IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Pine Point and Surrounding Communities Invited to a Career Fair and Open House for New Solar Manufacturing Facility May 2

8th FIRE SOLAR THERMAL PANELS TO BE PRODUCED AT NEW PONSFORD FACILITY AS PART OF “AKIING” INITIATIVE IN WHITE EARTH BY HONOR THE EARTH

PONSFORD, MINN., -- April 25, 2019 – The White Earth Reservation is banking on the future of renewable energy as it launches a new-solar thermal panel manufacturing facility in Ponsford. And it’s looking to people from Pine Point and surrounding communities to get involved.
Called 8th Fire Solar,* the new company will begin producing the most efficient and economical high-performance solar air heating panels in the U.S. Rigorously tested for even the coldest climates, its products have the best Btu-per-dollar ratio on the market. The company will target the commercial and home market, and hopes to help reduce the energy poverty in Native communities. The local community is invited to a sneak preview of the new facility with an Open House in its new, facility from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on May 2, 2019.

8th Fire Solar is part of a new initiative of Honor the Earth called Akiing, which is the Ojibwe word for “the land to which we belong.” The non-profit Community Development Corporation was launched in 2017 with the goal to transition to a truly sustainable local economy, one that better aligns with Native American values and culture.

Akiing will provide jobs and training in renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, silkscreening, and artisan products. As the 2019 growing season begins, Akiing will be filling a number of positions and is looking for everything from dedicated full-time employees to part-time temporary workers.

8th Fire Solar will initially employ six people from the White Earth area – and will be looking to hire more by taking applications during the Open House. It hopes to produce 100 panels in year one and to quickly establish a National dealer network. In 2017, the company entered into a licensing and technology transfer partnership with the non-profit Rural Renewable Energy Alliance (RREAL) in Backus, Minnesota, to make 8th Fire Solar a reality.

**Solar Heating A Green Alternative to Liquid Fuels Used by Many in Tribal Areas**

“The future is solar,” explains Winona LaDuke, rural economist and co-Founder of Honor the Earth, which is the umbrella organization for the Akiing 8th Fire Community Development project. “With the passage this week in the Jobs and Energy Omnibus bill by the Minnesota House of Representatives striving for a goal of 100% clean energy, the rise of 8th Fire Solar is timely and significant.”

“It will become part of the Next Economy and will play its role here in northern Minnesota as part of the New Green Deal,” LaDuke says. “Given the dire warnings about non-stop carbon-loading in the atmosphere, we believe that timely development projects like this, however large or small, can contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gasses and the further degradation of the immediate environment and the planet.”

“Here’s a good career opportunity for area tribal members and others. Solar air heating is a powerful solution for tribal communities, which often rely on delivered fuels such as fuel oil and LP tanks for their home heating,” adds Pam Mahling, Project Manager for 8th Fire Solar. “We welcome everyone to take advantage of this opportunity by attending the May 2 Open House and maybe landing a promising position with 8th Fire Solar.”
For more information – or to interview Winona La Duke and or Pam Mahling about 8th Fire Solar – please contact Martin Keller, Media Savant Communications, 612-729-8585, mkeller@mediasavantcom.com

*About 8th Fire Solar*

8th Fire Solar is the work of Akiing -- a non-profit community development corporation --and a project of Honor the Earth. Akiing, the Anishinaabe word for “the land to which the people belong,” works to restore a culturally-based Anishinaabe economy focused on food, energy, and sustainable production; one that restores health and economic opportunities for Anishinaabe people in the Great Lakes region.

8th Fire Solar panels rely on the innovative solar furnace systems developed by RREAL. Like panel technology that turns the sun’s power into electricity, solar thermal panels turn sunlight into heat, creating a clean and renewable energy source for heating a home or small business. Solar thermal air heating is an especially cost-effective, efficient and clean alternative to fuel oil or liquid propane that many Native and rural communities must use.

Mounted on a building’s south wall, the panels collect the sun’s heat inside insulated black glass panels. A thermostatically controlled fan blows the collected air heat into the house during the day and automatically closes the dampers to keep the cold out at night or when the sun isn’t shining. The state-of-the-art Array Interconnect system creates airtight, seamless connections. Airflow design and modularity enable uniform air distribution, flexible installation, and maximum heat capture.
Join us Thursday, May 2nd
10am to 4pm
At 49164 County Hwy 26, Ponsford, MN
Light refreshments served!

We're hiring! Come and learn!
The wide variety of positions we have available, and fill out an employment application if interested! Stop in and tour the new solar thermal panel manufacturing facility, see our community orchard, and learn about the Ak извест 8th Fire Programs.

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