

## **Solaqua Power & Art and SunDog Solar**

### **Leading the Way to Energy Efficiency with Education and Installation**

**July 31, 2009 -- Chatham, NY --** Solaqua Power & Art is a project under development to rehabilitate the former Columbia Box Board Mill site on Route 295 in Chatham, New York. Just across the parking lot in a building run almost exclusively on solar power are the offices of SunDog Solar and Kling Magnetics. The entire operation is the brainchild of Jody Rael, President and Founder. *“Solaqua’s mission is to integrate renewable energy and the arts, and to promote a sustainable future through community education and revitalization,”* says Rael.

To further that mission, Jody and his team have many comprehensive and innovative projects underway. The first and most complex is Solaqua Power & Art, a model center for renewable energy and the arts powered by renewable energy, complete with green businesses, a regional foods restaurant, artisans, and much more. The group has just put the finishing touches on a comprehensive master plan that details every aspect of this four-phase project. To view the plan online please visit the newly redesigned website at [www.solaqua.org](http://www.solaqua.org).

Along with plans to rehabilitate the former box board mill site, Solaqua is developing a state-of-the-art Solar Thermal Center in Chatham, the only center of its kind in the region devoted to workforce development training and public education for solar thermal energy technologies. The center will include demonstrations, equipment sales and distribution, and installation crews. Solar thermal systems capture the sun’s energy, in the form of BTU’s, to heat water or air. It is extremely efficient and often costs less than its better-known counterpart (solar pv).

Further on the education front, Betsy Ferris Wyman, SunDog Solar’s VP of Sales, and Peter Skinner, P.E., have developed and are currently teaching a course called, *“Solar Thermal Installation and Design”* at Ulster and Bronx Community Colleges. In autumn 2009 this course will also be offered at Columbia-Greene, Dutchess, Orange, Rockland and Sullivan Community Colleges.

The first incubator business to launch at Solaqua, SunDog Solar, continues to design and install energy efficient renewable energy systems in homes and businesses throughout the Capital Region and Hudson Valley. *“With improved federal and state incentives making solar even more affordable, coupled with environmental concerns and high energy costs, more and more people are interested in solar,”* says SunDog Solar’s VP of Sales, Betsy Ferris Wyman. *“We make installing a renewable energy system accessible and easy. We walk our customers through each step of the process, from the initial consultation and site visit, to the preparing and filing of paperwork, and final interconnection,”* says Wyman.

Seeing a need at home in other countries, Solaqua is collaborating with Hudson Sister Cities Program and Questar students in Claverack, helping families in Uganda by providing mobile solar ovens as part of global educational outreach effort. Closer to home, Solaqua has initiated a waste vegetable oil recycling program turning restaurant waste vegetable oil into renewable energy. Waste vegetable oil is currently collected weekly from over 20 local restaurants and a

500K BTU waste vegetable oil boiler heats their building, with propane now serving as backup alternative energy.

For students interested in the Solaqua project, internships are offered for a variety of research and development projects. For students seeking to gain work experience in the growing renewable energy field, SunDog offers summer internships at their Chatham-based facility.

For more information about Solaqua Power & Art visit [www.solaqua.org](http://www.solaqua.org) or send an email inquiry to [info@solaqua.org](mailto:info@solaqua.org). For information about SunDog Solar call (518) 392-4000 or visit [www.sundogsolar.net](http://www.sundogsolar.net)

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