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Welcome to this month's issue of ***Solar Newsbriefs***, brought to you by the Washington State University Energy Program. Please feel free to forward this issue to those of your colleagues interested in solar energy. For archives of past ***Solar Newsbriefs***, visit

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Oregon News

Portland Clean Energy Fund Supporters Say Tax Would Open Doors for People of Color

A new four-story building being constructed on Southeast 81st Avenue and Division Street was held Wednesday as a symbol of what could be if the Portland Clean Energy Fund is passed ... The 48-unit building is a joint project between the Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon and ROSE Community Development to build a community center topped by three floors of low-income housing. On the roof, developers hope to put in solar panels if grant funding comes through— by Shasta Kearns Moore, *Portland Tribune*, September 3, 2018: <https://portlandtribune.com/pt/9-news/404818-302603-portland-clean-energy-fund-supporters-say-tax-would-open-doors-for-people-of-color>

Oregon Projects Incorporate Solar Output Insurance in Financing

On Wednesday kWh analytics announced it has structured financing for a series of solar projects in Oregon that include insurance to protect cash flow when the sun does not shine. The financing covers four solar projects in Oregon with an aggregate capacity of 50 MW being developed by GCL New Energy, a Hong Kong-based solar developer, and financed by PNC Bank— by Peter Maloney, *Utility Dive*, August 30, 2018: <https://www.utilitydive.com/news/oregon-projects-incorporate-solar-output-insurance-in-financing/531253/>

Washington News

Do you know of any local governments or schools that want to go solar? The Washington Department of Commerce is now accepting applications for the [2018 Energy Efficiency and Solar Grant Program](#). This grant supports energy efficiency or solar installations for local agencies, public higher education institutions, public school districts and state agencies. **Applications are due at 5 p.m. on November 16, 2018.** A bidders conference and webinar will be held on September 18. For application information, materials and instructions on how to participate in the webinar, go to:

<https://www.commerce.wa.gov/growing-the-economy/energy/energy-efficiency-and-solar-grants/>

Five Facts about OPALCO's Solar Power Project

The sun shines brighter in the San Juans than most of Washington state, and for Orcas Power and Light Cooperative, that's a good thing. The local energy co-op took advantage of the islands' brighter, drier island weather by launching its first solar power project on Decatur Island on July 31— by Hayley Day, *The Islands' Sounder*, September 2, 2018:

<http://www.islandssounder.com/news/five-facts-about-opalcos-solar-power-project/>

Whidbey Solar Business Warns Against Policy Change

Whidbey Islanders like to go green. Whidbey has more solar energy installations per capita than the rest of Washington, says the head of the island's only solar installation company. "The solar industry is thriving and we're busier than ever now," says Kelly Keilwitz, founder of Whidbey Sun and Wind in Coupeville. "We've purchased a third truck and we're increasing crews. "But the solar energy principle called net metering is in jeopardy, and the issue is likely to come before the legislature again in the next session"—By Dave Felice, *Whidbey News-Times*, August 24, 2018:

<https://www.whidbeynewstimes.com/news/whidbey-solar-business-warns-against-policy-change/>

Spokane Tribe Launches 'Children of the Sun' Solar Initiative, with Long-Range Plans for Energy Independence

When the Cayuse Mountain fire swept through the Spokane Indian Reservation in 2016, parts of the reservation were without power for five days. Without electricity, tribal firefighters couldn't pump well water for fire suppression. The extended outage strengthened the Spokane Tribe's resolve to work toward energy independence. As part of that effort, work will begin on a \$2 million "Children of the Sun Solar Initiative" in September. The project will generate 637 kilowatts of solar energy for 14 tribal buildings, including the administration building and 12 multifamily units. The work is part of a multiyear effort to expand solar energy on the sunny, 159,000-acre reservation west of Spokane— by Becky Kramer, *The Spokesman-Review*, August 28, 2018:

<http://www.spokesman.com/stories/2018/aug/28/spokane-tribe-launches-children-of-the-sun-solar-i/>

Related: **Wells Fargo Commits \$5 Million To Solar In Tribal Communities**

<https://solarindustrymag.com/wells-fargo-commits-5-million-to-solar-in-tribal-communities/>

It's much Easier for Schools to get to Net Zero: Not only is it Getting Cheaper to Install Solar Energy Systems, but Local Grants and Incentives are Available to Defray Improvement Costs

According to the U.S. Department of Energy, energy consumption is the second-highest operational expense for schools. K-12 schools across the country spend \$6 billion annually on energy bills, more than they spend on textbooks and computers combined— by Jack Newman, *Daily Journal of Commerce*, September, 3, 2018: <http://www.djc.com/news/co/12114128.html>

Industry News

Small Business of the Month: Sphere Solar Energy

Growing up in Kenya, Edwin Ngugi Wanji says he was the kind of kid who was always "trying to figure out how stuff works." "A solar panel on my mom's little calculator was always very fascinating to me,

and I pulled a lot of those out as a kid,” he remembers. Edwin is now the owner and founder of Sphere Solar Energy, a small business that installs solar energy systems for clients across the region, and for communities around the world. Read more about Edwin in Laura Bet’s article in the *Bottom Line Blog*, August 1, 2018: <http://bottomline.seattle.gov/2018/08/01/small-business-of-the-month-sphere-solar-energy/>

