

SOLAR PARA TODOS

Reaching Difficult to Reach Populations

Nathan Scott

Fabiane Goncalves

2024

Green Communities Summit

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About us

MassEnergize

works with community organizers and local leaders to scale household and community-level climate actions.

Solar Para Todos

Solar for All

- Partnering with **Framingham State University & Energize Framingham**
- Funded by **MassCEC**
- Engaged **Sunwealth** as our community solar provider (focus on low and moderate income clients)



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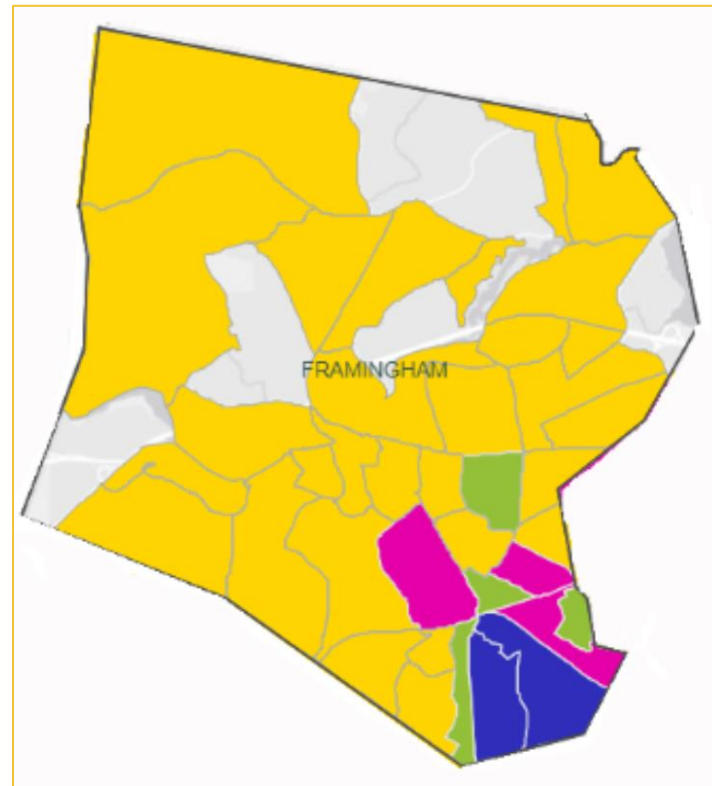
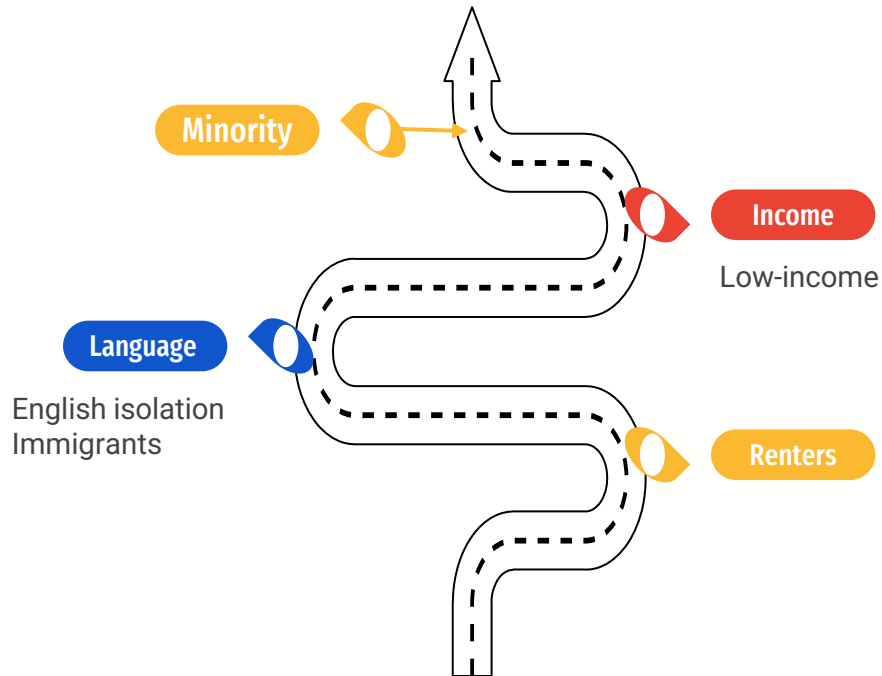
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Target Audience

City of Framingham

Environmental Justice Zones



Source: mass.gov

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Goals

Clean energy offers multiple benefits!

