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## **Zero Net Energy Center Grand Opening: Hundreds Celebrate Successful Ribbon Cutting**



*California Governor Edmund G. Brown, Jr., with JATC Training Director Byron Benton, cut the ribbon at the Zero Net Energy Center's Grand Opening on May 30, 2013. Congresswoman Barbara Lee and State Senator Ellen Corbett assist, along with 595 JATC trustees Matt Maloon, Bridget Hall, Tanya Pitts and Business Manager Victor Uno.*

San Leandro, CA –

A standing-room-only crowd of close to 600 celebrated the grand opening of IBEW/NECA's new Zero Net Energy Training Center on May 30, heralded as a "game changer" for the union electrical industry. The grand opening featured speeches and presentations by Governor Jerry Brown, Congresswoman Barbara Lee, State Senator Ellen Corbett, San Leandro Mayor Stephen Cassidy, IBEW International Vice-President Michael Mowrey and other industry representatives and officials.

After welcoming the many dignitaries, IBEW Local 595 Business Manager Victor Uno gave special acknowledgement to Local 595's apprenticeship trustees and union leadership, as well as the leaders of the National Electrical Contractors Association (NECA) for embracing the vision to create a new "zero net energy" education and training facility. "We are proud to push the envelope in the areas of energy conservation efforts, renewable energy promotion, job creation, work-force training and labor-management cooperation," Uno said. "The leadership of Local 595 understood the importance of this new facility, and without their support, this grand opening would not be taking place. Most of all, we have to recognize the 2,000 members of Local 595. Their efforts through their hard work on the job, every day, are taking this building from a dream to today's reality."



NECA's Northern California Chapter Executive Director Don Campbell told the

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huge gathering that, “This is the most important grand opening event I’ve been part of—it shows what labor-management cooperation can accomplish.”



Congresswoman Barbara Lee said the ZNE center would “make a huge impact for the economy,” with job training that is an example of environmental and social justice and that creates good paying jobs. “My District is home to some of the most innovative and progressive constituents in the country,” Lee said. “I’m thrilled to see it open its doors in my district and to see Labor take a stand for renewable energy use and good jobs.”

Governor Brown congratulated the IBEW/NECA effort saying “This is a great teacher of balance, of sustainability, of vision, of collaboration. And that’s why I wanted to be here, because this is the future... We’ve got a handful of these buildings around, we need thousands!” Expounding on the need for concerted leadership to address global warming, the governor recognized that “This is the wave of the future and we’re going to push it right across this country and right across the world.”



After the speeches and presentations, the ribbon was cut and hundreds streamed into the new Zero Net Energy Center. JATC instructors gave presentations on their curriculum and hands-on training; energy experts who helped design the facility explained the technologies and renewable energy systems; news reporters and journalists were able to interview and cover the historic event.



“This remarkable facility is a shining real-world model for education and training,” said Byron Benton, Training Director for Alameda County’s JATC. “We are celebrating the realization of our collective vision for a more sustainable world where young men and women will be trained for good paying jobs and new economy careers.”

Dozens of IBEW 595 instructors, journeymen and apprentices volunteered registering, facilitating, monitoring and assisting to make the May 30<sup>th</sup> grand opening of the Zero Net Energy Center a resounding success. “I didn’t know how incredible this facility is,” remarked one of the volunteers. “This is a great investment in our future!”

Extensive media coverage included KTVU, KRON and NBC television, CBS radio, SF Business Times, Globe Street real estate, San Jose Mercury News, Forbes Magazine, and many other media outlets. The Green Builder Conference featured the ZNE Center in a special presentation and Google’s head of real estate is scheduling a tour. Many requests are being made to visit the ZNE Center, giving the IBEW and NECA unprecedented opportunities to build positive relationships with policy makers, owners and builders, expanding opportunities for NECA contractors and IBEW members.

The ZNE Center promises to be “a game changer” for the union electrical industry.

*The ZNE Center is the first large scale commercial building retrofit designed to meet the U.S. Department of Energy’s requirements for a “zero net energy” building. The 46,000 square foot facility will now serve as the educational facility for the Alameda County IBEW-NECA Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee (JATC).*