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NABCEP News & Updates

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Headlines

Walt Ratterman & Les Nelson Awards 2027



Every year, NABCEP honors [Walt Ratterman](#), one of our first Board Certified Professionals, who was killed while working in Haiti when a devastating earthquake struck. Walt's astonishing renewable energy work among some of the worlds most needy was truly inspirational.

The Walt Ratterman Award will be presented to a Member of the NABCEP Community who has done a creative public service-oriented renewable energy project. The Award will be presented during the 2027 NABCEP CE Conference held in Mobile, AL from March 15 - 18, 2027 and NABCEP will donate \$500 to the charity of the winner's choice.

Nominations for the award will be accepted until Tuesday, December 1, 2026.

Installations can be domestic or offshore and the award recipient can be paid for his or her work, but the project must be performed at no charge for a charitable organization.

For more info and considerations for the Walt Ratterman award, [click here](#).

To nominate yourself or someone else for the Walt Ratterman award, [click here](#).



NABCEP and its Board of Directors have developed the [Les Nelson Scholarship](#) Fund for Volunteers as a tribute to Mr. Les Nelson, a passionate advocate of the renewable energy industry. The scholarship will focus on helping individuals with volunteer experience enter or expand their role in the solar PV or solar heating industries through credentialing, Board Certification, and continuing education.

Scholarship recipients will receive:

- NABCEP exam fees will be covered for the Associate or Board Certification exam of their choosing
- One (1) admission to an annual NABCEP CE Conference
- Travel costs to the NABCEP CE Conference (up to \$800)
- One (1) free on-line course provided by Solar Energy International (SEI)

Scholarship recipients will have two (2) years from the date of receiving the scholarship to earn their NABCEP Associate, NABCEP Board Certification, and attend the NABCEP CE Conference.

To nominate someone for the Les Nelson Scholarship, download the [application here](#). When you have a completed application, please e-mail it to NABCEP CEO & President Shawn O'Brien at: sobrien@nabcep.org.

Applications for the 2027 Les Nelson Scholarship must be submitted by Tuesday, December 1, 2026. The award winner will be announced at next year's CE Conference in Mobile, AL (March 15 - 18, 2027).

Solar Roots Party Returns with World Premiere of “The Pioneers of Solar” Documentary

Tickets Now Available for 2026 Solar Roots Party

Grass Valley, California (July 28, 2026) – [Tickets are now available](#) for the Solar Roots Party, taking place October 30 – November 1, 2026, at the Ponderosa Hall-Nevada County Fairgrounds in Grass Valley, California, considered one of the birthplaces of the modern solar industry. As part of the three-day gathering, the feature-length documentary film “Solar Roots – The Pioneers of Solar” will make its world premiere at the Del Oro Theater.

The film, more than a decade in the making, chronicles the untold true story of the hippies who brought solar power down from space and adapted it to power their remote homes in the forests of Northern California, ultimately transforming the technology into one of the world's fastest growing sources of electricity today. The filmmakers, Jeff Spies (Executive Producer) and Jason Vetterli (Director), conducted over 50 interviews with many of the movement's founders, innovators, and early adopters, preserving stories that might otherwise have been lost to history.

"This film has truly been a labor of love," said Jeff Spies, Executive Producer. "Our goal was to preserve the stories of the industry pioneers. Sadly, we've lost many along the way,

making the documenting of their experiences even more meaningful. Their creativity, determination, and willingness to challenge conventional thinking changed the world. I hope this film will inspire generations to come with those same values."

Rather than relying on a polished Hollywood production style, the filmmakers intentionally embraced an authentic documentary approach, reflecting the personality of the people and communities that gave birth to the solar industry.

"We wanted the film to feel as genuine as the people telling their stories," said Jason Vetterli, Director. "This allowed us to capture the quirky humor, ingenuity, and authenticity that defined the early solar movement. Most of the interviews were filmed in the same backwoods where the home PV industry took root, allowing viewers to experience the settings alongside the pioneers."

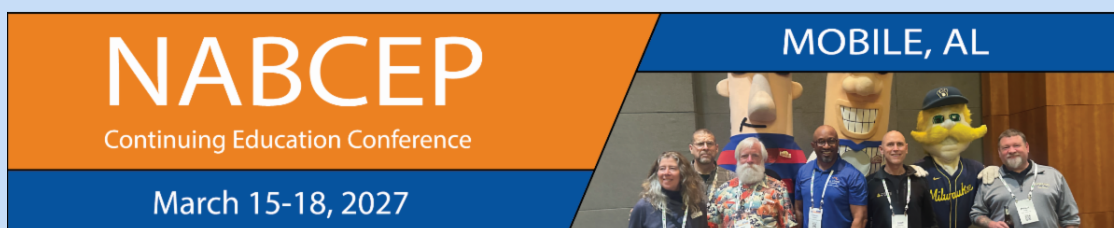


Following its world premiere at the Solar Roots Party, the film will be released as a free, non-commercial documentary, making it available to audiences around the world as an educational resource and historical archive for future generations.

