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CLEAN TECH STARTUP

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ANDREW BITTNER,
FOUNDER & CEO



GUARANTEED
CLEAN ENERGY

TRANSFORMING
CLEAN ENERGY
IN SCHOOLS AND
MUNICIPALITIES





GUARANTEED CLEAN ENERGY

TRANSFORMING CLEAN ENERGY IN SCHOOLS AND MUNICIPALITIES

By Kenneth Thomas

In recent decades, the traditional monopoly run and rented energy paradigm has lost ground to the concept of on-site sustainable energy development. The municipalities and K-12 school districts are leading the way in changing the energy paradigm. “It is a momentous occasion in the history of energy, and a testament to decades of dreams and hard work by many. We are proud to share that with the right plan, clean energy is cheaper than the grid today,” said Andrew Bittner, CEO and Founder of Guaranteed Clean Energy (GCE).

The much-needed flip (shifting from non-renewable fossil fuels to clean energy) is fundamental to creating a sustainable energy future. While the transition to a sustainable energy system

is one of the crucial challenges that the world faces today, global investment in renewable energy has emerged as an opportunity to bring about this change on a community level. Besides, the plummeting installation costs of solar and wind energy solutions, incentives, and engineering are catalyzing clean energy innovation. With a promise of democratizing renewable energy, GCE—a group of fiduciary advisors specializing in energy efficiency, energy generation, and sustainability is leading the way in transforming local communities through advising strategies. “The new utility company is one that you build from the inside out, based on your power needs, backed by engineering,” said Bittner.

STARTUPCITY TOP 10
CLEANTECH
COMPANIES - 2021

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GCE's unique strategic slant to energy projects and breakthroughs in the energy space has earned its selection as one of the top ten CleanTech Companies of 2021. "There are two main keys, one is that we do this as advising energy fiduciaries, not as contractors, and two, our engineering is backed by a third-party energy savings guarantee. So our clients have someone experienced on their side, and have zero risk." GCE has made its notable impact primarily serving institutional clients, such as school systems, municipalities, and private universities, by empowering them to build their own energy infrastructure.



HAVING ANTICIPATED THE FLIP A DECADE AGO, WE CAME TOGETHER AS A TEAM OF PROJECT MANAGERS, ENGINEERS, AND ENERGY EXPERTS WITH THE GOAL TO MAKE CLEAN ENERGY CHEAPER THAN THE GRID

CLEAN ENERGY IS CHEAPER THAN THE GRID

It has been an almost perfect storm of emerging energy technology, smart systems, data analysis, and financial mechanisms that has changed clean energy forever. It was anticipated that the transition to clean energy would happen slowly over time, but "Most cities and schools have sustainability or carbon goals to hit within the next 10-20 years, and are finding that with the right plan and strategy as a system, they can achieve those goals immediately, and that is it cheaper to do so."

Having anticipated the flip a decade ago, Bittner focused on the compounding impact of emerging energy technology, smart systems, data analysis, and financial mechanisms. "We built an advisory platform for our clients that not only deals with change but embraces it," says Bittner. "The future of energy is all about understanding how you use, reduce, and generate power. The days of just paying your utility bills and fully outsourcing your energy are coming to an abrupt end."

ENERGY SAVINGS GUARANTEED BY INSURANCE

The major innovation that GCE's platform and engineering addressed is to build trust to institutions through a guaranteed performance insurance policy. The policy is backed by A-rated insurance carriers and is underwritten by financial grade energy reporting and engineering. "If we engineer a project to create \$250,000 savings a year, and it only hits \$240,000, the client receives a check for \$10,000. The client should not have to take any risk, it is the engineers and the insurance company that are evaluating the project," says Bittner. "It took years of working with financial institutions to work with our technology teams to see how energy could be seen as a safe and predictable

cash flow. Our technology team has streamlined a platform that is transparent to the customer as well as the banks and insurance companies that are ultimately reinforcing the project's value."

REDUCE BEFORE YOU PRODUCE: FOSTERING SUSTAINABLE ENERGY PRACTICES

One of the reasons why clean energy is more economically viable than the grid is the integration of various smart systems. Measures such as LED lighting, sensors, HVAC systems, solar, and wind can today fit into one communicating energy system. By addressing energy conservation measures as your foundation, it can reduce your overall cost for on-site generation by 30 to 50 percent. When designing a power plant, it is based on designing for peak demand, not simply kWh consumption. Efficiency measures can reduce the cost and size significantly, with a typical cost that is 30-70 percent lower than generation.

"When we analyze a facility, we do not address anything as a single independent energy measure, but rather as multiple connected energy measures that come together to create a sustainable system," says Bittner.

FROM PLANNING TO DEVELOPING ENERGY STRATEGIES—TRUSTED ADVISORS NOT CONTRACTORS

GCE's advisory process revolves around listening intently to customers' needs throughout the project lifecycle. "When you



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hire an advisor, you don't have a contractor selling you one measure; you gain the ability to put together a well-rounded strategic plan that not only is more cost-effective but also qualifies for many more grants, incentives, and other energy funding initiatives."

The company's advisory efforts are directed toward executing projects that are more connected to end-users. "The old way of energy projects was to hire a contractor, and that general contractor was essentially in complete control of the scope and effectiveness of the project to a fault. One of the reasons our program has been so successful is that communities have an opportunity to communicate their real needs, and wants, as we are their hired fiduciary advisor, not a contractor. The relationship is one where everyone is sitting on the same side of the table, with open and transparent data, engineering, costs, and we can easily communicate what is best throughout the entire process."

GCE advisors are not tied to any particular technology and recommend products or services that best fit the client's needs. "We are committed to local economic development, so we make sure that local contractors and local people are hired to recycle the dollars within a community," reinforced Bittner.

LOCAL SUSTAINABLE ENERGY CAN END CHILD HUNGER

With the pace of energy innovation being incredibly fast, GCE has a keen eye for real breakthrough energy technology. "We deliver real value because we have the experience and knowledge of what makes an energy technology actually function and how to achieve measurable energy savings. We

look at everything from an engineering, financial, and human standpoint through the lens of an advisor," highlights Bittner.

As the next big step, GCE is focusing on the continued evolution of energy generation projects to ensure holistic sustainability. Having garnered huge traction across eight states in the last five years, the company now aims to expand its footprint nationwide to serve a broader clientele and large-scale projects. "Over the years, we have been able to learn from our clients as well as various energy managers and on-site engineers about new energy innovations and how to approach same processes differently. We will continue to evolve, scale, and become smarter by aligning with the latest trends and innovations and serve our clients as the leading advisor in the clean energy space," notes Bittner.

One of the ways GCE is already implementing this continued evolution is through sustainable food production. "Our goal is to empower communities to end child hunger locally," said Colin Bittner, COO of GCE. The company aims to expand its capabilities to evaluate converting electricity into food production with vertical farming powered by solar. "The only things you need in the new vertical farming type of systems are seeds, water, and electricity. We can power the production of healthy, accessible, affordable food that is all local and sustainable," says Bittner. This approach could revolutionize hunger by building sustainable communities that can create power locally, create food locally, and all at a cost less than the current centralized methods. This creates resilience, sustainability, and local empowerment of vital resources for the future of communities. ⁸⁶

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*In appreciation of their relentless pursuit of
excellence and innovation in CleanTech technology*


Kenneth Thomas
Managing Editor