UC SANTA BARBARA

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More Power to Us

There’s no shortage of sun in southern California, and UC Santa Barbara continues to take advantage of its average 10 months of sunny days every year to power the campus. Solar panels being installed atop the university’s Robertson Gym and parking lot 38 are the first in a series of five photovoltaic array installations, undertaken in partnership with Silicon Valley-based solar energy company SunPower. Under the power purchase agreement between SunPower and UCSB, the panels are installed, maintained and operated at no cost to the university for a term of 20 years. During that time, the power generated by the panels is sold to the campus at a lower rate relative to conventional public utility-generated electricity, with options to buy the equipment, extend the agreement, or remove the arrays after the 20-year term expires.

Three more SunPower arrays are planned for the campus: the parking structures at Mesa Road, San Clemente Villages and Elings Hall. All five arrays together, according to UCSB Campus Energy Manager Jordan Sager, will generate about five megawatts of power, a figure that translates to 11 to 12 percent of the campus’s annual electricity use, and approximately one-third of its peak electrical demand.

About UC Santa Barbara

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community

of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.