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Catholic universities among California?s top solar schools

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The University of San Diego and Santa Clara University were named among the top 15 solar schools in California [1], according to a clean energy investment group.

Mosaic, a company that facilitates public investing in clean energy, described the University of San Diego as ?the second largest solar energy producing private college in the United States.? The Southern California Catholic school?s solar capacity is estimated at 1,230 kilowatts of total solar capacity, which translates to an annual offset of 3.11 million lbs. of carbon.

More than 450 miles to the north, Santa Clara University generates 1,050 kilowatts of total solar capacity, and 2.2 million lbs. of carbon offset annually.

In recent years both California campuses have seen significant upgrades to their solar arrays.

In 2010, the University of San Diego installed 5,000 solar photovoltaic panels atop 11 campus buildings, making it the third-largest rooftop installation among U.S. colleges [2]. Overall, the university estimates the panels (which produce 7 percent of total consumption, as much as 15 percent at peak hours) and its other energy efficiency projects amount to 20 percent in energy savings annually.

The installation was but one project the California Center for Sustainable Energy cited in naming the school its 2012 Outstanding Sustainable Organization [3] at its eighth annual Energy All-Star Awards, lauding it as ?a leader in sustainable facilities and programs through the integration of green transportation, progressive energy management and community leadership in waste reduction.?

At Santa Clara, the campus houses a 1,100 kilowatts of photovoltaic panels. That includes a 1-megawatt installation in 2010 on the roofs of the Leavey Event Center, the Pat Malley Recreation Center and its parking garage, in addition to a 50-kilowatt system built in 2007 on the roof of its Support Services Building. Another small system was placed on a residence hall last year. The Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education ranks its roof-top installation as the sixth largest for U.S. colleges.

Other clean energy projects at Santa Clara include one of the state?s largest solar thermal installations, its first wind turbine (installed in 2012) and participates in the Santa Clara Green Power program, as well as a smart microgrid on campus to further reduce energy consumption.

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Links:
[1] https://joinmosaic.com/blog/california-solar-schools
[2] http://www.aashe.org/resources/campus-solar-photovoltaic-installations/top10/
[3] http://energycenter.org/index.php/news-a-media/latest-news/3127-community-energy-achievements-

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