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NEWS RELEASE

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Kupu and Sunetric to Train Youth to Install Solar Panels

HONOLULU—www.kupuhawaii.org & www.Sunetric.com —Kupu is proud to announce its partnership with Sunetric, Hawaii's largest solar installer, to train under-resourced young adults to install photovoltaic panels as part of Kupu's pilot Urban Corps program. Urban Corps is a free job training and service learning program that seeks to equip corpsmembers with the experiences, education, training, and support needed to become productive members of society, with a heart to serve and positively impact the community around them. The training runs from March 2 – June 3, at which time the corpsmembers will receive both classroom and on-the-job training.

Throughout the pilot program, Sunetric will donate materials and staff time to run weekly labs that will introduce corpsmembers to a range of job opportunities at a solar company, from initial sales to actual installations. After corpsmembers gain foundational skills, they will join Sunetric field crews to assist with residential and commercial installations. This valuable on-the-job training will prepare corpsmembers to become solar installers, helping to develop local talent in a growing industry while providing a social benefit to the recipients of training. According to a December, 2010 report released by the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations, one of Hawaii's fastest growing green jobs is solar photovoltaic installation. Over 447 positions are projected to open up by 2012.

"Kupu is so excited about this opportunity to partner with such a well-respected company like Sunetric," says Kupu Executive Director John Leong. "The experiences which our corpsmembers will gain will not only help to prepare them for jobs in this emerging field, but married with the life and jobs skills training they receive through the Urban Corps, this partnership will help these young adults to socially advance and transform to become catalysts of positive change in their communities."

Sunetric CEO Alex Tiller describes the partnership as a winner for all concerned. "Installing solar panels is more than a business to us," he said. "It's a passion. That's why this partnership with an organization as important to this community as Kupu is an ideal fit. It's a great way to give back to the local community by doing what we love to do – create clean, renewable energy for the future. This is just the beginning of Sunetric's long-term commitment to Hawaii's youth, environment, and green job training."

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The pilot Urban Corps crew consists of six underserved young men ages 17 to 23, several of whom have recently graduated from the National Guard Youth Challenge program. In addition to job training, corpsmembers will serve their communities by helping to restore and steward Ha'iku Valley and the He'eia Wetlands under the guidance of Kāko'o 'Ōiwi and Papahāna Kūaola, two conservation agencies based in Windward Oahu. Corpsmembers will also participate in life skills and job readiness workshops throughout the program. The Urban Corps pilot kicked off on February 22 and will run until June 3, 2011, with expected summer and fall sessions to follow.

About Kupu:

Founded in 2007 by John Leong, Julianna Rapu-Leong, and Matthew Bauer, Kupu is a 501(c)(3) Hawaii-based nonprofit whose mission is to empower youth to serve their communities through character building, service learning, and environmental stewardship opportunities that encourage integrity (*pono*) with *Ke Akua*, self, and others. Through its various programs, Kupu offers short- and long-term opportunities for approximately 400 Hawaii youth statewide to learn about and get involved in conservation, sustainability, and renewable energy. Kupu provided an estimated benefit of over \$7 million dollars to Hawaii in 2010 through its programs, volunteer opportunities, and direct service. The Urban Corps program is actively seeking other fee-for-service projects to engage young adults in service-based job training opportunities in the conservation, maintenance, green energy, and sustainable agriculture fields. For more information, visit www.kupuhawaii.org.

About Sunetric:

Founded in 2004 by Sean and Beth-Ann Mullen, Sunetric is Hawaii's largest locally owned and operated solar installer. Sunetric specializes in photovoltaic system design and installation. A SunPower Elite dealer, Sunetric has access to the highest efficiency photo-voltaic panels available and has installed several of the largest photovoltaic systems in Hawaii, including Kona Commons shopping center on the Big Island and Wilcox Memorial Hospital on Kauai. For more information, go to www.sunetric.com.

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FOR MEDIA ONLY: For an electronic version of this release or images of the Urban Corps program, please contact Brittney Orton at (808) 735-1221 x1012 or brittney.orton@kupuhawaii.org.