

God's Little Light Bulb: Sally Smith on Overcoming the Obstacles in Lavallee

Lavallee, Haiti, 2014, 2015, 2016,

When we encountered difficulties in completing our installation of solar power and clean water filtration for the community at a school in Lavallee, Haiti in October 2015, we turned it over to the Lord. It is simply the power of Christ to transcend any linguistic boundaries or man-made obstacles and I have seen this especially in this community of believers in Christ in Lavallee. We were amazed at their resourcefulness and hospitality without which this installation would not have been completed. It

Ancy our "uber friend," and many other people, Valdes Innocent, (a Living Waters for the World technician), and his assistant Charles, all worked tirelessly with the community, when we thought there was simply no hope, and that the defective pump we had taken great pains to install, in October 2015, was deemed to be irretrievable. Still, we kept praying for a solution, and it finally came.

And, so it is with God. Sometimes, the things we work hard to accomplish are not on His timeline or agenda, or so we think. I am here to tell you that without community of faith in God, there is no definite endpoint. Let God help you to do your work. Let each person's gifts be recognized, Gary Naud, Justin Badio, our new operators of the system in Lavallee. The thanks are not able to be shared with everyone whose name and personal history we did not obtain, so we all give thanks to God our creator and redeemer, and glory to His name. My thanks are also to the unnamed custodian of the school who came to the worksite with the grappling hook, and enabled retrieval of the pump, to many behind the scenes people: to Fevry's wife and her helpers who made fresh squeezed lemonade and a picnic lunch of ham and bread which we ate on the worksite while we grappled with the mysteries God has set before us, and to His providence which enabled this successful installation.

Thank you, Haitian partners and friends in America!! You know who you are.

—Sally

took many months of preparation, some setbacks, lots of prayer, and several trips before the installation was completed. The tenacity of many people of faith to help this community which had lost their water source, and were hoping against hope that we could complete this installation WITH THEM. And we did, in April 2016..... WITH GOD'S HELP, and THEIRS. So, this is a tribute to many unnamed people in the community of Lavallee, Haiti, and the people who helped this installation in the United States.

Fevry nau Picchoneau and his family: wife, mother-in-law, brother, (Francois), let us stay in their home (twice!) as family, while working on this project.

You are Invited

Did you know roughly a fourth of the world's population lives without access to reliable electricity?
Let's talk about that.

Join us for

*Energy Poverty in the Developing World:
How it Affects Everybody
and What You Can Do*

A Symposium sponsored by Solar Under the Sun

August 19, 2016, 6:30–8:30 pm

Broadmoor Presbyterian Church
1915 Grover Place
Shreveport, LA 71105

Come meet Solar Under the Sun staff and Board members and hear a presentation about energy poverty and its effects on communities worldwide.

Enjoy light refreshments as we discuss tangible ways that people of faith can respond, both as individuals and congregations, and how Solar Under the Sun is sharing God's gift of solar energy with people who need it desperately.

Admission is free! RSVP at
<http://evite.me/MXhdbzXMXa>

Visit solarunderthesun.org
or find us on Facebook.

Believing that Jesus Christ is the light of the world, Solar Under the Sun works to alleviate energy poverty in partnership with volunteers by equipping and resourcing them for mission and advocating for those in need.



Honduras Update

Answered Prayers and Long-Awaited Solar

In early 2015, some of our partners in Honduras contacted us to ask if Solar Under the Sun could find a team to work with their community to install solar in homes in El Horno, El Sute, and Agua Zarca. They even said that they wanted to pay for 25% of the equipment cost. However, because of the size of the project, it was proving difficult to find a team willing to adopt it. This spring, our prayers were answered and a combined group made up of the Cimarron Presbytery SUS Team and First Presbyterian Church in Mena, AR rose to the

challenge and committed to installing solar in 40 homes for these communities. At the end of June, Roy and Bill of Mena, Harold of the Cimarron team, and Emily of Solar Under the Sun traveled to Honduras to meet with the community and survey homes for the first installation trip which is planned for January. Pictured are a few of the families who are part of the project to install solar energy in their homes. Continue to pray for this team and our in-country partners and we work to install solar energy in these communities.



Don't Forget to Sign up for Solar School!

Join us September 22–25 at Ferncliff Camp and Conference Center for our 14th Solar School!

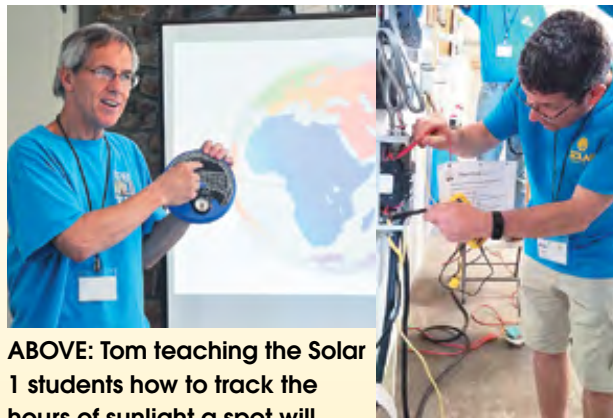
Solar School runs from Thursday at 10:00 am. through Sunday at 10:30 am.

