Young people have the opportunity to lead a new movement that dramatically increases clean energy in this country. On campus, students will call on their Administrations to demand enough clean energy from their utility providers to power the campus with 100% renewable energy. Off campus, young people will fight for better statewide clean energy policies. This will mean more solar and wind, less coal and natural gas, and a safer, healthier climate. Our nation’s clean and just energy economy will be built by a grassroots, people-led movement.

THE PROBLEM:
Many of the 4,000 colleges and universities in the United States still rely on outdated, polluting fossil fuels to power their campuses. Utility companies are the largest obstacle to universities transitioning away from dirty fossil fuels to clean energy.

Young people know that burning fossil fuels like coal makes us sick and is responsible for one third of US carbon emissions - the main contributor to climate disruption. Young people will also face more threats from climate disruption, including suffering from extreme weather patterns like Superstorm Sandy and widespread droughts that affect food supply, unless coal plants stop pumping carbon pollution into the air.

THE SOLUTION:
The good news is that universities can choose 100% clean energy. Already, wind energy is the cheapest electricity option in many places, and wind prices have fallen by almost a third over the last four years. The latest solar jobs census data shows that solar employment grew 10 times faster than the national average in 2012.

Campuses do not need to continue to purchase dirty energy that makes students sick and destroys the environment; rather, universities have a moral obligation to their students and the larger community to lead in the transition from fossil fuels to clean energy. To achieve this, universities can demand 100% clean energy from their utility providers. Students and young people will be the pivotal force to drive this forward.

THE OPPORTUNITIES:
Universities can leverage their large purchasing power to transform the energy market and our world.

When a major energy user like a university calls for 100% renewable energy from its utility provider, the demand for clean wind and solar power increases. Universities are often some of the biggest energy users, so this demand will put significant pressure on utility providers to start buying more clean energy and less dirty coal, and in the process, protect our health and our climate.

Universities also have an opportunity to use their influence to advocate for statewide policies that will bring more clean energy online. For example, in Pennsylvania, clean energy advocates are trying to pass a bill that will double the amount of renewable energy that utilities have to purchase and provide to their customers by 2023. Pennsylvania universities and students can, and should, start advocating for these important policy changes.
**WHAT YOU CAN DO:**

Young people will be the critical drivers: Ask your university administration to demand 100% clean energy to power the campus.

- **Option 1:** Get a public statement, or hold a public event like a press conference, where the Administration demands more clean energy options from their local utility provider.

- **Option 2:** Get a letter from the university to their current utility stating the intent to change providers or create its own on-campus power generation if the utility is not willing to work toward more clean energy options.

- **Option 3:** Get the university to support better statewide clean energy policies by making a public statement to the media and contacting state decision-makers directly.

Through the Campuses for Clean Energy Campaign, young people across the country will create the demand and the vision for local clean energy opportunities that work for their campuses, their communities, and their states.

E-mail Sierra Club’s Campuses for Clean Energy campaign director, Anastasia Schemkes, to get more information and guidance on launching the campaign on your campus: anastasia.schemkes@sierraclub.org

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