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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **RIBBON CUT ON DETROIT EDISON SOLAR INSTALLATION AT MCCC**

*Ceremony Marks First Day of Earth Week*



MONROE, Mich. – Today, officials cut the ceremonial ribbon marking the completion of the Detroit Edison solar installation on the Main Campus of Monroe County Community College.

The 500-kilowatt, \$3 million photovoltaic system on the extreme eastern side of the campus covers three acres and connects directly to the Detroit Edison grid.

The system officially began producing energy at 1:31 p.m. on February 22.

“There is no more perfect and appropriate way to ring in Earth Week than a solar installation at Monroe County Community College – where innovation, technology and training are central to the curriculum,” said U.S. Rep John D. Dingell (D-Dearborn).

“My dear friend Dr. David Nixon is a true visionary. His leadership in advancing solar technology in Michigan and many other renewable energy initiatives at MCCC will not only benefit our environment in the short-term, but it will also train a new generation of green leaders who will secure a cleaner future for generations to come. I thank DTE Energy for their partnership in this investment at MCCC and for their other renewable endeavors all around Southeast Michigan.”

“Monroe County Community College, in collaboration with DTE Energy, continues to be on the cutting edge of technologies for green energy that will provide electrical requirements for future generations,” said state Rep. Dale W. Zorn (R-Ida).

In July 2010, Detroit Edison – a subsidiary of DTE Energy – and MCCC announced the signing of a 20-year agreement to provide the utility’s customers with renewable energy generated from the sun.

The installation is part of Detroit Edison’s pilot *SolarCurrents* program that calls for photovoltaic systems to be installed at DTE Energy facilities or on customer property or rooftops over the next four years to generate 15 megawatts of electricity throughout Southeast Michigan.

MCCC is the first educational institution to participate in the program. Its installation is one of the largest in Michigan and Detroit Edison’s largest *SolarCurrents* array on a college campus.

The *SolarCurrents* program requires customers to participate for 20 years. The solar energy systems are owned, installed, operated and maintained by the utility. In return, customers get an annual payment or credit on their energy bill based on the system size, as well as a one-time, upfront construction payment to cover any inconvenience during installation.

“As an educator, I applaud MCCC and DTE for the experience they will provide our students,” said Monroe Township Supervisor Alan Barron, who is also chair of the MCCC Alumni Association and a teacher at Monroe Middle school.

“We are eager for the community to come out to the campus to see this impressive solar array, which is representative of the giant steps MCCC is taking to meet the future needs of alternative energy and learning opportunities for students,” said MCCC President Dr. David Nixon.

“This is an exciting day and we’re pleased and proud of our partnership with Monroe County Community College,” said Ron May, DTE Energy senior vice president, Major Enterprise Projects.

“It’s important that we diversify our energy portfolio, and renewable energy – whether from solar, wind or biomass – is the key to helping us achieve energy independence.”

Another completed project is a 500-kilowatt system at Ford Motor Co.’s Michigan Assembly Plant in Wayne. A 200-kilowatt, \$1 million *SolarCurrents* installation on the roof of a Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan parking structure is under construction in downtown Detroit and another 500-kilowatt installation at a General Motors plant in Hamtramck is in the final stages of design.

DTE Energy expects to invest nearly \$2 billion in the coming years to add 1,200 megawatts of renewable energy to meet the state’s renewable energy goals. In addition to the solar installations, the company plans to acquire or build wind farms and other green energy facilities for half of that capacity, and contract with third party producers for the rest.

The *SolarCurrents* system at MCCC will also be used as a demonstration for alternative energy education and instruction at the college, providing an opportunity for students to observe a working photovoltaic system that will generate an equivalent amount of power that would be consumed by about 100 homes in a year.

An interactive informational kiosk about the installation is scheduled be installed in the college’s Warrick Student Services/Administration Building this spring. The kiosk, which will provide real time data on the system’s output, will be moved to the college’s new Career Technology Center upon its completion. That is expected to occur in the fall of 2012.

In conjunction with the *SolarCurrents* installation, DTE Energy plans to partner with A123 Systems and MCCC on a Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) and U.S. Department of Energy (DOE)-funded energy storage research and demonstration project at the college.

The project would include the installation of a grid-connected lithium ion battery system by A123 Systems that would allow for the shifting of solar energy output produced by the *SolarCurrents* system to match circuit peak load.

The battery system would consist of a battery container, chiller unit and inverter.

At its Feb. 28 regular meeting, the MCCC Board of Trustees authorized the college to proceed with the demonstration station and authorized A123 Systems to use college property for four years to meet the requirements of the MPSC and DOE grant.

The next step is for DTE Energy to gain approval from Monroe Township to amend the current Detroit Edison easement agreement for the *SolarCurrents* installation to include the A123 Battery System.

The installation of the *SolarCurrents* system at MCCC builds on an already-established partnership between DTE Energy and the college to increase the availability of renewable energy training opportunities in the region.

- Last year with DTE Energy's assistance, MCCC launched a heavy and industrial construction certificate program.
- In May 2010, the DTE Energy Foundation announced a \$45,000 grant and additional in-kind donation of solar equipment to MCCC in support of curriculum development to establish an alternative/renewable energy program.
- In February, MCCC announced that it will launch its own nuclear engineering technology program in the fall in partnership with DTE Energy.

### **About Detroit Edison**

Detroit Edison is an electric utility serving 2.1 million customers in Southeastern Michigan and a subsidiary of DTE Energy (NYSE:DTE), a Detroit-based diversified energy company involved in the development and management of energy-related businesses and services nationwide. Information about DTE Energy is available at [www.dteenergy.com](http://www.dteenergy.com).

### **About Monroe County Community College**

Founded in 1964, Monroe County Community College is a public, two-year institution supported by tax monies from Monroe County, educational funds from the State of Michigan and student tuition. The college's mission is to provide a variety of higher educational opportunities to enrich the lives of the residents of Monroe County. The Main Campus is located on South Raisinville Road in central Monroe County with easy access to Toledo and Detroit. The Whitman Center is located in Temperance, near the Ohio-Michigan Border. Information about MCCC is available at [www.monroeccc.edu](http://www.monroeccc.edu).