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### *Area middle school students to compete in Junior Solar Sprint*

PITTSFIELD —On Saturday, May 31, area middle school students will gather at Reid Middle School in Pittsfield to race their model solar-powered cars in the ninth annual Berkshire Junior Solar Sprint (JSS). More than 90 students from across and beyond Berkshire County are expected to participate in the JSS this year.

The JSS is a fun and educational competition for students in grades 5-8 who work in teams to build model vehicles powered by the sun. In the process they learn firsthand about non-polluting transportation. The races and judging begin at 10 a.m. and end at noon. Registration for students begins at 9 a.m. The solar vehicles will be judged for speed, craftsmanship, innovation and technical merit, and the top three winners in each category will be eligible to compete in the regional JSS championship in Springfield on June 8.

City Youth Commissioner Cassandra Ynocencio will be on hand at this year's JSS to welcome the schools and their teams.

In addition, students from Conte Middle School in North Adams will be displaying solar ovens and explaining how solar technology can help people in developing countries by allowing them to harness the power of the sun to cook their meals.

The JSS is sponsored by The Berkshire Gas Company, Berkshire Bank, Northeast Sustainable Energy Association, Western Massachusetts Electric Company, Energy Federation, Inc., and the U.S. Department of Energy. Local Pittsfield sponsors also include Bob's Elm Street Service and South Street Servicenter.

For more information about the JSS or CET's solar energy curriculum, contact Nancy Nylen at [nancyn@cetonline.org](mailto:nancyn@cetonline.org) or Cynthia Grippaldi at 413-445-4556, ext. 25 or [cynthiag@cetonline.org](mailto:cynthiag@cetonline.org). CET is a non-profit community organization working to promote energy efficiency, renewable energy, waste management and environmental education in western MA. CET is funded in part by the Massachusetts Cultural Council.