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Manteca's Regional Environmental Studies Center Turns Green into Gold

Manteca, CA September 30, 2014-- The Gen7 Regional Environmental Studies Center (RESC) at Manteca Unified School District (MUSD) has been awarded LEED Gold Certification from the U.S. Green Building Council. MUSD partnered with Manteca-based American Modular Systems to build the modular Zero Net Energy (ZNE) RESC, the first K-12 school supporting facility in California's Central Valley to achieve the prestigious LEED Gold standard.

LEED—an acronym for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design—is a globally recognized benchmark for the design, construction and operation of highperformance green buildings. Building projects must satisfy prerequisites and earn points to achieve increasingly stringent levels of certification, with LEED Gold ranking among the highest echelon of green buildings. The RESC received LEED certification for implementing practical and measurable strategies and solutions aimed at achieving high performance in sustainable site development, water savings, energy efficiency, materials selection and indoor environmental quality. The building's ZNE design contributed to the LEED Gold rating, combining solar power with advanced energy-saving technology to earn exemplary performance points and high scores in both the Energy and Innovation in Design categories.

“Research shows that school buildings have a remarkable impact on how students learn and teachers teach,” said Jason Messer, MUSD Superintendent. “We wanted to raise the bar by creating a multi-use learning center that is both energy-independent and environmentally responsible, providing a model for future learning spaces within our District and demonstrating our commitment to best-in-class environments that benefit our community, staff and students.”

Every aspect of the state-of-the-art building, from the 10kW roof-mounted solar array to individual receptacle loads, is connected through the Gen7 web-based energy monitoring system. This platform allows MUSD to track energy consumption at a very precise level and manage it in real-time to achieve optimal performance. In just a year, the RESC has made a positive, measurable impact, reducing peak power demand more than 50% and producing more energy than it needs to operate.

Manteca's RESC is a testament to how prefabricated buildings can deliver healthier, more sustainable schools quickly and cost-effectively. The modular Gen7 meets the same LEED standards as a conventional building, yet can be built 60% faster for 30% less. Because Gen7s are designed to meet LEED standards, the added expense of attaining LEED certification is modest. LEED Gold certification added less than 1% to the RESC's construction costs—an outlay expected to pay back five-fold in operational savings over the building's lifespan.

Ultimately, the RESC's smart design is a teaching tool, educating the public and the District's vocational students about green building, sustainable living and energy and resource conservation—all reflected in the building's design and performance.

"The Manteca RESC was designed with a clear mission: to bridge the gap between awareness and action," said Aaron Bowers, Construction/Energy Technician. "We're providing a healthy environment for learning, while promoting renewable, clean energy as a sustainable solution for the future."

A LEED Gold plaque dedication ceremony will be held later this year.

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American Modular Systems (www.americanmodular.com) is one of the nation's leading modular manufacturers, designing and building quality commercial and educational facilities since 1983. **Gen7** classrooms (www.gen7schools.com) empower communities to create healthy, energy-efficient learning environments that will benefit students and educators for generations to come.