

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

*Brooklyn, New York – June 5, 2008*

## **Students Follow The Light Towards Self-Sustainability**

**Students from Little Red School House & Elizabeth Irwin High School Unveil New York City's First Off-Grid Solar Outlet in courtyard of Brooklyn Ecoeatery, Habana Outpost**

**Wednesday, June 11<sup>th</sup> 4pm – 7pm**

As a part of the 2008 Habana Labs workshop series, students from New York City's Little Red School House and Elizabeth Irwin High School have designed and built The Off-Grid Outlet which is a solar powered AC outlet and 12V DC power port. The system has a custom two-axis motorized tracking mechanism to increase the output of the solar panel by pointing it towards the sun. The outlet's users can directly drive the solar panel using switches and observe the relationship between the panel, the sun, and the energy captured and consumed via embedded displays. The Off-Grid outlet will mainly function as a charger for laptops and other portable devices in the courtyard of Brooklyn Ecoeatery, Habana Outpost where patrons will be invited to "plug into the sun" while visiting the restaurant.

The students were led by Jeff Feddersen, director of Habana Labs and Tim Cooper, an educator at Little Red School House/ Elizabeth Irwin High School. During the creation of the Off-Grid Outlet, the students discovered that following the sun is a non-trivial, real-world robotics challenge. The problem is further complicated by the particulars of the panel's ultimate location, which will only receive direct sunlight for about half the day. Using LEGO Mindstorms robotics kits, the students have been able to solve the problem and on June 11<sup>th</sup>, they plan to take it on a test drive at Habana Outpost.

**Habana Works** is a 501(c)(3) organization that provides free programs that educate, unite and engage community members around improving human and natural habitats. Created by artist and restaurateur Sean Meenan, these programs use art, architecture and design as tools to engage and instill a greater understanding of the community's role in the betterment of the planet. Current Programs include Urban Studio Brooklyn (USBK), Habana Labs, Kid's Corner and Garden Works.

**Habana Labs** is a program dedicated to sustainable energy. As part of Habana Works the Lab serves as a community resource with sometimes high-tech and always hands-on projects. The Lab aims to reach a larger audience about making smart energy decisions.

For more information:

Habana Outpost: [www.HabanaOutpost.com](http://www.HabanaOutpost.com)

757 Fulton Street (corner of South Portland) Brooklyn NY 11217

Habana Labs: [www.habanalabs.org](http://www.habanalabs.org)

The Little Red School House/Elizabeth Irwin High School: [www.lrei.org](http://www.lrei.org)

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