Reduce Energy Burden

By providing solar access to low-income households

Lower Electricity Bills

By providing 25% savings in solar credits monthly

Create Job Opportunities

Hired 6 members of the community as Solar Ambassadors (8+)



Reaching our target population

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Solar Ambassadors

Members of the
community

Informational materials

Language access



Community Engagement Model

Authentic community
engagement

Partnerships

Local orgs,
Framingham State Univ.

Reaching our population

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Action 1

Community Engagement Model

Authentic community engagement

Extractive Listening

Without further engagement or response.

Growth Listening

Engaging communities as active participants, fostering trust, and co-creating solutions.

vs.

Transactional Engagement

Typically one-sided, passive. Limited follow-up.

Authentic Engagement

Interactive. Dialogue. Ongoing connection, trust.

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Action 2



Reaching our population

Informational materials

Language access is critical, but is also cultural and builds trust



Quer reduzir sua conta de luz?

Junte-se à **Solar Para Todos**! Mantenha a Eversource como sua concessionária, enquanto adiciona energia limpa e acessível por meio da energia solar comunitária — **sem necessidade de telhado!** Perfeito para locatários. com zero taxas para aderir ou cancelar!

Fale conosco



Solar Para Todos oferece energia solar para todos!

Solar Para Todos é um programa focado em famílias de baixa renda em Framingham para auxiliar a economizar nos custos com eletricidade através de energia solar comunitária.

O que é Energia Solar Comunitária?

Energia solar comunitária são painéis solares instalados em uma determinada região para atender múltiplos residentes. Se inscreva e receba mais de 20% de desconto anual em gastos com energia elétrica!

Energia solar comunitária é para TODOS! Você não precisa ser proprietário da sua casa e não precisa comprar painéis solares ou equipamentos. A inscrição é **GRÁTIS** e fácil de cancelar!

Para mais informações:

✉ info@solarparatodos.org

☎ (857) 293-1201

🌐 www.solarparatodos.org



REDUZA SUA CONTA DE ELETRICIDADE COM ENERGIA LIMPA E LOCAL!



Economize em Energia



Não precisa de telhado



Fácil inscrição e economia



Energia sustentável



Acessível para quem vive de aluguel



Sem investimento ou instalações



Cancele a qualquer momento



Sem multas e juros



Não é necessário ter histórico de créditos

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Action 3

Reaching our population

Solar Ambassadors

Members of the Community



*MassEnergize and Sunwealth provided **training**.*

- Clean/renewable energy
- Community Solar
- Community engagement
- Subscription process
- Dual billing system





Action 3

Reaching our population

Solar Ambassadors

Growth Listening & Authentic Engagement

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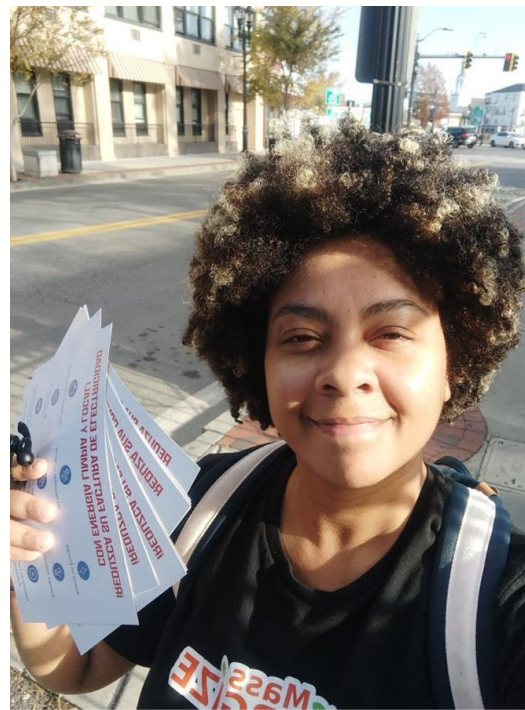
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Action 3

Reaching our population

Solar Ambassadors

Trust & Feedback

Gather information, discuss, and **improve** methods.

Solar Ambassadors serve as the **main point of contact** with the community.

Identify how we can best serve the community to build **ongoing relationships and trust**.



