



## 2013 ANNUAL REPORT



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# our mission

***Black Rock Solar promotes environmental stewardship, economic development and energy independence by providing not-for-profit entities, tribes and underserved communities with access to clean energy, education, and job training.***

## Staff and crew

Marnee Benson,  
Deputy Director  
Steve Bethlenfalvay,  
S. Nevada Installation Supervisor  
Laura Brigham,  
Communications Coordinator  
Diana Dorman,  
Policy and Education Assistant  
Rich Hamilton,  
Director of Business Development  
Anthony Jacks,  
Energy Efficiency Manager  
Alex Kirkpatrick,  
Project Manager  
David Lasky,  
Construction Manager  
Catherine Leon,  
Education Program Manager  
Eli Lyon,  
Crew Supervisor  
Patrick "Paddy" McCully,  
Executive Director  
Steven Mitchell,  
Crew Supervisor / Safety Manager  
Michelle Ochoa,  
Director of HR and Finance  
Matthew Sheets,  
Reno Office Administrator  
Justin Whitesides,  
Southern Nevada Program Manager

## A message from the executive director



*"And Lord, we are especially thankful for nuclear power, the cleanest, safest energy source there is. Except for solar, which is just a pipe dream."*

— Homer Simpson

**H**omer is, of course, not the sharpest saw in the toolshed. But his sentiments have long passed for conventional wisdom in the energy sector. Even today there are all too many boosters of nukes and fossils who deride solar as only a bit player in the great drama of our energy future. But those who continue to denigrate solar are simply not tethered to reality.

Incredibly, solar power made up nearly a third of all new electrical capacity built in the U.S. in 2013. And while the total percentage of our power from solar is still small, the amount of solar is growing rapidly – up 41% from 2012 to 2013 – and the miracle of compound annual growth means that very soon solar will make up a significant part of our overall power generation.

Black Rock Solar is proud to be playing our own small part in the rise of the sun. In 2013, we built almost 1.2 megawatts of solar power – twice the amount of 2011. These 17 arrays will save our clients around \$187,000 each year on their power bills. Our contribution is particularly satisfying given that we're not just reducing the climate and health impacts of our energy use, but also that because of the nature of our client base – non-profits, tribes, schools and rural areas – the money saved on electrical bills goes to benefit the members of our communities who are most in need.

We expanded our reach farther into rural Nevada in 2013, with our first projects in Elko and Winnemucca (both for Great Basin College) and our first system for the Walker River Paiute Tribe in Schurz. We also hired a crew based in Las Vegas for the first time. Overall our number of employees grew from 17 to 27.

Also in 2013 we did our first LED lighting retrofits, which will save thousands of dollars for two non-profits, the Children's Cabinet in Reno and Friends in Service Helping in Carson City.

We also greatly ramped up our education program, taking hundreds of school kids to visit the arrays we've built in the Reno and Las Vegas areas, and reaching hundreds more by bringing our new solar-powered trailer and some nifty little solar kits to schools to teach kids energy literacy.

This work, together with our solar installations for schools, was recognized by the solar industry in October when we received the Brian D. Robertson Solar Schools Memorial Fund Award at the Solar Power World "Top Contractors Gala" in Chicago.

On the policy front, we continued to ride the solarcoaster, coping with constant changes, both good and bad, in the regulatory and legal framework for solar incentives in Nevada. Most difficult for us is that the levels of the utility incentives that have been main source of funding for our clients were slashed by around two-thirds. On a more positive note, we helped persuade the legislature in Carson City to mandate a "Lower Income Solar Energy Pilot Program" to help fund arrays for affordable housing, homeless shelters and schools serving low income populations.

Many thanks to everyone on our construction crews, to our office staff and board members, and to all our consultants, supporters, partners, funders, and clients for a busy and successful 2013. And here's looking forward to the sun continuing to shine on our activities in 2014.

— **Paddy McCully, Executive Director**

## Board of Directors

Martha Belcher  
Matt Cheney, Chair  
David Festa  
Hal Harvey  
Dan Porras, Treasurer  
(elected December 2013)  
David Shearer, Vice Chair  
Gianluca Signorelli, Treasurer  
(resigned October 2013)  
Jerry Snyder, Secretary



