



News Release: IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Solar and Energy Loan Fund (SELF) Welcomes New Marketing Director

SELF is expanding rapidly throughout Florida and Georgia

Orlando, FL – November 15, 2021 - After expanding into the Orlando area from its headquarters in St. Lucie County a year and a half ago, the non-profit green-bank, SELF, has already surpassed \$1 million of financing for residential projects in Central Florida and connected with key partners and leaders of the climate equity movement. Now, one of these individuals is joining the SELF team as its new Marketing Director.

Ernest Calderon comes over from the world of environmental action as the former Chief Communications Officer of IDEAS For Us, an Orlando-based non-profit focused on climate solutions. After four years building the brand and storytelling of IDEAS For Us and its urban agriculture program, Fleet Farming, Mr. Calderon brings his extensive marketing skills to SELF as it expands rapidly throughout Florida, Georgia, and beyond.

An immigrant from Colombia, Mr. Calderon joins an already diverse team at SELF. Hispanic and Spanish-speaking homeowners represent a large share of the population and SELF's target markets, so creating messaging that visualizes a diverse audience is a key priority. Additionally, communication in both English and Spanish is crucial to reaching all future borrowers that would greatly benefit from SELF's lending programs and services.

SELF's Executive Director, Doug Coward, said, "The SELF team is very excited to have Ernest join the organization and add his diverse skills and years of experience."

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About the Solar Energy Loan Fund (SELF)

The Solar and Energy Loan Fund (SELF) is a 501.C (3) community lending organization that is also certified by the U.S. Treasury Department as a Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI). SELF focuses on achieving social, environmental and economic benefits for low- and moderate-income homeowners and communities. SELF provides energy expertise and low-cost loans that help homeowners achieve energy efficiency, clean energy (solar PV), storm protection (i.e. roofs and impact windows), disability adaptations, water quality improvements, and more. SELF has also created special programs for veterans and military families, women heads of households, and people with disabilities. SELF headquarters are located in St. Lucie County, where the program began in 2010, and they have satellite offices in partnership with Hillsborough County, the City of St. Petersburg, and the City of Orlando. SELF is currently expanding in Miami Dade County/South Florida and Atlanta/Georgia.

SELF offers accessible and affordable microloans for assorted home repairs and improvements, including high-efficiency ACs, roof repairs and replacement, solar technologies, and much more. SELF approves loans based on an applicant's ability to pay, rather than credit scores or equity. To date, SELF has helped more than 5,000 people finance \$22 million of projects, with 74% of the projects in low- and moderate-income (LMI) communities. The small unsecured loans help homeowners lower their energy and insurance costs, build equity and generational wealth, and increase safety, health and resilience. By providing access to affordable and innovative financing, SELF is charting a path for all to achieve energy efficiency, clean energy, and resilience, while also fostering green jobs and businesses.

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Ernest Calderon Official Headshot Image

