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Czech Republic Wins Architecture Contest and Team Austria Claims First in the Communications Contest at Solar Decathlon 2013

Solar Decathlon Open to the Public through Sunday, October 13, from 11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Irvine, Calif. – Announced today before an enthusiastic crowd at the Orange County Great Park, the Czech Republic, from the Czech Technical University, took first place in the highly competitive Architecture Contest, and Team Austria, made up of students from the Vienna University of Technology, won the Communications Contest of the U.S. Department of Energy Solar Decathlon 2013. For the Architecture Contest, collegiate students from around the world are judged on the design and construction of attractive, high-performance houses that integrate renewable energy systems and energy-efficient technologies. The Communications Contest evaluates each team's effectiveness in communicating the features of their house and their experiences during this project to jurors and the public through a variety of media including websites, audiovisual presentations, displays, and house tours.

"We are thrilled to announce these prestigious awards that represent the Solar Decathlon's top honors for architecture and communications," said Richard King, director of Solar Decathlon for the U.S. Department of Energy. "The Solar Decathlon prepares more than a thousand students with the skills and knowledge to design energy-efficient buildings that cut carbon pollution and help slow the effects of climate change."

A panel of three jurors, representing the professional and academic communities, presented the Architecture Contest award in front of an audience that included event officials and Solar Decathlon student team members.

Czech Republic earned a score of 98 out of a possible 100 points to win the contest. Architectural juror Richard Swett, CEO and co-founder of Climate PROSPERITY Enterprise Solutions LLC, said, "The warm and pervasive use of natural wood finishes throughout the house makes it a comfortable place to dwell and reenergize, being a part of nature without feeling exposed to nature."

For the Architecture Contest, the jury evaluated the houses based on their architectural elements, holistic design, lighting, project documentation and ability to inspire and delight Solar Decathlon visitors. Stevens Institute of Technology claimed second place with 96 points, and University of

Southern California took third place with 93 points. Full details on the Architecture Contest results will be available at http://www.solardecathlon.gov/contest_architecture.html.

Solid communication skills are critical to helping the public understand the practical applications of energy-saving technologies and how products available today can help households save money. A jury of communications professionals awarded points for the Communications Contest for delivering clear and consistent messages, images that represent the vision, process, and results of each project, and creativity in engaging audiences.

Team Austria finished first and earned a score of 94 out of a possible 100 points. "From the attire of the presenters to the professionalism of the team's video, website, signage, and handout, the jurors were wowed by Team Austria's creation of a sophisticated lifestyle brand," commented Mark Walhimer of Museum Planning LLC, one of the contest's jurors. The score helped propel Team Austria from 7th place to first in the overall competition.

University of Nevada Las Vegas finished second in the Communications Contest with 90 points, followed by Middlebury College in third place with 89 points. Full details about the Communications Contest results are available at http://www.solardecathlon.gov/contest_communications.html.

The teams currently in the overall lead for Solar Decathlon 2013 are Team Austria in first place, University of Nevada Las Vegas in second place, and Stevens Institute of Technology in third place.

Results from the Engineering Contest, also worth 100 points, and the overall winner of the Solar Decathlon will be announced tomorrow, Saturday, October 12 at 10:00 a.m. in Hangar 244 at the Orange County Great Park in Irvine, Calif.

The Solar Decathlon houses are open to the public for free tours through Sunday, October 13, from 11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. for one final weekend. Media interested in covering the Solar Decathlon may visit our [online press room](#) and download our [online media kit](#). For full event information, shuttle options, current standings, high-resolution photos, videos, an event schedule and daily results, visit www.SolarDecathlon.gov. You may also follow the competition in real time on Facebook at [Facebook.com/DOESolarDecathlon](https://www.facebook.com/DOESolarDecathlon) and Twitter at [@SolarDecathlon](https://twitter.com/SolarDecathlon). Photos are also available on Flickr at http://www.flickr.com/photos/solar_decathlon/

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