# solar projects 2013



## arrays by the numbers

	ARRAY SIZE (KW)	APPROXIMATE ANNUAL SAVINGS	APPROXIMATE AVOIDED CO2 PER YEAR (TONS)
<b>Numana Fish Hatchery</b> *	49	\$6,959	42
<b>Reno Star</b>	.5	na	0
<b>Arrowhead Market</b> *	78	10,827	66
<b>Western Nevada College</b>	49	6,884	42
<b>Western Nevada College</b>	49	7,025	43
<b>Truckee Meadows Comm. Coll.</b>	148	21,259	130
<b>Bailey Charter ES</b>	38	4,869	30
<b>Great Basin College</b>	42	5,875	36
<b>Great Basin College</b>	50	6,350	39
<b>Pyramid Lake Fish Hatchery</b> *	101	14,067	86
<b>Walker River Water Plant</b> *	101	14,596	89
<b>College of Southern Nevada</b>	108	15,636	95
<b>Friends in Service Helping</b>	28	5,090	31
<b>College of Southern Nevada</b>	28	4,134	25
<b>Lovelock Well Pump</b>	103	14,824	90
<b>Lovelock Water Treatment</b>	103	14,824	90
<b>Lake Mead Christian Academy</b>	102	15,874	97
<b>2013 Totals</b>	<b>1177.5</b>	<b>\$169,093</b>	<b>1,031</b>
<b>Cumulative Totals since 2007</b>	<b>3,996</b>	<b>\$573,412</b>	<b>3,496</b>

\* facilities owned by the Pyramid Lake and Yerington Paiute tribes

## what it means for our partners

*"The savings from this array will make it possible for us to do more for our people. For example, it could double the amount of food we can serve in our dining room, or cover the cost of the insulin we provide to diabetic patients."*

**Jim Peckham, Executive Director,  
Friends in Service Helping**



*"This array allows the college to lower energy costs and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, while decreasing our demand for energy from the grid."*

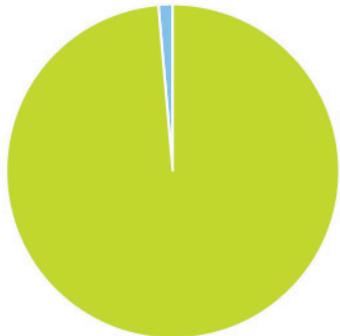
**Dan Neverett, Vice President,  
Western Nevada College**



*"This project will save our school up to \$6,500 a year in electric costs, a savings that can be spent on better serving our students."*

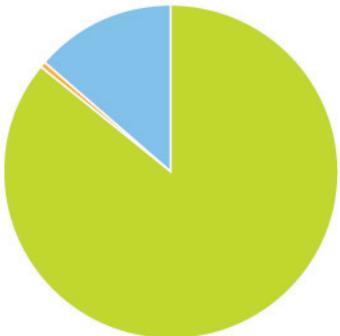
**Michelle Engebretson, Principal,  
Bailey Charter Elementary School**

# finance report



## 2013 REVENUE

Service revenue	98.69%	\$3,618,658
Donations	1.31%	47,509
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$3,666,167</b>



## 2013 EXPENSES

Program services	85.86%	\$3,223,424
Administration	13.44%	504,635
Fundraising	0.70%	26,363
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$3,754,422</b>

**Net assets at end of 2013: \$696,050**

## Help BRS help others

Black Rock Solar has installed more than 4 megawatts of solar power for tribes, nonprofits and schools. Help us bring more power to the people by donating at [www.blackrocksolar.org/donate](http://www.blackrocksolar.org/donate).

## energy efficiency initiative

While helping nonprofits, schools and tribes shift from fossil fuels to renewable energy sources is the primary work of Black Rock Solar, increasing these organizations' energy efficiency is also a vital part of maximizing their utility-bill savings.

In 2013, BRS started working to help our clients save money by providing lighting retrofits. Working with the NV Energy Sure Bet program (a rate-payer funded program) BRS has provided this service to our partners at the Children's Cabinet in Reno and Friends In Service Helping (FISH) in Carson City.

LED lamps have both low wattage and long lifespan, saving money on both



energy consumption and maintenance costs. If you're interested in a lighting retrofit, contact Anthony Jacks at [anthony@blackrocksolar.org](mailto:anthony@blackrocksolar.org).

## education program



The education program is built on the premise that to truly make a difference, Nevada's future leaders, innovators, decision makers, business owners, and educators must understand why clean energy is important and how it works.

In 2013, BRS hired Catherine Leon as its education program manager. Through field trips to BRS-built arrays, solar trailer school visits (a new program wherein we bring a mobile array to schools), direct classroom support, and online renewable energy curriculum development, this program is working to enlighten young minds about solar energy, the impact burning fossil fuels has on the environment, and energy conservation.

In 2013, we served 665 students and 11 different schools throughout Reno, Sparks and Las Vegas.

Students took trips to Urban Roots Garden Classroom, Numana Fish Hatchery, Food Bank of Northern Nevada, Children's Cabinet, Nevada State College, Western Nevada College, and Desert Research Institute.

If you know of a school group that could benefit from our education program, contact Catherine Leon at [catherine@blackrocksolar.org](mailto:catherine@blackrocksolar.org)