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Local businesses learn about greening their bottom line with help from sustainable and efficiency groups

Wednesday- Over forty businesses attended a Green Your business Affair hosted by the Cambridge Energy Alliance (CEA) and the Sustainable Business Leadership Program (SBLP). Participants represented a diverse background of small and large commercial entities from the efficiency, renewable energy, nonprofit, design, and retail sectors. The business affair connected attendees to sustainable programs including the New England Wind Fund renewable energy program and Prism Consulting Inc., which provides energy efficiency audits to commercial entities.

The Cambridge Energy Alliance shared information about its free one-stop-shop service available to Cambridge businesses including access to NSTAR's business audit and rebate program, financing options through local banks, and an in-house energy advisor to help businesses connect to the services they need. Lilah Glick, Outreach Manager for the Cambridge Energy Alliance notes that there is a huge opportunity for energy efficiency improvements in the business sector. "Almost 80% of Cambridge's greenhouse gas emissions come from buildings, and the commercial sector makes up 2/3rds of total emissions. Energy efficiency is a great way for businesses to not only become green leaders but also reduce their energy bills." Ms. Glick noted that saving energy is easy and makes financial sense, with robust incentives made available through the Cambridge Energy Alliance.

Emily Kanter, consultant at the Sustainable Leadership Program, has over nine years of working with local businesses and recognizes the challenges they face in a global economy. Ms Kanter performs sustainable assessments and shares that, "greening a company's operations reduces both resource usage and expenses." The Sustainable Leadership Program identifies viable environmentally sustainable improvements and then pairs companies with the tools and resources to make those changes happen. Participating businesses learn about ways to become sustainable through improvements in energy efficiency, water conservation, recycling and waste reduction, transportation, pollution prevention, and sustainability management

The event was hosted at Greenward Eco-boutique located in Porter Square. Greenward is a small, locally-owned eco-boutique in Cambridge, MA, owned by the husband-and-wife team of Scott Walker and Simone Alpen. Locally brewed beer was provided by Cambridge Brewing Company, pizza was donated by Stone Hearth Pizza, and organic fair-trade chocolate from Theo. Ms. Kanter concluded that the, "event was a great success and the Sustainable Business Leadership Program and the Cambridge Energy Alliance aims to host similar Green Affairs in the future."

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About CEA: The Cambridge Energy Alliance is a non-profit service sponsored by the [City of Cambridge](#) and [NSTAR](#) that helps residents and business owners invest in making their homes and buildings work smarter and more efficiently-saving energy, water and money.

About SBLP: The Sustainable Business Leader Program is a non-profit program that provides affordable and actionable sustainability consulting to meet the unique needs & challenges of local businesses.