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UTSA CAMPUS HARNESSES SOLAR ENERGY

UTSA received $1.08 million in Department of Energy stimulus funds distributed by the State Energy Conservation Office (SECO) to install solar panels on two buildings at UTSA's Main Campus. The project was made possible because of one of four solar-energy grants that will enable solar panel installations in San Antonio. In addition to UTSA, the City of San Antonio, St. Phillip's College and the University of Texas Health Science Center received funding for solar initiatives.

CPS Energy will participate in the UTSA solar initiative by creating opportunities for students to work on the project with $127,720 pledged from their solar rebate program for student scholarships. This turnkey project will be utilized as a practical lab study tool by electrical engineering students at UTSA for data collection and solar system evaluation.

UTSA will install 30,000 square feet of solar panels on the roofs of the University Center's recent expansion and the Engineering Building on the Main Campus. The panels are expected to reduce carbon dioxide emissions up to 273,661 pounds annually, which is the equivalent of planting 372 acres of trees. They also are expected to generate 237 megawatt hours of energy, saving UTSA as much as $64,000.00 per year.

Alderson served in the role of Owner's engineer to coordinate with the design-build contractor on this turnkey project for system design and installation of solar photovoltaic systems on two campus buildings. The roof top arrays are 140 kW on the University Center III building and 33 kW on the Engineering Building, with inverters for AC tie-in to the campus electrical system and electrical utility grid. The RFP consisted of drawings depicting as-built conditions of the roofs, mechanical penthouses and electrical penthouses. The drawings indicated the allowable area for the solar panel installation and acceptable structural loading of the roofs. Commissioning services included closeout activities with the observation of the complete power quality process and review of project closeout documentation (Operations & Maintenance Manuals, training, warranty transfer and record drawings).

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