

**Jorge Washington declares GIANT STEP IN energy independence with Solar panel inauguration**

November 16 Celebration Culminates 3-Year Project Collaboration

*San Ramon, Costa Rica,* [Date]*–* Esquela Jorge Washington of San Ramon is an exemplary educational institution that has taken a giant step forward toward energy independence. It is the first urban public school in Costa Rica to use solar panels to reduce their carbon footprint while simultaneously providing a significant portion of the energy needed to operate the school.

A formal public ceremony to inaugurate the solar panels was held on November 16, 1:00pm, as part of the Jorge Washington’s 75th Anniversary celebration. Invitees included the Minister of Education, Minister of Energy, CEO of ICE, Mayor of San Ramon, President of San Ramon Municipality, US Embassy, Chair of San Ramon Carbon Neutral Committee, President of San Ramon Chamber of Commerce, President of Community Action Alliance (CAA), and other dignitaries.

“The success of the project,” states Community Action Alliance (CAA) fiscal Cesar Carrillo, “is due to the strong commitment by the school’s Board of Directors and Principal,Aida Mendez Jimenez**,** to the environment in the use of clean technology, and a steadfast partnership with CAA. We worked hand-in-hand throughout every step of the process.”

The solar panel system was a 3-year collaboration financed by CAA’s substantial donation, Jorge Washington fundraising, installation services donated by SEVSA, and the support of the Minister of Education. SEVSA is owned by Jorge Araya, and SEVSA engineers Keyner Quiros and Mauricio Ramirez worked with John Nistler of PSIDA, the supplier of the system in Texas, EE.UU.

The panels were installed on the roof of the school one year ago. As a pioneering installation in San Ramon, many steps were required to achieve final approval of the system. Thanks to the tenacity of then CAA President Mike Styles, CAA fiscal Cesar Carrillo and Principal Aida Mendez, the project culminated successfully last month. On October 1st, ICE inspected the solar panel installation at Escuela Jorge Washington, found it all in order, and turned the system ‘on’.  The school should be enjoying a reduced electrical service cost for many years to come.