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CONTACT: Alan Cohen, ATR Solartech, 6650 Eli Whitney Drive, Suite 400, Columbia, MD 21046
Phone: 410.564.9889 E-mail: acohen@ATRsolartech.com

Kelly Cooper, Columbia Association, 10221 Wincopin Circle, Columbia, MD 21044
Phone: 410-715-3104 E-mail: Kelly.Cooper@ColumbiaAssociation.org

Columbia Association plants solar “tracker” array in River Hill *CA will dedicate the new clean-energy system, made by local firm ATR, on May 5*

April 18, 2012, Columbia, MD –The Columbia Association (CA) has expanded its renewable energy usage with the installation of 12 dual-panel solar “trackers” along Route 32 near Great Star Drive. The solar devices, made by Advanced Technology & Research Corp. (ATR), also located in Columbia, Md., will be used to supply power for the River Hill Pool and the River Hill Neighborhood Center, both located at 6330 Trotter Road in Clarksville, Md. The systems use GPS technology to move with the sun, enabling their solar panels to produce 25 to 45 percent more power than fixed solar arrays. The River Hill solar installation, mounted on wooden posts in the ground, stretches out on a ridge above Route 32 just west of Great Star Drive. CA will host a dedication of the installation on Saturday, May 5, coinciding with the national Climate Impacts Day. More information on this event is forthcoming.

“It’s exciting for us to expand our use of clean, renewable-energy at CA’s facilities,” said CA President Phil Nelson. “The power these solar trackers provide will help offset the electricity needed by both the pool and the neighborhood center,” he said. “As part of our ongoing commitment to environmental sustainability, we’re proud to partner with ATR, to support local technological innovation, manufacturing and jobs, and to make this a Columbia-wide effort,” Nelson added.

The River Hill tracker array is the latest of many clean-energy and sustainability initiatives undertaken by CA. Previous projects have included collecting wasted heat from A/C units at the Supreme Sports Club and recycling it for heat for the club’s showers and laundry machines; a solar hot water system at Swansfield Mini-WaterPark; geothermal systems to heat and cool the Fairway Hills Clubhouse; and installing LED lights in several parking lots.

“As a Columbia business and manufacturer, ATR is very pleased to find an important application for its tracking solar technology right in its own community,” said Dr. Jackson Yang, the company’s founder and CEO. “We’re glad that the power produced by these trackers will benefit the entire community at the pool and neighborhood center. And the installation provides another opportunity to help demonstrate the utility and versatility of this green, energy-saving product,” Yang added.

“Besides providing power for the pool and neighborhood center, the installation of the 12 dual-panel trackers (DPT) is intended to demonstrate the potential of this technology for more widespread use in similar residential, commercial and other settings,” said Rob Lundahl, ATR’s Vice President for Energy Systems and Automation. “Up to 15 DPTs can be “daisy-chained” in any open area with sufficient southern exposure and produce over seven kilowatts of power. Here in Maryland, that sized system will provide an average of 33 Kilowatt Hours of energy each day which would meet the energy requirements of the average home. This technology is completely scalable from a single unit to dozens, or even hundreds, of devices per site,” Lundahl said, “all connected to the existing utility grid and generating clean power close to where it’s used. The DPT system is a good example of ‘distributed power generation,’ where energy is produced close to where it is used, preventing the typical 40% transmission losses over power lines,” Lundahl added.

About the Columbia Association

The Columbia Association (CA) is a 501(c)(4) non-profit service corporation that manages Columbia, Md., a master-planned community that is home to approximately 100,000 people and several thousand businesses. CA strives to be a community that welcomes diversity, respects the land and fosters the growth of individuals. In addition to enhancing the Columbia community through numerous recreational, cultural and community services and programs, CA also manages the short- and long-term needs of the community including master-planning support for our village centers, storm-water management, long-range aquatics master planning, and improving connectivity and walkability.

On the Web: ColumbiaAssociation.org

Facebook: facebook.com/CA.ColumbiaAssociation

Twitter: [@CA_intheNews](https://twitter.com/CA_intheNews)

About ATR

Advanced Technology & Research Corp. (ATR) is a Maryland-based engineering firm with a 38-year history of excellence in military systems, robotics and automation equipment. Over the past three years, the company has developed a suite of solar power systems for small-scale commercial and residential applications. All ATR Solartech systems feature state-of-the-art sun-tracking technology for enhanced energy production from photovoltaic panels, mounts designed for vertical structures, small footprints and strong aesthetics. Produced in Maryland, ATR Solartech products include distributed solar power generation systems for lighting and utility poles, ground-mounted systems for residential clean energy production, solar-powered electric vehicle charging stations, and the solar components of hybrid wind-solar systems.

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