



601 Laclede Ave., Neosho, MO 64850 417-455-5540

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Crowder to Compete in U.S. Department of Energy Solar Decathlon 2015**

Neosho, MO – Crowder College partnered with Drury University have been selected to compete in the U.S. Department of Energy Solar Decathlon 2015.

The Solar Decathlon is an award-winning program that challenges 20 collegiate teams to design, build, and operate solar-powered houses that are cost-effective, energy-efficient, and attractive. The winner of the competition is the team that best blends affordability, consumer appeal, and design excellence with optimal energy production and maximum efficiency.

"Being selected to participate in the 2015 Solar Decathlon is really a continuation of the history and tradition in solar power and sustainability that Crowder College began in the late 1970's. We participated in the first two Solar Decathlons, in 2002 and 2005. This is great for our solar program, for our community and for the local economy. We will use the competition as an enhancement to our training. Students who enroll in our solar degree or certificate programs will definitely get to work on the 2015 Solar House and of course, we welcome the participation of the entire Crowder student body," stated Russ Hopper, Executive Director of the MARET (Missouri Alternative and Renewable Energy Technology) Center.

Crowder is working with the Hammons School of Architecture at Drury University in Springfield, MO. They have a great tradition in sustainable design and building. "It was a pleasure working with them on the proposal for the Decathlon, and we are looking forward to working with them on the solar house itself," Hopper commented.

Hopper noted, "A major driver for our and Drury's participation was the May 22, 2011 Joplin, MO tornado and the aftermath. Both schools have worked, and continue to work, to help the citizens of Joplin recover. We all thought that demonstrating a sustainable house that would be both solar powered and disaster resistant would be a good goal."

The Solar Decathlon enhances public understanding of how to save money at home with clean energy solutions available today and provides students with training and hands-on experience to prepare them for the clean energy workforce.

Since 2002 the Solar Decathlon has:

- Involved 132 collegiate teams, which pursue a multidisciplinary approach to study the requirements for designing and building energy-efficient, solar-powered houses
- Established a worldwide reputation as a successful educational program and workforce development opportunity
- Positively impacted nearly 20,000 collegiate participants.

The Solar Decathlon supports the Obama Administration's goal of building a clean energy economy while saving families and businesses money by saving energy.



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Crowder College was designated by the Missouri Legislature as the MARET Center in 1992. Crowder's solar projects began by building the first solar powered vehicle to travel from coast to coast in the United States. After that several others were built that participated in solar challenges in Japan and Australia.

Crowder College is a two-year college located in Neosho, MO with centers in Webb City, Cassville, Nevada and McDonald County. The school reached a record high 5,845 students in the fall 2013 semester. The college offers programs that will transfer to four-year universities or allow students to enter into a career.

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