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To Commemorate Earth Month, Green Mountain Energy Company Presents the University of Houston with \$140,000 to Fund University's First Solar Array
Organizations also announce first Green Mountain Energy® Solar Internship program and Name Green Mountain Energy Company Private Dining Room

HOUSTON – In honor of the 41st Earth Day, Friday, April 22, the University of Houston and Austin-based Green Mountain Energy Company, today announced several new green initiatives for the University.

Green Mountain presented the University with a check for \$140,000 to fund UH's first solar array – a new 15.58 kilowatt (kW) AC solar panel system. The two organizations also announced the formation of the *Green Mountain Energy Solar Internship* and the naming rights of the *Green Mountain Energy Company Private Dining Room*.

“This is such an exciting partnership, and the University of Houston is honored to be chosen for this gift,” said Emily Messa, assistant vice president for University Services at the University of Houston. “Not only will the solar array display our commitment to green initiatives and help our university in conserving energy, but it will also become a valuable teaching tool for our next generation to continue this movement of sustainability.”

Emily Messa, assistant vice president for University Services, UH; **Alex Ignatiev**, professor, Physics, UH; made the announcements with **Sean Figaro**, Green Mountain Energy Company's Houston market manager and **Super Earth**, Green Mountain's mascot; and **Recycle Man**, on the UH campus located at 4800 Calhoun Rd.

“In recognition of Earth Day, we are especially pleased to donate the solar array system to the University of Houston, and work with UH to implement the *Green Mountain Energy Solar Internship* program,” said Sean Figaro, Houston market manager for Green Mountain Energy Company. “Both of these initiatives will help UH spread the word and educate thousands of students over the 30-year expected lifespan of the array about the benefits of solar energy; further supporting Green Mountain's mission to change the way power is made; and help us give back to the Houston community where our customers live, work, shop and play.”

Green Mountain Energy® Solar at the University of Houston

The solar array, expected for completion by May 30, will be mounted on the roof of the University's Central Utility Plant, which is located on the northeast side of campus. It will be the first solar array to power a University of Houston building. Once installed, 88 large photovoltaic (PV) solar panels, covering 2,000 square feet, will convert sunlight into electricity to produce up to 23,615 kilowatt hours (kWh) of clean energy annually. It is estimated that the solar array will save the University nearly \$300,000 in electricity costs over its 30-year lifetime. It will help reduce the University of Houston's carbon footprint and energy costs, as well serve to educate students about the benefits of solar energy.

(more)

Green Mountain funded UH's solar array through its Big Texas Sun Club®, a unique program in which Green Mountain's Texas customers can choose to support solar energy installations in Texas by paying an additional \$5 on their monthly Green Mountain Energy® electric bill (for information, visit www.bigtexassunclub.com).

Green Mountain has previously made 11 other solar donations to Houston-area organizations including: the Houston Zoo, Girl Scouts of San Jacinto, Chinquapin School, and Houston Habitat for Humanity.

Green Mountain Energy Company Solar Internship Program

As a result of the annual electricity savings that UH will receive from the solar array, the University is launching the *Green Mountain Energy Company Solar Internship* program. One student intern will be paid \$1,000 per academic semester from the savings generated as a result of using solar panels. The first internship will start in the fall semester of 2011 and will require the intern to keep track of the solar array's performance, update the Green Mountain Energy Solar Array webpage and execute one on-campus educational event each semester.

Green Mountain Energy Company Dining Room

In recognition of the donation, UH has named the private dining room in the university's largest residential dining hall, the *Green Mountain Energy Company Dining Room*. This dining room is open to residential students daily and can be reserved for private social and academic events. A special plaque naming the dining room will be installed during the Green Mountain Energy Solar Dedication Ceremony in the fall.

The History of Earth Day:

<i>When did Earth Day start in the U.S.?</i>	20 million Americans participated in the first Earth Day on April 22, 1970.
<i>Why did it start?</i>	Senator Gaylord Nelson wanted the environment to be a higher priority for the American people and politicians.
<i>When did Earth Day go global?</i>	On the 20 th anniversary of Earth Day in 1990, there were participants from 140 countries.
<i>What is Earth Day like today?</i>	Earth Day has turned into a month-long celebration and people all over the world are attending events, participating in helping the Earth, and putting the environment at the top of their priority lists.

About University of Houston

The University of Houston is a comprehensive national research institution serving the globally competitive Houston and Gulf Coast Region by providing world-class faculty, experiential learning and strategic industry partnerships. UH serves more than 38,500 students in the nation's fourth largest city, located in the most ethnically and culturally diverse region of the country.

About Green Mountain Energy Company

Green Mountain, the nation's leading competitive retail provider of cleaner energy and carbon offset solutions, was founded in 1997 "to change the way power is made." The company is the longest serving green power marketer in the United States. Green Mountain offers consumers and businesses the choice of cleaner electricity products from renewable sources, such as wind, as well as a variety of carbon offset products. Green Mountain's largest customer is the "world's most famous office building," the Empire State Building in New York City. Green Mountain customers have collectively helped avoid over 11.3 billion pounds of CO₂ emissions. As a wholly owned subsidiary of NRG Energy (NYSE:NRG), Green Mountain is backed by one of the nation's largest renewable power producers. For more information, visit GreenMountain.com.

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