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4 Local Contractors Win "Smackdown" to Complete Home Makeovers

Charlottesville, VA – Abrahamse & Company, Albemarle Housing Improvement Program (AHIP), APM-Energy and Creative Conservation were today awarded the work on the four winning homes as part of the PowerSaver Home Energy Makeover Contest's "Contractor Smackdown." These four local companies competed with others to develop the most effective scopes of work to help the homeowners achieve at least a 15% energy efficiency gain. They will start meeting with their homeowners today, and the makeover work begins next week.

Three of the winning contractors will team up with other local contractors to complete the work. Abrahamse & Company leads a team working with Comfort Source, Key Green Energy Solutions, Piedmont Radiant and WeatherSeal. AHIP is working with Key Green Energy Solutions, Robertson Electric and WeatherSeal. APM Energy is working with Airflow Systems, Inc.

See below for more information about the winning homes, homeowners and their contractors or visit www.powersavermakeover.org. Interviews and house visits with the winners and contractors are available; to schedule, please call Annie Suttle at 434.249.9817 or email annie@leap-va.org.

"This is the most exciting part of the PowerSaver Home Energy Makeover Contest, matching the winning homeowners with the winning contractors and starting the improvements," said Cynthia Adams, LEAP's Executive Director. "Thanks to all of contractors who competed in this first 'Smackdown,' congratulations to the four winners, and we look forward to watching them in action as they help the homeowners achieve more comfortable, healthy and affordable homes."

Contractors were invited into the winning homes last week to assess the home and design a scope of work based on the price point of the makeover. A team of LEAP staff and local experts and partners then reviewed the plans and selected the winners and will now work together with the contractors and homeowners to refine the final makeover plans. Projected improvements include air sealing, duct sealing, adding insulation, and the maintenance or upgrading of heating and cooling equipment. Last month the pool of Contest entries was narrowed down to 10 finalists, all of whom received free home energy assessments. The results of their assessments – including the potential for energy savings – were the key factors in selecting the winning homes.

The Contest is sponsored by LEAP and UVA Community Credit Union. The costs of the makeovers will be covered by sponsors and separate funding and will not be incurred by the winning homeowners or contractors.

About the Winning Families and their Contractors

Jim Duncan (Crozet, Albemarle County; 2278 Square Feet): \$2,500 makeover

Contractor: APM-Energy (<http://apm-energy.com/>)

Jim and his family of four live in a pretty new house (2003) but pay excessively high energy bills while still suffering in a drafty house. Turns out only half of their attic is insulated, among other issues.

Kathleen Brumbaugh (Palmyra, Fluvanna County; 2300 SF): \$2,500 makeover

Contractor: Creative Conservation (<http://www.creativeconservation.com/>)

Kathleen's family of four have been dealing with major comfort issues despite the fact that they live in a 2002 home. Her son's bedroom and husband's office above the garage were particular trouble spots. They've got a fair amount of insulation, but their duct work all sits outside the conditioned space.

Lisa Workman (City of Charlottesville; 1978 SF): \$5,000 makeover

Contractor: AHIP (<http://www.ahipva.org/>)

Lisa's family of three moved into this 1948 home about 20 years ago and have dealt with extreme comfort and moisture issues ever since. Their energy bills are moderately high but largely because they set their

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thermostats so low that they are freezing in the winters. And heavy rains create a river in their basement.

John Collmus (Charlottesville, Albemarle County; 2212 SF): \$10,000 makeover

Contractor: Abrahamse & Company (<http://www.abrahamse.com/>)

The Collmus family of five plus their two exchange students live in a 1983 house with high energy bills and comfort issues. Among the main culprits are old appliances and heat pumps plus duct work outside of the conditioned space.

About LEAP (leap-va.org)

LEAP is a community-based nonprofit created initially from a joint initiative between the City of Charlottesville and County of Albemarle. Our alliance partners include local government, Dominion Virginia Power, Charlottesville Gas, the University of Virginia, Piedmont Virginia Community College, the business and contracting community, and other nonprofits. Working together, we seek to create unprecedented utility (energy and water) savings by retrofitting buildings to make them more energy efficient, comfortable, and healthier for those who live and work inside.

About UVA Community Credit Union (uvacreditunion.org)

UVA Community Credit Union is a not-for-profit, member-owned cooperative that provides a wide range of convenient and professionally managed financial services to its more than 55,000 members. Membership Eligibility: Membership is open to those who live or work in Charlottesville, Albemarle, Fluvanna, Greene, Louisa, Madison, Nelson, or Orange. Business Eligibility: Membership is open to any business located in our field of membership.

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