



Organization of American States

Press Release

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YOUTH AND ENERGY IN THE AMERICAS: RENEWABLE ENERGY TRAINING PROGRAM LAUNCHED

The Organization of American States (OAS) has launched a new program aimed at exposing youth from Latin America and the Caribbean to careers in renewable-energy technologies. The initiative known as the Youth and Energy in the Americas: Renewable Energy Training Program (YEA) was recently unveiled at a ceremony in the Art Museum of the Americas. The YEA Program is a joint venture between the Renewable Energy in the Americas (REIA) Initiative of the OAS; the Young Americas Business Trust (YABT); the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID); and the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) of the United States Department of Energy. The program introduces young people from Latin America and the Caribbean to sustainable-energy technologies through an intensive orientation seminar and career training program.

At the event, OAS Assistant Secretary Christopher Thomas said that the cooperation between these independent identities will bring a "a truly innovative and useful program."

"We see great potential for business in the Latin America and Caribbean region" stated Duke Solar President John Myles. "We need only to look to some of our closest neighbors - Mexico, Brazil, and Barbados - to see some of the largest markets for solar and other renewables in the world. We see the YEA program as an opportunity for us to build personal relationships in key countries of the Americas and to have friends and potential employees in the region," he added.

Other speakers included Luis Lauredo, U.S. Ambassador to the OAS, Roy Thomasson, Chief Executive Officer of YABT, Scot Sklar, President of the Solar Energy Industry Association, Mark Lambrides (REIA) and Quentin Kelly of WorldWater. The presenters emphasized the benefits to the industry of participation in this program by sponsoring interns, while helping to spread education on renewables throughout the Americas. Several companies committed to bringing YEA interns into their companies for the fall of 2000. The event also served as the inaugural reception of SOLTECH 2000, the annual meeting of the Solar Energy Industry Association.

Additional information on the YEA program can be obtained at www.ybiz.org/yea.htm or by contacting Sasha Beth Gottlieb (telephone, 202/458-3964; fax, 202/458-3560; e-mail, sgottlieb@oas.org).

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