

**NEWS MEDIA CONTACTS: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**Eric Barendsen, U.S. Department of Energy, (202) 531-5687 Wednesday, October 7, 2015**

**Eric.Barendsen@ee.doe.gov**

***For On-Site Inquiries and Logistics:***

**Eric Escudero, U.S. Department of Energy, (720) 234-3417**

**Eric.Escudero@ee.doe.gov**

Visit our [online press room](http://www.solardecathlon.gov/2015/news-press-room.html) and download our [online media kit](http://www.solardecathlon.gov/past/2015/pdfs/2015-media-kit.pdf) to help you cover the event.

***MEDIA ADVISORY***

**Solar Decathlon Opening Ceremony and VIP Ribbon Cutting**

***Program Features U.S. Secretary of Energy Dr. Ernest Moniz and Student Teams***

IRVINE, CA – Collegiate teams involving hundreds of students from around the world are racing to complete construction of their highly energy-efficient solar-powered houses for the U.S. Department of Energy Solar Decathlon 2015. The award-winning competition officially begins tomorrow at the Orange County Great Park with an opening ceremony featuring U.S. Secretary of Energy Ernest Moniz, City of Irvine officials, participating students, special guests and event sponsors. [See early photos here](http://www.solardecathlon.gov/2015/photos.html).

**WHO: *Dr. Ernest Moniz, United States Secretary of Energy***

***Richard King, Director of the U.S. Department of Energy Solar Decathlon***

 ***Collegiate teams from across the country and around the world***

 ***Christina Shea, Irvine City Councilwoman***

 ***Competition sponsors including: Edison International, Schneider Electric, Wells Fargo***

**WHAT:** Official kick-off of the global competition that shows consumers how to save money and energy with affordable clean energy products available today. Highly efficient houses built by collegiate teams will open to the public tomorrow at 11 a.m. Teams will begin competing in 10 contests spanning nine days that gauge each house’s performance, livability and affordability.

**WHEN:** **Opening Ceremony:** Thursday, October 8

 8:30 a.m. All-team student photo in east end of Solar Decathlon village; we suggest media arrive by 8:15 if planning to capture the team photo

 9:00 – 9:30 a.m. Media set-up and advance seating in Hangar 244

 9:30 – 11:00 a.m. Opening ceremony in Hangar 244 with students teams, U.S. Secretary of Energy Dr. Ernest Moniz, and other Energy Department officials, sponsors, special guest speakers, and VIPs

 11:00 a.m. Ribbon-cutting and opening of Solar Decathlon village

 11:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m. Interview availability with students, guided tours, and house access

**WHERE:** Orange County Great Park, Irvine, CA – [view directions for free parking for media](http://www.solardecathlon.gov/past/2015/pdfs/2015-media-kit.pdf) (page 4)

**RSVP:** Media wishing to attend are encouraged to RSVP by contacting Eric Escudero, media relations contact at the U.S. Department of Energy, at Eric.Escudero@ee.doe.gov or (720) 234-3417. Also, visit our [online press room](http://www.solardecathlon.gov/2015/news-press-room.html) and download our [online media kit](http://www.solardecathlon.gov/past/2015/pdfs/2015-media-kit.pdf) to help you cover the event.

Solar Decathlon 2015 teams competing at the Orange County Great Park:

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| * **California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo**
* **California State University, Sacramento**
* **Clemson University**
* **Crowder College and Drury University**
* **Missouri University of Science and Technology**
* **New York City College of Technology**
* **Team NY Alfred** - State University of New York at Alfred College of Technology and Alfred University
* **Stevens Institute of Technology**
* **Texas/Germany** - The University of Texas at Austin and Technische Universitaet Muenchen
 | * **University at Buffalo, The State University of New York**
* **University of California, Davis**
* **Team Orange County** - University of California, Irvine; Chapman University; Irvine Valley College; and Saddleback College
* **West Virginia/Rome** - West Virginia University and University of Roma Tor Vergata
* **Mass/Central America** - Western New England University, Universidad Tecnológica de Panamá, and Universidad Tecnológica Centroamericana
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Team houses will open to the public free of charge **October 8-11 and October 15-18** from **11:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.,** and theoverall winner will be announced on October 17 at 9:45 a.m. There is a $10 fee for public parking at the Orange County Great Park during the event; [view directions and a map](http://www.solardecathlon.gov/2015/visit-directions-transportation.html). For full event information, current standings, high-resolution photos, and videos, visit [www.SolarDecathlon.gov](http://www.SolarDecathlon.gov). You may also follow the competition in real time on Facebook at [Facebook.com/DOESolarDecathlon](http://www.Facebook.com/DOESolarDecathlon) and Twitter at [@Solar\_Decathlon](http://www.twitter.com/Solar_Decathlon). Photos are also available on Flickr at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/solar_decathlon/>.

More about the Solar Decathlon

The U.S. Department of Energy Solar Decathlon is an award-winning program that challenges collegiate students from around the world to design, build and operate solar-powered houses that are affordable, highly energy-efficient, attractive, and easy to live in. The competition shows consumers how to save money, water and energy with affordable clean energy products that are available today. The two-year projects culminate in an unprecedented display of affordable green living and design at the Orange County Great Park in Irvine, California. The Solar Decathlon also provides participating students with hands-on experience and unique training that prepares them to enter our nation’s clean energy workforce. Together, the energy innovations demonstrated during the event support the Energy Department's efforts to advance President Obama’s Climate Action Plan and help reduce climate-changing carbon emissions to meet the targets of the Clean Power Plan, while transitioning America to a clean energy economy and saving money for families and businesses.

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