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Siemens helps Virginia Tech create more sustainable campus with solar implementation

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Blacksburg, Virginia – Virginia Tech is the commonwealth’s most comprehensive university and a leading research institution. The university’s hands-on approach to learning, research, and discovery is evident to the more than 24,000 students who attend the Virginia Tech Blacksburg Campus.

In 2010, the university received an American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) grant and worked with Siemens for a solar energy implementation that would contribute to Virginia Tech’s sustainability goals.

Objectives

Although the solar project was intended to advance the university’s overall sustainability goals, Virginia Tech established several other objectives for the energy efficiency project with Siemens:

- Help reduce utility costs and consumption
- Reduce carbon emissions and footprint
- Create an aesthetic solar implementation that would coordinate with the school’s architectural vernacular

Solution

To achieve its objectives, Siemens worked with Virginia Tech to evaluate the physical space allowance and design a system that would work within the university’s architectural requirements. Ultimately, Siemens is implementing a 100kW carport solar application on the roof of a parking garage. When complete in 2012, the solar implementation will generate approximately 130,000kWh of electricity every year for the university.

In addition to the solar energy project, Siemens is working with Virginia Tech to design and implement a monitoring system that will demonstrate the environmental impact of the solar project to university students and faculty and the community.

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Results

For Virginia Tech, the solar project with Siemens is part of a larger energy-reducing effort. But the 100kW solar application is contributing to the university's sustainability goals, helping to reduce utility costs. By producing 130,000kWh of solar power annually, the university will save the equivalent of 208 barrels of oil, or one acre of forest from deforestation—clearly contributing to the university's desire to reduce its carbon footprint.



Siemens Industry, Inc.
Building Technologies Division
1000 Deerfield Parkway
Buffalo Grove, IL 60089

(847) 215-1000

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