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Solar Decathlon house nears completion, open house to be held Sept. 22

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NEOSHO, MO — A diverse team of students from Drury University and Crowder College is entering the final stretch of an 18-month-long effort to design, build and operate a cutting-edge home for the national Solar Decathlon contest.

The media and public are invited to tour the house and help send off the team from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Tuesday, Sept. 22. Student team members, faculty advisors and representatives from some of the project's many sponsors will be present and available to media for interviews. Team members can be made available in the days before and after the open house, as well, upon request.

The house, currently being built on the Crowder campus in Neosho, will be disassembled and loaded onto trucks on Sept. 23 for the trip to the Decathlon, which takes place during the month of October in the desert outside Irvine, California.

Sponsored by the U.S. Department of Energy, this international contest pits future architects, engineers, marketers and business people from the nation's top colleges against one another, challenging them to design, build, and operate solar-powered houses that are cost-effective, energy-efficient and attractive. The winner of the competition will be the team that best blends affordability, consumer appeal, and design excellence with optimal energy production and maximum efficiency.

The Crowder-Drury entry accomplishes all this – and more. Dubbed Shelter^{R3}, or “Shelter Cubed,” the house has a three-prong design philosophy of Respond, Recover, and Resist. Inspired by the devastating and deadly 2011 Joplin tornado, the house is transportable so that it can be trucked to disaster areas during emergency response and recovery efforts. It can then be converted into a permanent and stylish living structure that is designed to resist the extreme winds and debris clouds of future tornadoes.

“Students from 22 different majors here at Drury and from Crowder have poured countless hours of time and talent into this project over the last year and a half,” said Traci Sooter,



project manager and a faculty advisor to the team. “It’s incredibly exciting to see the Shelter³ house become a reality and we cannot wait to finally stack our ideas up against the other teams.”

For much more information, including renderings, videos and more about the team’s inspiration, visit <http://shelter.drury.edu>. For more information about the Decathlon, including a list of other schools in the competition, visit www.solardecathlon.gov.

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