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Action 4



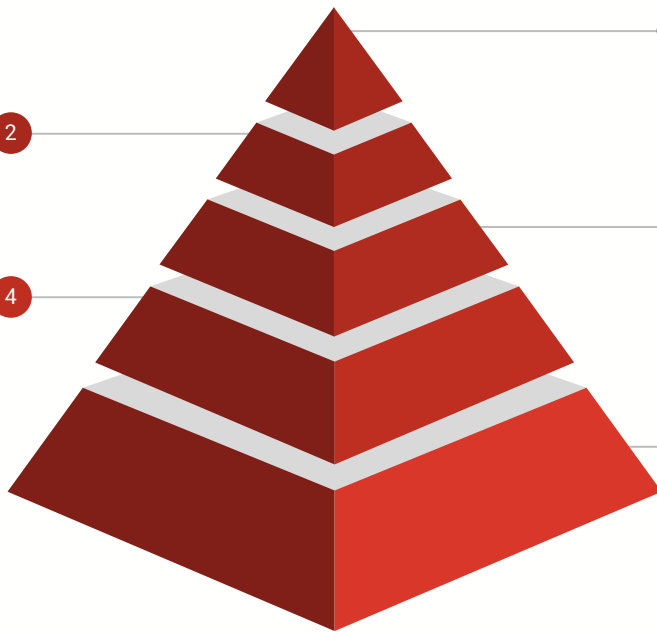
Reaching our population

Partnerships

Local orgs



Challenges



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Eversource

- R2 application.
- Language accessibility.

Sunwealth

- Subscription process.
- Dual billing.
- Language accessibility.

Build Trust

- Scammers.
- Organizations with good reputations.

Immigration

- Share information.
- Future implications.

Recruiting Advocates

- number of hours
- Learn a new technology and educate people

Lessons Learned

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Community tends to trust us more when we engage with them at events organized by familiar or **trusted organizations**.

Gather community input, making adjustments, and **communicating** changes back to them.

Effective community engagement happens at the **speed of community**, not at the speed of grant timelines or deadlines.

Trust

Basic needs

Understand and direct community members to the **right resources**.

Feedback Loop

2024

Easy process

Low-income and immigrant families are primarily concerned with **practical aspects** of clean energy benefits. Use on the spot application/subscription.

Time

Culturally sensitive engagement

Effectively engage diverse community members. **Listen** for their needs.

Thank you



Contact Details

Fabiane Goncalves

Phone : 954.991.1121

Email : *fabiane.goncalves@massenergize.org*

SolarParaTodos.org

THEY
MIDDLEBOROUGH!

WANT TO SAVE HUNDREDS ON HEAT?

**WEATHERIZE
NOW!**



**SUSTAINABLE
MIDDLEBOROUGH**



Cover photo: Middleborough Historical Museum

**Middleborough
Center is an
environmental justice
district, at about 58%
of the state median
income.**

**Almost 60% of
housing in town was
built pre-1979,
meaning it's likely
uninsulated or
underinsulated.**





Middleborough
Public Schools



**Reaching out to
service providers...**

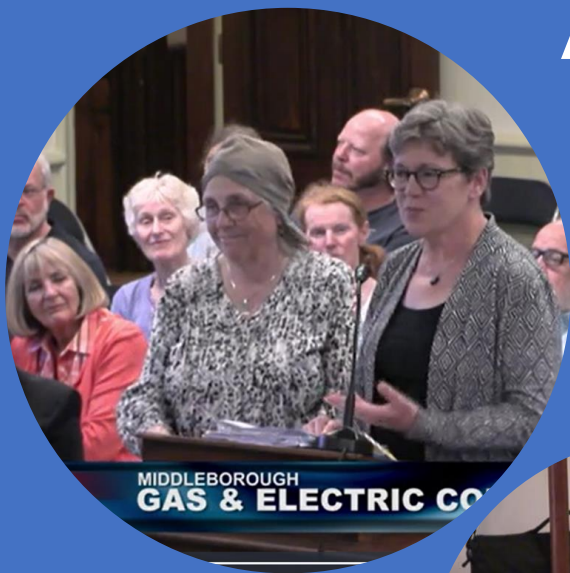
Society of
St. Vincent de Paul
Middleboro, Massachusetts



Sacred Heart
Food
Pantry



Advocating for local policies...



0% loan program for energy retrofits

Higher rebates for low/moderate-income households

Low-income discounted rate

Financing commercial/multifamily building energy upgrades

More equitable distribution of federal rebates

Creating an online Weatherization Guide...



Photo credit: Middleborough Historical Museum

Hey Middleborough! Want to save hundreds on heating & cooling?