Silfab Unveils US Manufacturing Site with \$40 Million Investment in Itek Energy

Canada-based Silfab Solar has invested US\$40 million in U.S. solar PV module manufacturer, Itek Energy, LLC’s Bellingham, Washington production facility – by Becky Beetz, *PV Magazine*, August 30, 2018: <https://www.pv-magazine.com/2018/08/30/silfab-unveils-us-manufacturing-site-with-40-million-investment-in-itek-energy/>

See also press release: **Silfab Solar Invests in Itek Energy to Expand U.S. Manufacturing**

<https://www.marketwatch.com/press-release/silfab-solar-invests-in-itek-energy-to-expand-us-manufacturing-2018-08-30>

Solar Could Replace 2.73 GW of PacifiCorp Coal Units, at Lower Cost

A simple comparison of per-MWh costs for solar versus PacifiCorp’s existing coal-fired generation found that new solar would cost less than the going-forward costs of 11 coal units with a combined 2.73 GW of capacity— by William Driscoll, *pv magazine*, August 15, 2018: <https://pv-magazine-usa.com/2018/08/15/solar-could-replace-2-73-gw-of-pacificorp-coal-units-at-lower-cost/>

Resilience

The Contribution of Distributed Solar to Reliability, Grid Resilience, and Community Resilience: A Report for Solar Plus Northwest

A strong emphasis of the SolarPlus initiative is to increase both community and resilience and grid resilience in OR and WA. The role of this report is to establish a framework around community resilience, grid resilience, and reliability within the context of distributed solar energy systems. The work from this report will be used as a definitions guide for resilience roadshows, workshops, and other related policy work at the local and state levels—Dean Summer, Renewable Northwest for Solar Plus NW, August, 2018:

http://solarplusnw.org/wp-content/uploads/RNW_ODOE_Resiliencpaper_2018-2.pdf

The Art — and Challenges — of Monetizing Resilience

In this edition of Industry Perspectives, S&C Electric’s David Chiesa explores the ins and outs of monetizing resilience, and how the industry is working to place a value on energy stability.

Various folks have tried to place a value on resilience, including universities, government agencies, large industrials, and utilities. Each has found difficulty developing a means to calculate the value. Let’s narrow our focus for monetizing resilience down to investor-owned utilities (IOUs). Read more on the ins and outs of monetizing resilience and how the industry is working to place a value on energy atability — by David Chiesa, *Microgrid Knowledge*, July 30, 2018:

<https://microgridknowledge.com/monetizing-resilience-sc-electric/>

City of Portland, PSU, PGE and MIT Partnering on First-Ever Emergency Preparedness Hub

The City of Portland, Portland State University and Portland General Electric, with guidance from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, are partnering to create a PREP Hub (Emergency Preparedness Hubs) Pilot, a program to improve disaster resilience and emergency preparedness in Portland. Portland City Council voted to approve the agreement today. PREP Hubs are a new kind of infrastructure designed to operate entirely off-grid during a disaster, providing crucial services that include power, communication and emergency first aid supplies—*Business Wire*, August 8, 2018:

<https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20180808005846/en/City-Portland-PSU-PGE-MIT-Partnering-First-Ever>

Workforce Development

Solar Industry Experience Shines When Mentoring A Diverse Workforce

As the U.S. works toward producing more renewable energy, recent solar industry data points to the impacts when women and other underrepresented groups are offered a “classroom in the field,” or hands-on solar career experiences. The rapid growth in solar energy presents a challenge for the industry — what are the best ways to teach the next generation of scientists, engineers, and technicians who will implement solar technologies on a greater scale and integrate these resources into energy systems? Making renewable energy technology and job training accessible to traditionally underserved communities is necessary for a successful transition to clean, renewable energy that includes everyone – by Carolyn Fortuna, *Clean Technica*, Aug. 27, 2018:

<https://cleantechnica.com/2018/08/27/solar-industry-experience-shines-when-mentoring-a-diverse-workforce/>

Conferences and Webinars

2018 Washington State Solar Summit, October 19, 2018, Meydenbauer Center, Bellevue

The Washington State Solar Summit is an important annual information gathering and networking event for industry stakeholders including manufacturers, installers, utilities, municipalities, legislators/policy makers, educators, students, tribal members, advocacy organizations/nonprofits, distributors, engineers, financial lenders, consultants and more. For more information and to register see:

https://www.solarwa.org/2018_solar_summit

Energy Leadership Summit: Business, Policy, & Innovation, The Conference Center at Washington State Convention Center, Seattle, October 30, 2018.

The Energy Leadership Summit is the region’s must-attend clean energy event. Presented jointly by the CleanTech Alliance and the Northwest Environmental Business Council, this unique event connects policy with practice and addresses the industry’s current challenges and future opportunities. For more information and to register, see:

<https://www.cleantechalliance.org/2018/07/13/energy-leadership-summit-announced/>

Want to Contribute? If you have information on events, publications or other solar topics that you would like mentioned in an upcoming issue of *Solar Newsbriefs*, please contact Anne Whitney at whitneya@energy.wsu.edu

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