Solar 1: Leadership, Partnership Development, and Surveying

Solar 2: Installation and Equipping Partners

The cost for Solar School is \$485 per registrant, which includes room, board, instruction, and training manuals. The cost for commuting registrants is \$375 per person.

Please register online at www.solarunderthesun.org/solar-school. For any questions concerning registration, please call Ferncliff Camp at (501) 821-3063.



ABOVE: Tom teaching the Solar 1 students how to track the hours of sunlight a spot will get throughout the year and Rick doing some final checks before the Solar 2 smoke test of the newly built systems. BELOW: Graduates and instructors of Solar School #14.



SUS Blurbs

Upcoming Solar School

Session #15: September 22–25, 2016
Held at Ferncliff Camp & Conference Center near Little Rock, AR.

Register online at www.solarunderthesun.org

SUS VBS curriculum is available for \$50. Please visit our website to order your copy today!

SUS Stats

14 Solar Schools—278 graduates
76 SUS solar systems installed through July 2016

- 63 systems in Haiti
- 1 system in Ukraine
- 1 system in Kenya
- 11 systems in Honduras

61 systems are combined project with Living Waters for the World

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Why I Talk About Energy Poverty: Education

Perhaps it would be best if I start by defining energy poverty. There is actually some debate among experts on what is to be included in the definition and at what point one can be considered to be experiencing it; but a good, inclusive definition that I have found is this: **Energy poverty is not having electricity because it is either not available, not reliable, or not affordable.**

Here are a few things you should know about our world. First, about 1.3 billion people in the world are without access to electricity. Secondly, the poorest people are most likely to be affected by energy poverty. Thirdly, these people are more likely to remain poor, because energy poverty stunts the development of a community by negatively affecting one of the most fundamental pillars of a community's improvement: education.

One-third of primary schools in the world lack electricity. Note that I did not say "one-third of primary schools in developing countries" but rather all primary schools. **In some countries, such as Guinea, only 2% of schools are electrified.**



Now, nobody is saying that a basic level of education and literacy cannot be achieved without electricity. It can be, and people have been doing it for millennia. However, electricity does improve the quality and availability of that education as well as the likelihood that children will complete or even be able to attend school. Let's talk about some of the reasons why.

Reason #1: Energy poverty often reduces study time for students and the amount of time that children are able to spend at school. Especially in the developing world, every member of a family is vital to that family's ability to prosper. Often families have to make the hard choice that their child is unable to go to school because they need to help with the income or chores such as gathering firewood. In a community we worked in last summer, Las Glorias, there were some families where the girls stayed home during the day to help their mom make fireworks for \$.30/day. Having a light at home means that they can attend school during the day and be able to help with work after dark. Even when children attend school, sometimes there simply is not enough



time to complete homework or sufficiently study in the hours of daylight left after school. If a family is lucky enough to be able to afford kerosene for a lantern, children's eyes are red and swollen the next day from the fumes. If they are not able to afford kerosene, often children will travel to urban areas and congregate beneath street lights to study, sometimes even spending the night there rather than walking for miles home in the dark. Having electricity at home means that these students can not only study more conveniently, but also safely.

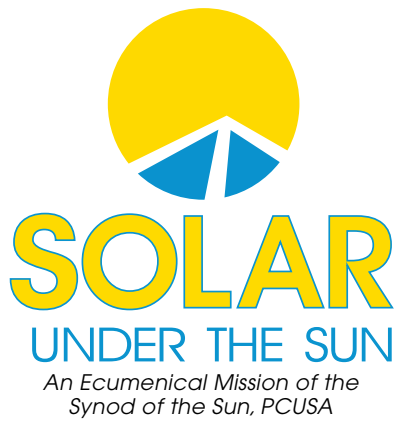


Reason #2: Energy poverty restricts teaching materials and resources and complicates work for the teachers and administration. You teacher friends out there, think about the electronic equipment that you use on a day-to-day basis. No electricity means that you cannot print and copy homework assignments to hand out. It means that teachers do not have access to all of the modern online resources for ideas, lesson plans, or research. No electricity means that all grading must be done and kept by hand, and all student and staff records are kept on paper rather than electronically.

Reason #3: Because teachers know that they will be working with the above difficulties (as well as teaching students that are often unable to attend or do their assigned work), energy poverty makes it difficult for schools in developing communities to acquire well-trained, educated teachers. Imagine you are a young teacher who is just graduating college and looking for a job. You are offered two options. At the first job, you will be working in an urban area at a school with all of the desired equipment and resources like copiers, computers, and internet (not to mention lighting in the classrooms). The second job is for a small rural school up in the mountains. They have no electricity in their community, so not only will you be working in conditions that you are not accustomed to, you will have to change your lifestyle as well, giving up things such as light, refrigeration, and many forms of communication. On top of that, they probably cannot even pay you well. Which school do you choose? The first one, right? Most teachers do. Installing electricity in these schools is the first step to attracting more teachers to these communities.

This is just a brief look at the effects that energy poverty has on education around the world. These are just a few of the reasons why Solar Under the Sun cares and is working with volunteers and communities around the world to install solar energy in the developing world. We are able to help, and we believe that we should. **Join us.**

—Emily Fausett



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