Our Weatherization Guide will walk you through the steps to saving energy in your home—and how to pay for them. It's the only place where you can find every local, state, and federal rebate, tax credit, and financing program that Middleborough residents are eligible for!

See the Guide

Free Help to Get Started

This has got to be one of the best-kept secrets in town!

You can make a FREE appointment with an Rhode Energy Management consultant who will talk to you about your house and situation before you invest. [Click here to get started!](#)

These folks are great! They will look at your weatherization, heat pump, or solar estimates and make sure you're getting the best system for your house. They'll also talk to you about weatherization you can do yourself or hire a handyperson to do. They're independent, not connected to any contractors, and offered by Middleborough Gas & Electric as part of what you already pay on your local utility bill. People in other towns can pay \$100 or more for this service.

How do I know if I have insulation, or if I have enough?

- Was your house built before 1960?
- Does the temperature vary from room to room?
- Are your power bills extremely high in heating or cooling seasons?
- Do you get icicles hanging from your roof?
- Do you feel drafts, e.g. around doors, windows, or the dryer vent?

If you answer yes to any of these, you may need more weatherization. Get a free assessment and find out! Sign up below.

Want free help finding estimates for solar panels?

We know that getting solar panel estimates can feel high-pressure and overwhelming. Contact our partner *Energize*, an independent consultant, to get free estimates from pre-screened contractors. You don't need to share your contact information until you're ready. Energize will advise you on which ones, if any, are right for your home. You can also check out Energize's [solar calculator](#) to estimate your energy savings on your own.

“

"I met with Mike and Christopher at Rhode about both insulation and heat pumps. The estimates I got were all over the place and very confusing. The assessor said my 100-year-old farmhouse probably needed complete insulation because of its age. One contractor said I didn't need any. Another was ready to charge me thousands. The Rhode consultants helped me sort it out so I could pick contractors that I trusted and were a good value."

KIMBERLY FRENCH
Local Editorial Contributor

Am I eligible to get weatherization paid for?

The Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) will pay up to \$4,500 for weatherization if you meet income guidelines. Families who use this no-cost program save an average of about \$300 a year on their heating bills—at no upfront cost!

If you already qualify for fuel assistance...

You are eligible! Apply for the Weatherization Assistance program by calling (508) 743-7575 x 6253 or go [here](#).

If you have not received fuel assistance before...

HOUSEHOLD SIZE	GROSS ANNUAL INCOME	4 WEEK GROSS INCOME
1	\$46,392	\$1,402
2	\$63,340	\$1,965
3	\$73,326	\$2,449
4	\$82,294	\$2,775
5	\$93,291	\$2,789

Check this chart: Household incomes at or below these levels are eligible for both fuel assistance and weatherization assistance.

Before you apply for weatherization, you must first get your income qualified with the South Shore Community Action Council (SSCAC); phone: (508) 748-4363. You must apply during the heating season, November through April.

Many more people qualify to get 100% of their insulation cost paid for than make use of it. Eligible applicants will receive a free home energy assessment by SSCAC. This assessment is different from the one Middleborough Gas & Electric requires for rebates. If you think your income qualifies for 100% WAP funding, start by applying for this program.

DID YOU KNOW?



Another program called HEATWAP can repair or replace your heating system at no cost, too. For information, contact the South Shore Community Action Council at (508) 747-7575 x6253 or [here](#).

• A FEW TIPS

Be patient. It may take some weeks to get a response to your application. It's worth getting in line to get your weatherization paid for!

Remember: You must first get your income qualified for fuel assistance during the heating season, November through April. Once you're qualified, you can apply for weatherization assistance.


The Council on Aging, the veterans agent, and other service providers here in town can help you begin the process.

Getting the message out...

