



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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North Carolina Sustainable Energy Association Announces 2019 Member Award Winners

RALEIGH, N.C., December 18, 2019 – North Carolina Sustainable Energy Association (NCSEA) recognizes today the winners of seven prestigious awards given to members in 2019. The winners of these awards were selected from among almost 400 NCSEA members for their distinguished service to unlocking an affordable and accessible clean energy economy in North Carolina. Awards were given for each of the following categories: Lifetime Achievement Award; North Carolina Clean Energy Leadership Award, Community Impact Award; Clean Energy Innovator Award; Business Clean Energy Leader Award; Individual Clean Energy Leader Award; and Promoting Diversity and Inclusion in Clean Energy Award.

"Our work would be impossible without the participation and contributions of each of our members, and we are immensely grateful for their partnership. This year, we were proud to present awards to seven of our members who demonstrated exemplary service and commitment to our clean energy future. Each of these award winners demonstrate excellence in their field and are integral in the transition towards an energy future that is clean, affordable, accessible, and reliable for all North Carolinians," commented Ivan Urlaub, Executive Director for NCSEA.

Maria Kingery, winner of the *Lifetime Achievement Award*: Maria Kingery's leadership focuses on enabling individuals to be the best version of themselves they can be. Maria has been integral in the innovation and success of NCSEA, both during her time on our Board of Directors and as the leader of NCSEA's transition to the Entrepreneurial Operating System used to manage the organization today. Through the company she jointly owns with her husband, Maria has defined what excellent energy efficiency, high performance building, and solar services look like for North Carolina and nationally. For the impact she has had, and will continue to have, on North Carolina's clean energy economy, Maria was awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award at the Powering Our Future Gala in October.

Zoë Gamble Hanes, winner of the *North Carolina Clean Energy Leadership Award*: Zoë Gamble Hanes is an incredibly intelligent leader, entrepreneur, finance innovator, and attorney whose innovative financing and deal structures have helped to unlock North Carolina's clean energy policies and market potential. Without Zoë's involvement in clean energy policy and finance throughout the last two decades, North Carolina would certainly not be #2 in solar as it is today. A former Chair of NCSEA's Board of Directors, Zoë has demonstrated strategic and steady leadership to NCSEA and North Carolina's clean energy industry generally and NCSEA was pleased to award Zoë with the North Carolina Clean Energy Leadership Award at the Powering Our Future Gala in October.

Creighton Blackwell- Coastal Credit Union, winner of the *Community Impact Award*: The Community Impact Award is given to an individual or business who exemplifies dedication, integrity, and honorable service to the community and whose work has had a transformative impact towards the goal of providing clean, affordable energy to all. Creighton has continued to champion the work of NCSEA and clean energy and the benefits they can provide to all North Carolinians. Creighton's support, and through him the support of Coastal Credit Union, has enabled low income homeowners throughout rural North Carolina to participate in a clean energy economy through innovative financial programs, leading to entire home energy retrofits and more money in their pockets.

The Nature Conservancy, winner of the *Clean Energy Innovator Award*: The Clean Energy Innovator of the Year Award is given to a member whose innovative product or business model has helped change the face of clean energy in North Carolina. The recipient of the award this year is The Nature Conservancy and their North Carolina Director of Science, Liz Kalies, and Climate and Energy Policy Manager, Tiffany Hartung. The Nature Conservancy's work as part of the North Carolina Pollinator Conservation Alliance to determine and promote best practices in solar siting and development has had promising initial impacts. Through this work, The Nature Conservancy is poised to help ensure that as North Carolina's clean energy economy grows, the incredible biodiverse ecosystems that North Carolina is known for continue to grow, too.

Birdseye Renewable Energy, winner of the Business Clean Energy Leader Award: The Business Clean Energy Leader Award is given to an NCSEA business member who has made a lasting positive impact on North Carolina's clean energy economy. This year's winner is *Birdseye Renewable Energy*, whose *proposed Friesian Holdings solar project* would finance transmission upgrades in southeastern North Carolina. If completed, these upgrades will allow an extra 1.5 GW of solar to interconnect.

Tyler Norris, winner of the *Individual Clean Energy Leader Award*: The Individual Clean Energy Leader Award is given to an individual who has helped advance clean energy in our state through their personal commitment and leadership. Tyler Norris, Director of Development at Cypress Creek Renewables, is the recipient of this year's award. Since joining the Cypress Creek Renewables team, Tyler has demonstrated dedication to addressing North Carolina's utility-scale solar and energy storage policy and market challenges. His support has been invaluable to NCSEA's work in 2019, with the completion of projects such as NCSEA's joint Clean Energy IRP study with Synapse Economics and GridLab being highly improbable without Tyler's leadership and advocacy on behalf of NCSEA. Tyler also served as an expert witness on important energy storage issues in front of the North Carolina Utilities Commission.

Al Ripley, winner of the *Promoting Diversity and Inclusion in Clean Energy Award*: The Promoting Diversity and Inclusion in Clean Energy Award is awarded to a member whose outstanding achievements have enhanced opportunities for people of diverse cultures, backgrounds, and experiences. Al Ripley, Consumer, Energy, and Housing Policy Project Director at the North Carolina Justice Center, is this year's award recipient. Al spearheads the Justice Center's consumer, energy and housing policy advocacy and has been a key partner in NCSEA's fight for energy equity and inclusiveness. Particularly this year, with Senate Bill 559 looming, Al's tireless commitment to improving the lives of North Carolina's low-income populations was critical to our coalition's success in defeating Senate Bill 559.

NCSEA extends our congratulations and sincerest thanks to our members and the 2019 award winners.

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About North Carolina Sustainable Energy Association

North Carolina Sustainable Energy Association (NCSEA) is the leading 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that drives public policy and market development for clean energy. Our work enables clean energy jobs, economic opportunities, and affordable energy options for North Carolinians. Learn more about NCSEA, our mission, and vision at www.energync.org.