The Solar Roots Party brings together the original pioneers of residential solar, today's solar leaders, and the next generation of clean energy innovators to celebrate the industry's remarkable history while inspiring its future. The party is made possible in part through the generous support of industry sponsors. SMA serves as the event's Gold Sponsor and BoxPower is the Silver Sponsor. Additional sponsors include FranklinWH, IronRidge, REC, Greentech Renewables, NABCEP, Tamarack Solar, PV Cables, and Planet Plan Sets.

For more information about the event, [tickets](#), and the documentary, watch the [official trailer](#) and visit the [Solar Roots event website](#).

Registration For the 2027 NABCEP CE Conference Will Be Open VERY SOON - Be On the Lookout!



NABCEP's 2027 CE Conference will be opening registration very soon! As a reminder, next year's CE Conference will be held in **Mobile, AL from March 15 - 18** and will be located at the [Mobile Convention Center](#).

So be on the lookout for our announcement for opening registration by the end of September! **Interested in Sponsoring or Exhibiting at the 2027 NABCEP CE**

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BayWa r.e. Solar Systems is a leading U.S. distributor of residential and commercial solar and energy storage materials. They focus on helping solar installers and contractors create more financial stability for their businesses in an ever-changing market.

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YASKAWA SOLECTRIA SOLAR



A NEW WEBINAR SERIES FROM YASKAWA SOLECTRIA SOLAR

Recharge with Solectria, a dynamic webinar series exploring the latest solar technology, industry trends, and expert insights—focuses on the critical role of inverters in today's solar energy systems.

LEARN. Discover emerging technologies, evolving standards, and the latest innovations shaping solar inverter performance and system design.

ASSESS. Gain our perspectives to evaluate real-world challenges, market trends, and best practices across utility-scale and commercial solar.

APPLY. Turn insight into action with practical guidance you can apply to your projects, designs, and operations.

CRITICAL DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS for Yaskawa Solectria Solar Utility-Scale Inverters

Date: Thursday, September 24

Time: 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM CT

This training will provide a deep dive into the essential design factors and most important National Electrical Code® (NEC) to be considered when integrating Yaskawa utility-scale inverters. From DC array sizing through inverter behavior, terminal specifications, and transformer compatibility, we will cover practical design choices to optimize performance, prevent faults, and ensure system longevity. Attendees will gain actionable knowledge for designing robust solar installations:

- DC array sizing (string length, number of strings, combiner box usage)
- Inverter clipping conditions and maximum current ratings
- AC and DC terminal wiring and sizing considerations
- Transformer compatibility and inverter-per-transformer guidelines, including weak grid and low SCR conditions
- Model distinctions: DCG versus standard inverter behavior
- Phantom voltage issues and ground fault detection in DCG setups

To register, learn more or check out our full 2026 schedule and access previous webinars on-demand visit <https://solectria.com/trainings/webinars/>

Join Us. Recharge your knowledge—[register today](#).

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WEBINAR SERIES

JOIN US SEPT 24
**CRITICAL DESIGN
CONSIDERATIONS**
for Yaskawa Solectria Solar Utility-Scale Inverters

Hatem Alymani
Application Engineer

Jonathan Helmuth
Director of Sales

**YASKAWA
SOLECTRIA SOLAR**

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TODAY!**

LEARN • ASSESS • APPLY

Do you have a passion for renewable energy and enjoy working with the best customers? Yaskawa Solectria Solar is adding a **Tech Support Engineer** to the team and looking for YOU to join the solar crew! Proudly located in the USA, we back our products with the best, most comprehensive customer support organization in the industry!

To learn more and start your new journey, visit [JoinOurSolarCrew](#)



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Technical Support Engineer

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YASKAWA
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MADE IN THE USA

The advertisement features a green and orange color scheme. It includes a photo of a smiling man in a grey polo shirt pointing towards the viewer, and a white Yaskawa solar inverter. The text is bold and clear, emphasizing the hiring opportunity and the company's commitment to being made in the USA.

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2026 CE Conference Sponsors

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