Energy Efficiency Incentives for Middleborough Households



EFFICIENCY MEASURE	FEDERAL INCENTIVES*	FEDERAL TAX CREDITS*	MASS. STATE ENERGY INCENTIVES	MGED/LOCAL ENERGY INCENTIVES*
Home Efficiency Rebates (HER): A one-time rebate, based on implementing efficiency measures that are projected to save 35% (higher rebate) or 20% (lower rebate) in household energy use when combined, e.g. whole-house weatherization and/or heat pump systems.	Low-income households can get a rebate of \$8,000 (if saving 35% in energy use) or \$4,000 (if saving 20%). Moderate-income households can get a rebate of \$4,000 (if saving 35%) or \$2,000 (if saving 20%). Administered by the state Dept. of Energy Resources; funded by the federal Inflation Reduction Act. Expected in early 2025.			
Electric Panel Upgrade	Can qualify for federally funded Home Efficiency Rebates (above)	30% tax credit up to \$600/year if panel upgrade is combined with other upgrades, e.g. heat pump. No max if upgrade is combined with installation of solar.		
Electric Wiring (upgrade to support new energy-efficient appliances/equipment)	Can qualify for federally funded Home Efficiency Rebates (above)			
Heat Pump Heating & Cooling	Can qualify for federally funded Home Efficiency Rebates (above)	30% tax credit up to \$2,000/year.	Equipment purchases are exempt from state sales tax.	\$500 per ton cooling capacity, up to \$2,000 , plus additional \$500 if replacing central a/c or whole house heating system. Low-income rebates are \$750 per ton up to \$3,000 , plus additional \$750 if replacing central air/heating.
Weatherization (insulation, air sealing, ventilation)	Can qualify for federally funded Home Efficiency Rebates (above)	30% tax credit up to \$1,200/year. Insulation & air sealing up to \$1,200/year . Doors: \$500 . Windows: \$600 . Energy audits \$150 .		50% of cost up to \$1,000/year for insulation; 50% of cost up to \$500/year for air sealing. Low-income rebate is 100% of cost up to \$750 for air sealing; 100% up to \$1,500 for insulation.
Weatherization & Heating System Repairs for Income-Eligible Households				Families qualified for fuel assistance (LIHEAP) can receive 100% cost of weatherization and emergency heating system repairs from South Shore Community Action Council: www.sscac.org/weatherization .
Heat Pump Water Heater	Can qualify for federally funded Home Efficiency Rebates (above)	30% tax credit up to \$2,000/year.		50% of cost up to \$500 ; low-income rebate is 100% of cost up to \$750 .




THINKING ABOUT INSULATION AND HEAT PUMPS?

NOW YOU CAN GET A 0% LOAN!

Make your house more comfortable in winter and summer and save on energy bills.

SUSTAINABLE MIDDLEBOROUGH



HEY MIDDLEBOROUGH!

WANT TO SAVE HUNDREDS ON HEAT?

WEATHERIZE NOW!

SUSTAINABLE MIDDLEBOROUGH

Cooler Middleborough Fair

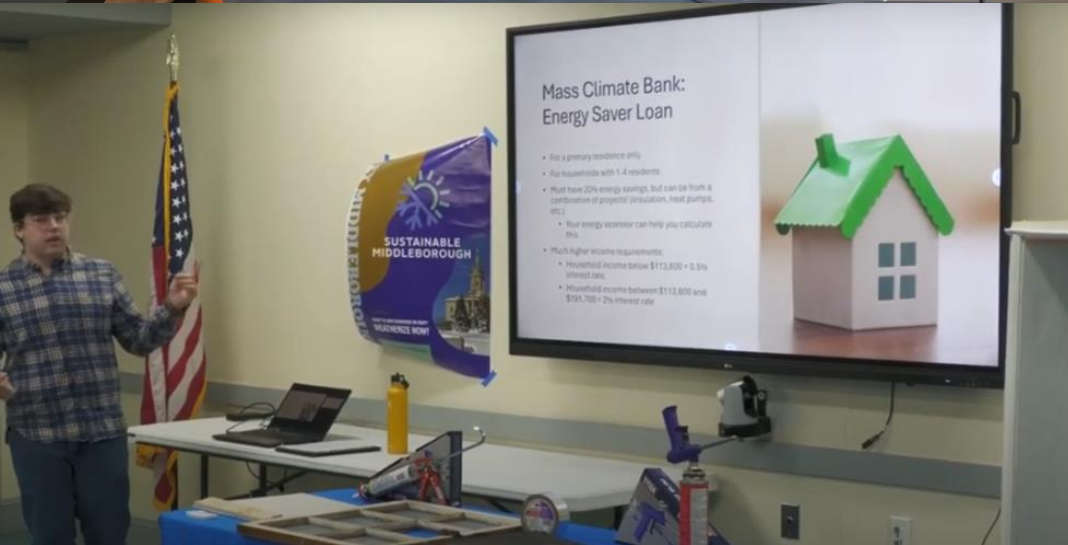




Showing up in the community...

Hands-on workshops...





Hiring a Weatherization Navigator...

Climate Counseling



What's worked...

- Tabling at community events
- Cooler Middleborough Fair partnerships

What hasn't...

- Pushback before collaboration
- Low turnout at stand-alone events
- Speed of volunteers
- Renter-owner and low-income outreach