



## Two Canadian Teams Chosen to Compete in Solar Decathlon 2009

Canadian universities will lead two of the twenty teams chosen to design and build a solar home for the 2009 Solar Decathlon competition. Organized by the U.S. Department of Energy and the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, the competition aims to promote development and adoption of solar-powered housing, evaluating the projects' architecture, energy efficiency, and livability. .

University of Waterloo will head up Team North, teaming up with Ryerson and Simon Fraser University. The Alberta Solar Decathlon Project, the second Canadian team, will be led by University of Calgary.

All four institutions are members of the Canadian Design Research Network (CDRN), a pan-Canadian consortium of universities and industry partners working together to address critical social and economic issues through design research. It was through the network's collaborative approach that the three universities of Team North gained the necessary connection and trust in each other to join forces.

U Waterloo, Ryerson, and U Calgary all had interest in the 2009 competition, with each planning to submit a separate bid. This was the point at which Dr. Robert Woodbury, scientific director of the CDRN, proposed that collaboration, not competition, among the schools would yield a much stronger project. University of Calgary teamed up with AIT Polytechnic and Mount Royal College, while Waterloo, Ryerson, and SFU joined together to create Team North.

The resulting success of the two bids showcases the value of building connections, and reflects the Canadian excellence in design that the CDRN strives to foster. With sustainable design as a key theme, the network involves leading Canadian experts in sustainability, many of whom will contribute to the Solar Decathlon. "We have a vibrant and growing core of excellent researchers across the country", says Woodbury, who heads up the Team North advisory committee; "That the Department of Energy has awarded entries to two Canadian teams speaks to both the depth of expertise in sustainable design in Canada and to the Canadian spirit of collaboration."

The Team North concept is the NORTH HOUSE, a holistic approach to solar living in the harsh terrain and extreme climates of northern regions. Alberta's contemporary design is also inspired by its native landscape, incorporating the four elements of wood, water, stone, and light to reflect the province's connection to the land.

Once completed, the prototype homes will join 18 others in the "Solar Village" in Washington, DC National Mall, where they will be open to public viewing. Each school will have a distinct responsibility throughout the design process, with students taking on a key role and gaining invaluable learning experiences in the process.

"Together, the schools in each team have the expertise needed to inspire imagination by design, to ensure sound engineering and construction and to communicate the ideas of sustainable living to the world", says Woodbury; "This is collaboration at its best."

**For more information:**

Kate Andronov, Communications Coordinator  
Canadian Design Research Network  
T: 778-782-8432  
E: [k.andronov@cdrn.ca](mailto:k.andronov@cdrn.ca)