

**SONOMA COUNTY STUDENTS CAN NOW BUILD ELECTRIC CARS IN THE CLASSROOM,
THANKS TO AN INNOVATIVE NEW LEARNING PROGRAM**

Santa Rosa, CA (October 12, 2015) – The Career Technical Education (CTE) Foundation, Sonoma County Office of Education (SCOE), and Switch Electric Vehicles, Inc., together with their Presenting Sponsor Sonoma Clean Power, have today announced the implementation of an Electric Vehicle (EV) design and manufacturing program for local youth to develop awareness, knowledge and skills around clean energy and STEM education (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math). Four schools from across the county have been selected, through a competitive grant process, to participate in the “Clean Energy Education through STEM Learning” program, which provides instructor training, materials and curriculum for students to build a “street-legal” electric vehicle.

Sebastopol-based Switch Electric Vehicles, Inc., developed the comprehensive program that teaches students (middle school, high school and college) the fundamentals of EV design, assembly, manufacturing and maintenance.

“We’ve successfully deployed this unique education program in numerous schools throughout the U.S. and are thrilled to finally bring the program to Sonoma County,” says Peter Oliver, CEO of Switch Vehicles, Inc. The company has been in discussions with the Sonoma County Office of Education (SCOE) and other local schools *since June 2012*. Despite the rising interest in the program, organizations were unable to move forward due to lack of funding. The County Office of Education partnered with an anonymous donor to fund the first program at Analy High School earlier this year and the program got a real boost when in June, Sonoma Clean Power sponsored the EV program through a \$150,000 donation to the CTE Foundation.

“The Switch EV education program directly aligns with our goal to promote widespread adoption of electric vehicles in support of reducing greenhouse gas emissions,” said Geof Syphers, CEO of Sonoma Clean Power. “It’s great to see schools motivated to participate in this innovative approach to education and we’re happy to be a part of inspiring the next generation toward a clean energy future.”

The CTE Foundation and County Office of Education partnered to design the process locally with plans to distribute the kits to as many as ten schools countywide over the next two years. The CTE Foundation is seeking to match the Sonoma Clean Power sponsorship in order to meet the two-year budget of \$400,000.

Sonoma County schools were invited to apply for the Switch Grant through the CTE Foundation – each applicant was asked to demonstrate how they would effectively implement the program by meeting the criteria of a “Model CTE Program.” In addition to providing the technical training, Model CTE Program elements include: showing how the CTE class integrates with a core

subject/teacher in math, science, English or history; identifying ways to engage with local companies; and exposing students to the variety of viable career opportunities in the clean energy, green technology and automotive industries.

The four schools chosen to participate include:

- *Santa Rosa High School, Auto Mechanics 2 & 3*
- *Petaluma High School, Engineering/Automotive Programs*
- *Archbishop Hanna High School, Vocational Arts & Environmental Education*
- *Healdsburg Junior High School, 8th grade Robotics*

For more information regarding the CTE Foundation, the competitive grant process and/or to support the Switch Grant program, contact Kathy Goodacre, Executive Director, kgoodacre@ctesonomacounty.org, visit www.ctesonomacounty.org, or call (707) 537-1679.



For more information about the program, curriculum or training contact Stephen Jackson, Sonoma County Office of Education at (707) 524-2720, sjackson@scoe.org

To learn more about the Switch Vehicle education program contact Peter Oliver, (707) 975-2700, peter@switchvehicles.com visit www.SwitchVehicles.com