

Panelist Profile: Andy Leber

Hi neighbors! As Sustainable Grandview prepares for our Solar Info Session TOMORROW, Friday February 23rd, at 3:30pm (see event details here: <https://fb.me/e/1Z1aH4j5s>), we're finishing up our series of profiles here to introduce you to our panel members.

Today, we're saying hello to Andy Leber! He is an organizing member of Sustainable Grandview and will be giving the 30-minute presentation at the start of our info session! Andy and his wife, Julie, are both professors in the Department of Psychology at Ohio State, where they specialize in cognitive neuroscience, the study of the mind via human brain imaging and behavioral methodologies. They moved to Grandview Heights in 2013 and live here with their kids, Alexandra and Micah, as well as their dog, Mochi. Andy has a strong interest in renewable energy, and he has spent lots of time learning the ins and outs of residential rooftop solar.

Things Andy likes about the Grandview area: "Before moving to Columbus, we lived in a few cities in New England, where we loved the human scale of things. Most neighborhoods in Boston, for example, have public squares with lots of 2-3 story buildings, surrounded by residential housing. This provided a nice balance of trees and yards, mixed with most everyday amenities in walking distance. When we came to Columbus, we didn't find ourselves seeking downtown skyscrapers as much as a neighborhood with diverse restaurants, bars, coffee shops, and some shopping. We instantly saw these things in Grandview and were thrilled to find a house here." Julie reports that a Jeni's within walking distance was a key part of their decision to move to Grandview.



When did you go solar? May, 2019. Installation performed by Ecohouse Solar.

Why did you go solar? "Civilization owes so much of its progress to fossil fuels. They provided the massive amounts of energy we've needed to get to where we are. But it's completely unsustainable for us to continue relying on them. Burning fossil fuels on the scale we do is bad for our health, and the evidence that it's driving climate change is overwhelming. So, we looked into solar to reduce our carbon footprint. The bigger surprise for us was when we discovered just how much money we'd save."

Benefits you've experienced since going solar: "Aside from the usual reasons, as a scientist and data geek, I love keeping track of our daily electricity production and analyzing patterns in it across time. It's completely addicting. And I also love talking about our solar panels with our 5-yr old. It's helped her to

understand that energy doesn't just freely materialize out of thin air, and discussing this has made all of us so much more mindful of our consumption."

Any other thoughts you want to add about solar? "Rooftop solar is great but it's not feasible for most people, including renters, condo dwellers, homeowners with shade cover or rooflines incompatible with an installation, and folks for whom the financing doesn't work out. So, we need to allow the energy market to provide more opportunities to consumers regarding where they get their energy. I've become really interested in community solar and locally-supplied green energy aggregation. For anyone out there who wants to work toward these initiatives, come talk to us at Sustainable Grandview!

Additional notes about Andy's installation:

1. Like the Hagers' installation we wrote about a few weeks ago, Andy's array is on a West-facing roof. It produces about 15% less electricity than an ideal south-facing roof would, but it's still quite sufficient to save lots of money. Plus, it provides more power in the afternoon, when the utility grid faces the greatest demand.
2. Like Brian Will's installation, Andy's array produces enough energy to account for about 60-65% of his family's total usage. He's of the philosophy that any solar is better than no solar, but he remains focused on how to further reduce his family's dependency on fossil fuels.