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Correction Alters Affordability Contest Results Two Teams Still Tie to Win New Affordability Contest at U.S. Department of Energy Solar Decathlon 2011

WASHINGTON, DC – Solar Decathlon organizers have corrected errors in the calculations for the Affordability Contest results, which were initially announced on Tuesday, September 27, 2011. A blog post issued on SolarDecathlon.gov on Friday, September 30, 2011, explains the process and calculation error. The following press release has been updated to reflect the corrected contest results.

In a tangible sign that the cost of clean energy home upgrades has come down, two teams – Parsons NS Stevens and Team Belgium – tied for first place in the Affordability Contest during the U.S. Department of Energy Solar Decathlon 2011. A new addition for the Solar Decathlon competition, the Affordability Contest encourages teams to design and build reasonably priced houses that combine highly energy-efficient construction design and energy-saving appliances with renewable energy systems.

“By initiating the Affordability Contest this year, we wanted to emphasize that many of the energy-efficient features in these amazing houses are within reach of many Americans,” said Richard King, director of the Solar Decathlon for the U.S. Department of Energy. “Most of the energy-efficient designs and products on display this week are affordable, and they can help anyone save money at home.”

Teams earned the full 100 points for achieving a target construction cost of \$250,000 or less, as evaluated by a professional estimator. A sliding point scale was applied to teams with estimated house construction costs between \$250,001 and \$600,000. No points were awarded to any house that cost over \$600,000.

Parsons NS Stevens (Parsons The New School for Design and Stevens Institute of Technology) earned the full 100 points in the contest by constructing a house estimated to cost \$229,890. Team Belgium (Ghent University) also achieved top honors and full points in the contest by constructing a house estimated to cost \$249,568.

Purdue University earned second place and 99.215 points with a house estimated to cost \$257,854. Placing third in the contest, SCI-Arc/Caltech earned 98.750 points with a house estimated to cost \$262,495. Full details on the cost estimates for each house are posted at www.solardecathlon.gov/contest_affordability.html.

Affordability Juror Matt Hansen, founder of Takeoffs Construction Estimating and partner at Licata Hansen Associates Architecture, said, "Parsons NS Stevens truly exemplified the can-do attitude. The house is based on the affordability needs of the team's target market in an urban context: low initial costs, low maintenance costs, and low utility costs." Along with nationally recognized architect Ric Licata, fellow and current Western Regional Director of the American Institute of Architects, Hansen has spent time over the last nine months evaluating each team's house to determine accurate cost estimates for the contest.

Regarding Team Belgium's house, Hansen commented, "Ingenuity, the use of known materials, and limited use of heavy equipment added to the affordability of the house." And he continued about the second place team, "Purdue's use of a traditional design and construction approach demonstrated high tech energy and control systems for a sophisticated yet conventional market. The general public would not perceive it as a solar home."

During the award presentation, the Affordability jury told students, "Do not let future employers or clients tell you 'It can't be done.' Never let anyone say you can't build an affordable, energy-efficient house that produces as much energy as it consumes – for the Solar Decathlon 2011, you have designed attractive homes to do just that."

Following the Affordability Contest results, Purdue is in first place overall, Ohio State is in second place and Maryland is in third place. The Solar Decathlon comprises 10 contests – each worth 100 points – that evaluate affordability, architecture, engineering, market appeal, comfort, appliances, and the level of energy produced versus energy consumed, among other competition aspects.

Solar Decathlon's overall winner will be announced on Saturday, October 1, at 2:30 pm in the solar village at the National Mall's West Potomac Park. The Department of Energy Solar Decathlon is open to the public through Sunday, October 2. The houses are open for free tours each weekday from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm, and on weekends from 10:00 am to 5:30 pm. For full event information, current standings, high-resolution photos, videos, an event schedule and daily results, visit www.SolarDecathlon.gov. You can also follow the competition real-time on Facebook at [Facebook.com/DOESolarDecathlon](https://www.facebook.com/DOESolarDecathlon) and Twitter at [@Solar_Decathlon](https://twitter.com/Solar_Decathlon).

More about the Solar Decathlon

The U.S. Department of Energy Solar Decathlon 2011 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 and energy with affordable clean energy products that are available today. The nearly two-year projects culminate in an unprecedented display of affordable green living and design on the National Mall's West Potomac Park from September 23 – October 2, 2011. 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, supporting the Obama Administration's goal of transitioning to a clean energy economy while saving families and businesses money.

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