

**COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
& COOPER CENTER FOR
ENVIRONMENTAL LEARNING**

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Tucson Electric Power to Invest \$25,000 in Solar Energy at Camp Cooper

Key Points

- Tucson Electric Power (TEP) will invest \$25,000 to develop a solar-powered learning resource at Camp Cooper, Tucson's "living classroom" for environmental learning since 1964.
- The new system will help power the camp while serving as a centerpiece for lessons about renewable energy.
- Camp Cooper served over 3000 students in the 2018-19 school year, supplementing science education for TUSD students with hands on experiences.
- TEP's gift will help to educate and inspire the next generation on the importance of solar energy and the wise use of energy in all forms.

For Immediate Release

TUCSON, Ariz. – Dec 16, 2019 – Tucson Electric Power (TEP) will invest \$25,000 to develop a solar-powered learning resource at Camp Cooper, Tucson's "living classroom" for environmental learning since 1964. The support comes on the heels of the signing of a 20-year agreement between the University of Arizona College of Education and Tucson Unified School District (TUSD), who partner in camp operations.

In 1995, Camp Cooper, the learning center for the Cooper Center for Environmental Learning, was one of the first TUSD sites to feature a solar demonstration project as a partnership between TEP, Solar Energy International, Photocomm and others. Camp Cooper's solar installation was followed by many more solar installations at TUSD schools, helping to reduce the district's carbon footprint over the last two decades. "Cooper can clearly claim credit for getting TUSD started on a more sustainable energy future," explains Doug Crockett, retired TUSD Facilities Manager, who was involved in the original solar installation in 1995.

The new system will help power the camp while serving as a centerpiece for lessons about renewable energy.

"Our vision for the future of facilities at Camp Cooper," explains director Colin Waite, "is to develop them as a sustainable model of how to live more lightly on the planet and in harmony with natural systems. What better place for us to begin this new phase of development than to address how we power our learning center?"

Camp Cooper served over 3000 students in the 2018-19 school year, supplementing science education for TUSD students with hands on experiences. TEP's gift will help to educate and inspire the next generation on the importance of solar energy and the wise use of energy in all forms.

"We look forward to working with the learning center staff to develop a system that supports Camp Cooper's mission and helps introduce students to the kind of sustainable energy systems that generate an ever increasing share of the power we provide our community," said Ted Burhans, Director of Emerging Technology and Innovation.

TEP has been a longtime supporter of Cooper both through renewable energy investments and in curriculum development. In 2018, TEP funded development of a new program designed for high school students that will begin implementation in early 2020. This program, focused on atmospheric pollution, will make Camp Cooper a facility that serves all grade levels, offering students a range of transferable STEM skills, including research, data analysis, collaboration and science communication.

To extend the value of this solar energy investment by TEP, The Cooper Center pledges to work with TEP, UArizona, and TUSD to create sustainable energy activities and curriculum materials for use as part of field trip experiences and in the classroom.

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Photo & Suggested Caption



Camp Cooper's solar installation, initiated in 1995, was followed by many more solar installations at TUSD schools, helping to reduce the district's carbon footprint over the last two decades.

High-resolution download:

<http://coopercenter.coe.arizona.edu/sites/default/files/camp-cooper-solar-array.jpg>

About the Cooper Center for Environmental Learning

The Cooper Center for Environmental Learning is an outreach project of the University of Arizona College of Education and focused on educating and inspiring people of all ages to live more lightly on the Earth through UA campus outreach, community events, teacher professional development, future teacher training, research and its flagship initiative, Camp Cooper, a “living classroom” in Tucson’s desert foothills, run in partnership with Tucson Unified School District (TUSD). Each year, thousands of kids visit Camp Cooper for hands-on, outdoor lessons and activities designed to inspire youth to care about the environment by revealing the science and wonder of nature. Operating since 1964 and today funded almost entirely by grassroots donors and private grants, the Camp now often hosts the grandkids of its earliest students, welcoming a third generation to its 130,000 alumni around the world.

Website: <http://coopercenter.arizona.edu>

Video: <https://vimeo.com/269925981/c1a40e1701>

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