



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Local Business Ameresco Commits \$20,000 To NFA Solar Car Racers**

The solar powered car that Newburgh Free Academy (NFA) students plan on racing across the country next summer is being completely rebuilt with a \$20,000 donation from Ameresco, an energy services company with offices across North America including Newburgh. NFA's Solar Racing Team and their rebuilt vehicle, Sol Machine VI, will compete against teams from other schools in the US and abroad in a contest that begins in Round Rock, TX on July 14 and scheduled to end in upstate New York eight days later. "These devoted, energetic students have combined their thirst for learning with a passion for preserving the environment," says David J. Anderson, Executive Vice President. "Ameresco believes in supporting activities that teach young people to become active stewards of their environment by encouraging responsible energy use and renewable energy innovation." Ameresco – which works with governments, and commercial and industrial businesses to develop energy saving solutions and renewable energy generation worldwide – is supporting the NFA Solar Racing Team through the company's Better Schools Partnership which Ameresco created to provide assistance to youth programs that focus on math, science and engineering. Earlier this year, NFA students began petitioning various local, state and federal sources for funds necessary to retool their saucer-shaped race car which has become worn from previous races. Richard E. Kohrs, who manages the Ameresco Newburgh office, heard of the students' efforts and invited them to his Front Street office. The students detailed their summer race plans and ideas for improving the solar car. Shortly thereafter, Kohrs informed race team student advisory Christopher Eachus that Ameresco would sponsor the student solar racing team and the reconstruction of the solar car. "We'd hoped all along that a local sponsor would step up and support these deserving kids and Ameresco has done just that," said Eachus. "The kids and the school are extremely appreciative to Richard Kohrs and Ameresco through whose generosity these students will receive an important and rare educational experience." While the students are focused on improving on last year's third place finish, Eachus, a physics teacher and faculty advisor to the NFA Solar Racing Team, says the main focus for the atypical program is to spark inventive thought and urge the students to stretch their minds further and further in search of new answers to math, science and engineering problems. The students' race car is currently equipped with an electric 4.6 hp motor powered by twelve on-board batteries. The batteries get their power from solar

energy collected from flexible solar cells that blanket the upper half of the car. The contribution from Ameresco will be used mainly to cover the cost of significant fiberglass and welding work as well as replacement solar cells. The vehicle requires no liquid fuel and produces no emissions. The upgraded car will be adorned with Ameresco logos similar to a NASCAR look. Ameresco also plans to outfit the student race crew with logoed apparel. NFA students steered Sol Machine VI to a third place finish in last summer's Dell-Winston National Solar Challenge, a 4-day closed-track race at the Texas Motor Speedway. Over the past thirteen years, more than one hundred NFA students in classes ranging from computer aided design (CAD), welding and automotive, as well as physics have participated in the Solar Racing Team in one way or another. School officials say the students learn problem-solving skills with an emphasis on technology and engineering concepts. ### Ameresco, Inc. is North America's largest independent energy services company. With headquarters in Framingham, Massachusetts, the company is a single-source provider of comprehensive energy solutions. Ameresco is committed to developing renewable and sustainable energy generation worldwide. Please visit its website at [www.ameresco.com](http://www.ameresco.com).

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