\_

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Estimated value of services: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

b4) If your type of contribution has not been specified, please fill out the following:

Description of contribution: \_\_\_\_\_

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Estimated value of contribution: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Section IV: Receipt and Recognition**

a) Please enter the *total amount* being donated, including the estimated value of material donations, services, or other non-monetary contributions: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

b) Please check ( ✓ ) this box if you would like a receipt of your donation:

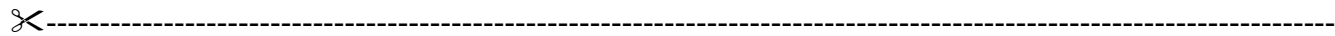
c) Do you allow the TJSPI to include the name of your group/club in an official list of donors at the completion of this project? This list may be published in newspapers and other media as publicity.  
 Yes                      No

d) If your total contribution amount **totals \$1000 or more**, please write below the text you would like to be displayed on the donor wall<sup>1</sup>. Check box if not applicable or if you do not want your plaque displayed on the donor wall.

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<sup>1</sup> Three lines maximum; engraving will appear as you write it (including capitalization and spacing)


-or- Check here if not applicable:



Please drop this form off in Mrs. Hurowitz's teacher mailbox in the front office. We will contact you when we receive your form.

***Thank you so much for your contribution!***



## **The Thomas Jefferson Solar Panel Initiative**

### **The Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology**

#### **About the TJSPI and Mission Statement**

Founded in 2006, the Thomas Jefferson Solar Panel Initiative (TJSPI) is comprised of a group of student volunteers from the Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology. The students work under the guidance of Mrs. Amanda Hurowitz and Mr. Hadan Kauffman, faculty members at TJHSST. The mission of the TJSPI is to integrate solar energy into the TJHSST building and culture by first introducing solar power infrastructure and then ultimately powering the entire school from solar power via incremental increases in solar power production and photovoltaic system output.

#### **TJSPI Goals**

To achieve energy independence for TJ, first one must install the framework of the solar panel system, as well as solar photovoltaic panels. Thus, our current goal is to obtain an initial, on-grid solar power system. An off-grid system and/or full energy independence are not yet the goals of this committee. The accompanying goal and provision is to ensure the maintenance and repair of the system for the future.

Solar energy is the most feasible and cost-effective renewable energy solution in Northern Virginia. Other forms of renewable energy, such as wind power, are excellent in the correct conditions; in this area, there is not enough wind to make wind power practical. Thus, given the current state of technology, solar power is the best route.

#### **Benefits**

The benefits of installing solar panels at TJHSST impact the school, the community, and the world. Of course, one benefit of solar panels is less dependence on fossil fuels and a decrease in carbon dioxide emissions, reducing the rate of climate change. The reduction in energy usage would also free school funds to be redirected to other underfunded programs. Additionally, solar panels at TJ would provide a working model for study by students taking courses in energy systems. Solar panels would also provide an energy backup to ensure closings do not occur due to power failures, as in the past. Finally, solar panels at TJHSST would keep the school on the forefront of cutting-edge technology – appropriate for a school of science and technology.

#### **Our Plan**

Though student-driven, this project is being guided by Mrs. Amanda Hurowitz and Mr. Hadan Kauffman, members of the TJHSST Faculty. Additionally, the project has been approved by Dr. Evan Glazer, Principal of TJHSST. The TJSPI has chosen to work with Standard Solar Inc. for the purchase and installation of solar panels. Standard Solar, a Maryland-based company that specializes in solar power installations in the area, has generously given a discount on the solar panel system, as well as free installation and training seminars for students and faculty at TJ. The funding for this project will come from: corporate donations; community members, groups, businesses, charities; and grants from various organizations. We have already raised over a quarter of the necessary funds, attracted media attention, and received backing and endorsement from major organizations (e.g. The Earth Day Network).

#### **More Information**

If you are interested in helping with this project, please contact us at [the.tjspi@gmail.com](mailto:the.tjspi@gmail.com), or visit our website at [tjspi.110mb.com](http://tjspi.110mb.com).