The Solar Decathlon

Every other year, the U.S. Energy Department holds a solar decathlon for teams from various universities around the world. The winning team receives a $100,000 grant over two years.A Contest of a Different SortThe solar decathlon is an interesting strategy for promoting research and development on solar technology by the Energy Department. The Department selects 20 teams from a bevy of applicants to take part. To win the competition, the teams are given the goal of creating and manufacturing a home that runs completely on solar power. The home must function as a residence as well as a home-based business and all typical transportation needs typically found with a residential home. The teams are not only required to design **Click here!** and build the home, but they must construct the homes on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. for all to see. The most energy efficient home wins the competition and the university is awarded $100,000 for research and development of solar technologies. In 2005, the University of Colorado was the winner of the competition with Cornell and Cal Poly finishing second and third. It was the second win in a row for Colorado over such schools as MIT and Cal Poly. The teams for the 2007 competition have been selected and are currently working on their projects: California Polytechnic State UniversityCarnegie Mellon UniversityCornell UniversityGeorgia Institute of TechnologyKansas State UniversityLawrence Technological UniversityMassachusetts Institute of TechnologyNew York Institute of TechnologyTeam Montreal Technische Universitt Darmstadt, Texas A&M University Pennsylvania State University



Universidad de Puerto RicoUniversidad Politcnica de MadridUniversity of CincinnatiUniversity of Colorado University of Illinois at Urbana-ChampaignUniversity of MarylandUniversity of Missouri-Rolla, University of Texas at AustinThe teams are due to build their homes on the National Mall on October 7, 2007. With the new interest of the Bush Administration in solar power, perhaps the contest will get a Presidential visit.