



## **SMA America and Partners Collaborate to Donate Solar Project for the Flemington Area Food Pantry**

*Industry Cooperation Feeds Power to the Grid so New Jersey Food Bank Can Feed Families in Need*

**Rocklin, Calif; November 17, 2020** - The Flemington Area Food Pantry, serving Hunterdon County, N.J., has cut the ribbon on its new, entirely donated solar power array. As a result of the collective support of solar industry leaders, including SMA, the new solar asset will allow the pantry to meet the needs of a growing number of local residents.

SMA donated the Sunny Tripower CORE1 inverter for the array. "This is a project we are proud to support," said Charles Ellis, vice president of sales for SMA America. "Contributing to this community in their time of need was an opportunity that aligned with our values at SMA, and we're grateful to Merit SI and the other partners who brought this project together."

Among all the partners who contributed to making the installation a reality, the pantry has one person in particular to thank—North Hunterdon High School student Evan Kuster.

"As a volunteer of the Food Pantry, I knew the pantry had a significant electricity expense for the refrigerators and thought that solar energy could save the pantry a bunch of money," shared Kuster, Class of 2022. "My dad works at Merit SI, a solar energy development company, , and he suggested we ask for donations to fund the solar system for the pantry."

So, the Kusters asked, and solar industry leaders responded. Rallying around their vision of impact, project partners First Solar (modules), OMCO Solar (mounting), and Pro-Circuit Electrical Contracting (electrical and labor) signed on to the project, joining Merit SI (infrastructure design and engineering).

Collectively, the solar installation donated to the pantry will relieve an annual electrical bill exceeding \$10,500. Going forward, the new 33 KW system will mean those funds can instead be allocated to purchasing food for pantry clients—enough food to prepare 6,360 meals.

Jeannine Gorman, executive director of the Flemington Area Food Pantry, emphasized the gravity of this new asset. "Every dollar we spend on our electric bill is one less dollar we can spend on food for



the community," she said. "We carry out our mission on a daily basis; it's amazing motivation for us to know that professionals care enough to donate their time, talent, and supplies to help us carry out our daily work."

The display of generosity from the solar industry couldn't have been better timed, given the devastating impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in the region. Between March and May, there were 400 new registrants at the pantry, and in the first six months of the year, the pantry saw a 30% increase in clientele. According to Ms. Gorman, "The despair on families' faces as they have had to ask for help" has been evidence that the pandemic has had a crippling impact, stretching many local residents to levels of need they had never previously experienced.

The Flemington Area Food Pantry's mission statement "is to feed the hungry with respect and compassion." Powered by the SMA Sunny Tripower inverter, the new solar array will allow the pantry to continue providing food and personal care products to its 1,200 (and growing) income-qualified clients, regardless of race, religion or ethnicity.

### **About SMA**

As a leading global specialist in photovoltaic system technology, the SMA Group is setting the standards today for the decentralized and renewable energy supply of tomorrow. SMA's portfolio contains a wide range of efficient PV inverters, holistic system solutions for PV systems of all power classes, intelligent energy management systems and battery-storage solutions as well as complete solutions for PV diesel hybrid applications. Digital energy services as well as extensive services up to and including operation and maintenance services for PV power plants round off SMA's range. SMA inverters with a total output of around 85 gigawatts have been installed in more than 190 countries worldwide. SMA's multi-award-winning technology is protected by more than 1,500 patents and utility models. Since 2008, the Group's parent company, SMA Solar Technology AG, has been listed on the Prime Standard of the Frankfurt Stock Exchange (S92) and is listed in the SDAX index.

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